

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

**GENDER INEQUALITIES IN MANUFACTURING: A CASE STUDY OF  
FOOD-PROCESSING AND THE TEXTILES AND GARMENT INDUSTRIES  
IN GHANA**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the

**Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**in the University of Hull**

**By**

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**THESIS CONTAINS**

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## **ABSTRACT.**

Gender inequality is deeply entrenched in society. This continues to restrict women's opportunities in life and has also been widely seen as an obstacle to economic development. Wage employment is seen as important mechanism for empowering women, and also conferring benefits on the family and society as a whole. This thesis examines patterns of inequality in the food-processing and the textiles and garment industries in Ghana, the structural factors that are responsible for producing gender inequality and their impacts on the socio-economic advancement of women. Within the cross-sectoral case study, a comparative gender and social relation analysis was undertaken to explore the factors that determined the allocation of economic resources and nature of power relations within the labour market and the household.

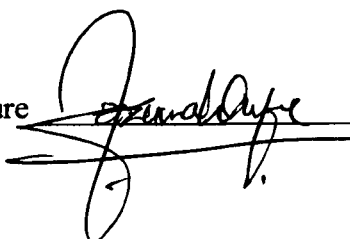
The study of occupational segregation, access to training, career advancement opportunities, decision-making authority and responsibilities, earnings and domestic responsibilities led to the conclusion that, comparatively, the majority of women do not have equal opportunities in the "feminised" food processing and textiles industries in relation to men. With some inter-sectoral variations, the disparity between men and women is also widened as a result of the influence of the size of firm. The processes are complex because they are intertwined with wider socio-demographic, cultural, economic, and legal elements. However, within this complex set of factors, employers' preference and taste for discrimination is arguments concerned with the issue most central to gender inequality in these industries. These preferences are based on the economic rationality of profit maximisation and production efficiency, which is in turn intertwined with the cultural stereotypes concerning men and women's abilities and their attitudes to work. Recommendations to address the structural inequalities which exist between men and women in these industries and in Ghanaian society as a whole are set out.

## DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Gender Studies, University of Hull, in East Yorkshire.

The work reported is my own and I have not submitted it for any previous degree.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sandra Payne', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'S' and a trailing flourish.

Date

09/12/03

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A study like this which attempts to survey the experiences of women's economic role and the relations between gender and industry in Ghana would not be possible without the kind assistance of a huge number of people.

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To you only, O God, I give the glory, honour, praise and thanksgiving! Amen.

## **DEDICATION**

**In loving memory of my parents**

**Mr Joseph Peperah Kusi-Mensah and Mrs Theresa Peperah Kusi-Mensah**

**And for my children**

**Marilyn and Victor**



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## Acronyms

<b>BWND</b>	Business Women’s Network, Diversity and Practise
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CWIQ</b>	Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (Ghana)
<b>DAW (UN)</b>	Division for the Advancement of Women
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development
<b>ECA</b>	Economic Commission for Africa
<b>ECE</b>	Economic Commission for Europe and North America
<b>ECLAC</b>	Economic Commission for Latin America & the Caribbean
<b>ECOSOC</b>	Economic and Social Council of the General Assembly
<b>EPF</b>	Employment Policy Foundation Employment Policy Foundation
<b>ESCAP</b>	Economic & Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific
<b>ESCWA</b>	Economic & Social Commission for Western Asia
<b>FAO</b>	Food & Agriculture Organisation for the UN
<b>GAD</b>	Gender And Development
<b>GHD</b>	Ghana Human Development Report
<b>GLSS</b>	Ghana Living Standard Survey
<b>GoG</b>	Government of Ghana.
<b>GSS</b>	Ghana Statistical Service
<b>ICFTU</b>	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development.
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund

<b>ISCO</b>	International Standard Classification of Occupations
<b>ISSER</b>	Institute for Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER),
<b>KCTU</b>	<b>Korean Confederation of Trade Union</b>
<b>MoE</b>	Ghana Ministry of Education.
<b>MOWA</b>	Ghana Ministry of Women's Affairs
<b>NBACSW</b>	New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women
<b>NGO,</b>	Non-Government Organisation
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development
<b>RPED</b>	Regional Program on Enterprise Development for Ghana
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNECE</b>	United Nations Economic Commission ...
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNIFEM</b>	United Nations Development Fund For Women
<b>WAD,</b>	Women And Development
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>WID</b>	Women In Development

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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### **INTRODUCTION.**

#### **1.0. Introduction.**

Over the past few decades, the importance of gender relations in employment as a crucial issue in economic reconstruction has been increasingly recognised. The vital role of women in the industrial and economic development of nations has been acknowledged. National governments, international bodies and organisations have made commitments to solving issues relating to gender inequality, at all levels of society, in order to promote the advancement of women (UNIDO, 1994, 1995,1998; World Bank, 1995; Lim, 1998; ILO, 1998; DFID, 2000). However, the goals of full employment and recognition of the rights of women workers are still more of a fantasy than a reality, as women workers are still considered to be highly vulnerable to inequality in the workplace and in society as a whole (Reskin et al., 1994; UNIDO, 1995; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Lim, 1997; ISSER et al., 1998; ILO, 1998; Stern, 1999).

Wage employment enhances the socio-economic status of men and women; it also empowers them to gain social and economic independence, as jobs are a key means through which men and women gain social and economic recognition in most societies. Leghorn and Parker, for example, argue that work leads to empowerment when it “makes survival easier for women, increases women’s access to resources, or gives women more tools to fight with, more respect, or opportunities to get together and build networks”(Leghorn and Parker, 1981:226). However, UNIDO cautions that the benefits derived from the increased participation of women in wage employment should not be at the expense of women’s quality of life (UNIDO-ECA, 1995:5).

In Ghana, the nature of women’s participation in the paid workforce and specifically the structural gender inequalities they are often faced with, are issues that require serious attention. This chapter provides an introductory overview of this thesis which examines the patterns of inequality in Ghana’s manufacturing industry – specifically the textiles and food processing sectors - and their impact on the socio-economic advancement of women. The chapter is structured in the following sequence: the leading research questions; the rationale of the study; the objectives of the study; definition of terms; and general overview of the study.

### **1.1. Leading Research Questions.**

Women are more likely than men to dominate the food processing and textiles and garment sectors in Ghana (Nikoi, 1998; GLSS 4, 2000). The question is whether gender inequalities exist in these feminised, as well as other, sectors. More specifically, I wish to explore the following:

- What are the patterns of gender inequality in the food processing and textiles and garment firms in Ghana?
- What are some of the structural factors responsible for producing gender inequality and segregation within the labour force?
- What are the prevalent attitudes in the labour market of employers and employees to each other, and how far are these affected by gender?

To answer these questions effectively, it is necessary to examine the relationship governing the status of men and women within a variety of institutional settings, most particularly the household, the economy and wider society.

### **1.2. Rationale of the Study: Economic Changes and Women's Work in the Global Labour Market.**

Speaking in a global sense, international bodies, organisations, national governments and women's advocates have made relentless efforts towards the attainment of gender equality and empowerment of women over the past 50 years. Although there is evidence that there has been some improvement in women's status following the UN Decade for Women, 1976-1985, there is still much to be done as the process has been slow (ILO, 1998; Wirth, 2001). The glass ceiling and walls, although cracked, are not fully broken. Gender inequality still persists in all societies. Women continue to swell the ranks of the working poor. They account for over 70% of the world's population that live in poverty; and they continue to work more hours for less pay and in worse jobs than men in every country of the world (World Bank, 1995; ILO, 1996; Wirth, 2001; UNFPA, 2002). Female employees continue to face overt and subtle forms of discrimination, hidden in exclusionary practices in the workplace as the organisational environment maintains sex differentiation by concentrating men and women into different settings and assigning them to different duties (Reskin et al.,

1994:31). Gender inequality also manifests itself through the distribution of economic resources, and the allocation of authority and decision-making processes.

The gender relationship within the workplace is a mirror of that which pertains within the domestic sphere. Within the household, the relationship between men and women is underpinned by socio-cultural norms and traditions which generally regard women as inferior to men. This ideology governs the allocation and distribution of economic resources and decision-making, thereby creating difference between men and women in society.

Some writers have argued, in an international context, that the inequalities that exist between men and women are not only detrimental to the socio-economic advancement of women but also affect economic transformation, leading to economic inefficiency and labour market rigidity, thereby reducing economic growth and the process of development (World Bank, 1995; Anker, 1998; Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Klasen, 1999; OECD, 2002). It is also established that gender inequality reduces income and that societies that support it pay for it (Dollar and Gatti, 1999). As the World Bank points out, “the economy pays for... inequality in reduced labour productivity today and diminished national output tomorrow”(World Bank, 1995:11). The question, then, is why does gender inequality persist? Has economic development promoted or decreased gender inequality?

There has been an expectation that the process of development and the economic prosperity accompanying this would benefit women. Despite this process, women are still relatively deprived and underprivileged in relation to men in most societies (see World Bank, 1995; ILO, 1998; UNDP Human Development Report, 2002; UNPFA, 2002). Insufficient attention has been paid to gender analysis in the designing and implementation of macro-economic policy choices and outcomes (Elson and Mcgee, 1995; Fall, 1996). Most development policies adopted by government are gender blind<sup>1</sup>, but inevitably impact differently on men and women (Elson, 1998). In addition, development approaches followed by governments in the past were more quantitative, aiming towards growth in national output and national expansion. Development is better viewed as a complex process involving the social, economic, political and cultural betterment of individuals and of the society itself. Betterment in

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<sup>1</sup> According to Elson, achieving gender inequality and the empowerment of women usually comes low on the list of developmental priorities. Confirming this, she stated that gender was not mentioned at all by the World Bank in its sector programme guidelines in 1995 (Elson, 1998:7).

this sense means the ability of society and its members to meet the physical, emotional and creative needs of the population at a historically acceptable level. This new dimension of economic development involves raising living standards, broadening opportunities and choices and increasing the general welfare of its citizens (simply put, to provide increased opportunities for a better life). This suggests the need to achieve "qualitative" economic development and not only a development which aims at increasing gross national output or even recording a rise in individual citizens' incomes (Edgar Owen in Todaro 1989:88; UN Human Development Report, 2000). This approach to development would focus on the improvement of human potential and capabilities, the restoration of human dignity and respect, and interaction with other social groups on the basis of mutual respect and equality (Ghai, 1989).

The impact of different development policies and processes on the position of men and women and the relationships between them is a matter of controversy. Some analysts consider that industrialisation through liberalisation, as a development strategy, is an efficient means of raising income and providing more productive employment (Steel, 1977; World Bank, 1985, 1987; Todaro, 1991; UNIDO, 1994). The benefits derived from the linkage between women, men and trade and investment liberalisation can be seen from two perspectives. The first is the impact of women on trade and investment liberalisation. Women's increasing labour force participation has enhanced the capacity of most economies to engage in and benefit from international trade and investment liberalisation. The second perspective focuses on the impact of trade and investment liberalisation on women. Trade and investment liberalisation and export-oriented growth have created new jobs for large numbers of young women. This economic opportunity has empowered women because of the greater autonomy and participation in decision-making that often result from increased economic independence (Safa, 1995; Lim, 1997; Elson and Pearson, 1997; Corner, 1998).

Nevertheless, notwithstanding these gains and other benefits, such as the increase in educational attainments, some writers claim that women have been victims in development and neglected by development policies (Boserup, 1989, Tinker, 1990; Deere, Safa et al., 1997; Manuh, 1997; NLC, 2002). While the process of economic liberalisation has provided employment opportunities and income, these gains often cannot compensate for the negative effects of poor working conditions and low wages on individual health and welfare and their potential impact on domestic health and

other social costs. Women in the labour force also continue to be disadvantaged by gender stereotypes. Furthermore, women are often regarded as temporary workers and secondary income earners who can readily return to the unpaid household economy in times of unemployment, such as in the current economic crisis (ILO, 1996; Corner, 1998; NLC, 2002) Corner, argues that “the differential effects of globalization and liberalization on women and men may also result in systematic differences between businesses owned by women and those owned by men in access to opportunities. The traditional barriers to women’s business success, such as family responsibilities that restrict their mobility and lack of access to credit, technologies and information, have a greater impact in a highly-competitive export-oriented market”(Corner, 1998:6).

In general, macro economic and development policies aiming at economic growth and stabilisation have different impacts on a country’s economic development process and its employment patterns. These policies also affect inter and intra household relations in terms of the allocation and distribution of resources and the overall advancement of the members (UNIDO, 1979; Jenkins, 1992; Feldman, 1992; Hewitt et al., 1992; Lim, 1997). Gender differentials in resource allocation not only hinder women's drive towards economic advancement but also impede the progress of society as a whole. According to Afshar, this process has been reinforced by male-oriented development projects and employment opportunities in the capitalist, waged sector, which has reinforced the subordination of women (Afshar, 1991: 3). Simply put, government policies have been gender blind, not making room for women’s interests. In light of the different impact of the development process on men and women and the consequential marginalisation of women in development policies, agencies concerned with economic development and gender equity have tried to adopt new concepts and approaches<sup>2</sup> to analyse social realities and existing hierarchical/ unequal gender relations.

The role of women in industrial development, particularly in manufacturing industry, which is considered as the engine of growth and the key to the process of economic development, cannot be overlooked. According to UNIDO, women in manufacturing now make up about 30% of the global work force. They noted, however, that women out-number men in informal manufacturing in developing countries (UNIDO, 1998:18). In manufacturing, women are largely employed in the light, labour-

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<sup>2</sup> The Women in Development (WID), and Gender and Development (GAD), among others, are the successive new development approaches that agencies have adopted. The significance of these approaches in the development process is discussed in the next chapter.

intensive industries such as the garments, food-processing, electronics and assembling plants, where they work in low paid, dead-end jobs as knitters, sewers, packers, pickers, etc (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Pearson, 1992, Lim, 1997; Anker, 1998).

As in other developing economies, manufacturing industry plays a very significant role in the economic development process of Ghana (Nyanteng, 1997; Lall et al., 1994; Takeuchi, 1999; ISSER, 1998, 2001). However, the country's employment structure shows that the industrial labour force is still small. Manufacturing industry is the third largest source of employment behind the agriculture and the service sectors (GLSS 4, 2000; ISSER, 1998, 2000). Women dominate the manufacturing sector (in absolute terms); however, men dominate all areas of the formal sector. The concentration of women lies rather in the informal sector where they are predominantly self-employed; a sector that provides no health benefits or job security, and has invisible opportunities for job advancement and limited access to economic resources (UNIDO, 1995; Nikoi, 1998; CWIQ, 1998; Boeh-Ocansey, 1998; Brydon, and Legge, 1999; GLSS 4, 2000; GSS, 2002).

Even though gender issues have gained some attention within Ghana, less attention is given to employment programmes (employee status) within manufacturing industry, irrespective of the fact that it is suggested that Ghana's industry is the driving force for the economy, with the manufacturing industry playing a significant role. Comparatively the role of employees in manufacturing has received less attention than their role in agriculture, the tertiary sector or the social domain in Ghana. The insignificant representation of women as wage earners in this industry, compared to other sectors, has led to an undervaluation of the importance of their activities, and their conditions of work. I would argue that the importance of women in this sector is overlooked and this has perpetuated the devaluation of women's work in the sector. In addition, women's invisibility has resulted in gender insensitive labour policies which ignore the reality of the type of work they do and the conditions in which they work. This neglect, according to UNIDO (1995, 1998), has obscured two important relationships:

- **First:** the relationship between industrial development and women's participation in the manufacturing sector
- **Second:** the relationship between women's wage employment and social development (ibid).



Not many studies have been undertaken on gender-related issues in manufacturing industry in Ghana. The few studies covering women's issues largely focus on women as entrepreneurs within the informal sector (Ewusi, 1978; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Nikoi, 1998). Esther Ofei-Aboagye's work 'Women, Employment and Industry' in Ghana provides a generalised picture of the situation of women in the informal sector (focusing on retail trading and manufacturing) and especially on their working conditions, such as lack of access to credit and financial, training and market facilities. However, her analysis provides no evidence about women as employees in this sector, nor does it provide an in-depth study of women as wage workers in manufacturing in general. Rather, the study focuses more specifically on women in the professional, managerial and formal administrative set-up of the tertiary sector and the problems that they face as employees. Ofei-Aboagye's research provides a general picture of some factors influencing women's occupational distribution in Ghana, such as low levels of education and managing their triple role responsibilities (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996:31). Furthermore, her study provides information on women's response to their situation, but does not clearly indicate the structural cause of these problems.

Although other studies, such as the living standard survey reports of Ghana, show the employment patterns in manufacturing by gender (see GLSS, 2, 4, 1996, 2000), they do not provide detailed explanations of the factors underpinning gender segregation in the labour market. They also fail to outline the various forms of inequality that exist in manufacturing industry. Notwithstanding these limitations, such surveys provide a useful insight into the gender trends in Ghana's labour market.

In spite of the general impression that women in Ghana are comparatively better off in terms of economic independence and autonomy than others within the sub-region and most developing societies as a result of the country's dual kinship system, gender inequality still exists in Ghanaian society. Women in Ghana are culturally regarded as inferior to men. Again, whether elite or sub-elite, a woman's status in the Ghanaian society is dependent on that of her husband. Women's inferior status consequently blocks them from having relative authority over men (Robertson, 1984a, 1987; Dolphyne, 2000; Mrs. Asmah (Min. of Women Affairs), 2001). This ideology permeates the whole fabric of the society, thereby influencing both the allocation and distribution of economic resources, and authority and power in decision-making processes in both the private and public sphere (Bukh, 1979; Oppong, 1974; Dumor, 1983; Haddad, 1991; Baden et al., 1994). Although, there were efforts in the early

1970s to improve the position of women in Ghana<sup>3</sup>, studies conducted on women's status in the region since then indicate that there has been little or no improvement in their position compared to that of their male counterparts (Ewusi, 1978; 1987; Ardayfio-Schandrof, 1990; Brown, 1996; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Nikio, 1998, Verner, 2000).

It is an undisputed fact that sexual division exists in the world of work in Ghana, but existing studies provide only a partial understanding of the extent and causes of gender inequalities. The present study aims to extend our understanding by examining the nature and extent of gender inequalities in feminised sectors of manufacturing industry and the factors responsible for these gender differences. Furthermore, it will ask whether there is any general trend in the problems faced by male and female employees in the feminised sectors of manufacturing industry in Ghana.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study.**

The purpose of this study is to determine the patterns of gender inequality that exist within certain sectors of manufacturing industry in Ghana, the causes of these inequalities and, by extension, their effects on the socio-economic advancement of women.

Specifically, this study seeks to: -

1. Study the socio-economic profile of men and women in the food processing and textiles-garment sub-sectors of manufacturing industry.
2. Examine the factors influencing the movement of men and women into these sectors, and reasons for their choice of occupation.
3. Compare men and women's access to economic resources: education, training and development and career advancement opportunities; and the extent of their participation in and influence on decisions affecting them in the workplace.

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<sup>3</sup> In the early 1970s Ghana adopted the Equal Rights, Equal Pay and Equal Opportunity Acts. It also established a Women's Organisation (The National Council on Women and Development) that was to promote women's development. Currently, Ghana has a Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) that deals with the issues of women and children.

4. Determine the structures that are responsible for the forms of gender inequality and segregation, which appear to weigh on women in manufacturing industry as wage workers.
5. Examine the impact of their domestic roles and responsibilities on parent-workers.
6. Suggest strategies and policies that would help women attain economic independence and self-reliance in as well as increase their contribution to economic development, as well as provide guidance to policy makers in Ghana.

#### **1.4. Definition of Terms.**

For the purpose of the current thesis, the following words have been used in a particular way.

“Gender issues” refers to any aspect of men and women’s lives and relations, including their access to and control over resources and opportunities. That is, problems that are revealed when the relationship between men and women, their roles, privileges, status, and positions, are identified and analysed. These problems arise where inequalities and inequities are shown to exist between people purely on the basis of their being female or male (UNECE, 2003)

“Gender Equality” refers to the norms, values, attitudes and perceptions required to attain equal status between men and women without neutralising the biological differences between them (ibid).

“Gender Equity” refers to the fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between men and women. It is therefore the condition in which men and women participate as equals and have equal access to socio-economic resources (ibid)

#### **1.5. General Overview of the Study.**

This thesis is organised into ten chapters. In addition to the written text, I have produced a supplementary video documentary (53 mins) which includes interviews with workers, employers and key informants on gender inequality in manufacturing. The video has a dual function: to serve as a supportive document that provides the

reader with a better understanding of the environmental and socio-cultural context of the study; to be used for educational purposes in Ghana.

Following this introductory overview, chapter two examines global literature on gender issues in wage employment in order to provide a framework for the study. The patterns and determinants of labour force participation are examined further, taking a closer look at the factors underpinning the movement of women into the labour market. Gender issues in the labour market are explored by focusing on such issues as access to, and the distribution and structural allocation of economic resources between men and women. The 'why' and 'how' factors explaining the gender gap are analysed within the framework of concepts and theories underpinning gender inequalities in the labour market.

The chapter ends by looking at the dilemmas of the workforce, specifically in combining work and family life. The significant effects on men and women of managing the conflict between work and family responsibilities have been recognised as a critical challenge for organisations and individuals (Kossek and Ozeki, 1998).

Chapter three discusses the setting of the study. It aims firstly to give the reader a general picture of the relations between men and women within Ghanaian society. Secondly, within the economic sphere, it examines the structure of the economy, focusing on the historical development of manufacturing industry within the framework of economic development policies of the country. It also takes a look at labour market issues in relation to gender, considering patterns of structural distribution, employment equity and advancement opportunities, of men and women.

In chapter four, the methodology of the study is considered. It analyses the strengths and weakness of qualitative and quantitative designs and explains why triangulation – a combined methodological approach – was considered to be the most favourable option for the study. It further discusses how the research instruments were employed, including the use of audio-visual aids. The chapter also provides a description of the sample, areas of the study, how the data were analysed, and a reflection on the problems encountered, as well as the general limitations of the study.

A thematic approach is used in the presentation and analysis of the data, which are examined in chapters five to nine. The purpose of these chapters is to examine the patterns of gender and sectoral differences, and to draw out similarities within and amongst the sectors. The factors generating these gender and sectoral differences are also explored.

Chapter five examines the socio-economic profile of workers within the food processing and textiles and garment sub-sectors of the manufacturing industry. It considers variables such as age, education, marital status and family life, and how these elements in turn affect the worker's participation in industry. It examines social concepts such as those of the breadwinner and head of household and their impact on parent-workers.

Chapter six focuses on the issues, which pertain to occupational distribution and segregation in the labour market. It examines the ways in which men and women are streamed into different jobs, considering recruitment and selection procedures. The chapter further assesses the working environment, in terms of physical separation of workers and of work relations and the impact of these on men and women. It also looks at the factors underlying the movement of individual men and women into the labour market.

In chapter seven, issues concerned with equal opportunities in the workplace are analysed. Training and development, career mobility, income, overtime and the criteria employed in the determination of access to these opportunities are examined.

Chapter eight focuses on authority, responsibilities and decision-making processes within both the workplace and the home. It examines how the role of men and women as leaders influences their decision-making authority in the workplace. It expands this analysis further by considering the domestic environment and whether the power gained in decision-making as a parent-worker reflects the level of responsibility within the household.

Chapter nine analyses the dilemmas faced by workers within the workplace and parent workers within the home. It examines the patterns of gender and sectoral differences, considering the problems and challenges faced by the workers and their further prospects, looking at issues of job security and satisfaction.

Chapter ten forms the concluding chapter. This discusses some of the key issues arising from the research. It makes some recommendations and suggests further in-depth study in some areas which could not be fully dealt with within the framework of this thesis.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **GENDER INEQUALITY, MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE.**

## CHAPTER TWO

### GENDER INEQUALITY, MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE.

#### 2.0. Introduction.

Women form a third of the world's workforce and work two-thirds of the total work hours. They thus make a significant contribution towards the economic growth and development of nations. However, aforementioned they still account for an overwhelming majority (70%) of the world's figure of over one billion people who live in poverty (UNDP, 1995; ILO, 1996, UNIDO, 1998; UNFPA, 2000). The reality is that gender inequality<sup>4</sup> is deeply entrenched in all societies (Anker, 1998) as women continuously face diverse forms of subordination and discrimination (see Sen, 2001), which manifest themselves through the structures responsible for the distribution and allocation of economic resources, power and decision-making processes that tend to favour men in most societies.

The processes of inequality are made more complex by the continuous socio-economic restructuring of nations which forms a part of the current pressure of global transformation. The macro-economic policies adopted by governments within this context have had a serious impact on both the public and private domains. Even though it is assumed the long term benefits of such policies would improve economic growth and stability, increase employment opportunities and have a trickle-down effect on the poor, such policies have nonetheless, often had detrimental effects on women (see Green Revolution of the 1950s; neo-liberal reforms (SAP/ERP and liberalisation programme))<sup>5</sup>. Neo-liberal reforms have impacted differently on the participation of men and women within the wage labour market and their self-employment in the informal economy. The effect on employment has varied across region, country and industry over time, but too often it is the women who are most heavily exploited (UNIDO, 1994-1995, 1998; Lim, 1997, Bhattacharya and Rahman, 1999; Arias et al., 2001; NLC, 2002).

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<sup>4</sup> According to Sen, 'gender inequality is not one homogenous phenomenon, but a collocation of disparate and interlinked problems' (Sen, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> For readings on the impact of economic reforms on women see Beneria and Feldman, 1992; Afshar and Dennis, 1992; Rai, 2002.

Changes in macro-economic policies aimed at stimulating economic growth and industrial development affect both the meso-and micro-environment, but the nature and complexity of gender relations within these is often ignored by policy makers (Feldman, 1992; Elson, 1998). Feldman argued that the structural transformation may change relations among producers and between production sectors, and generate conditions that form new relations of interdependence among countries: "It also creates a structural reorganisation of intra-household relations...and an emergence of new patterns of intra household division of labour ... in both the workplace and household that may generate contradictory outcomes. The outcomes may entail new relations of inequality and exploitation of women" (Feldman, 1992:5). These inequalities continue to restrict not only women's opportunities in life, but are widely seen as an obstacle to economic development (Anker, 1998; Klasen, 1999; Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Orloff, 2001; Dollar and Kraay, 2001).

It is against this background that there has also been a persistent global outcry over gender issues in the process of the development of nations. The issue has not only been how to integrate women and/or gender into the broader macro-economic framework of development, but also how to curb, if not eradicate, inequality within society, and adopt measures to enhance the socio-economic advancement of women. A key move in this direction came from Ester Boserup's groundbreaking thesis published in 1970 (Boserup, 1970). Criticising the economic ideologies enshrined in development theories and practices, she argued that women are disadvantaged, because they have been left out of the development process, and therefore need to be integrated into it (Boserup, 1970, 1989). The core of her argument is that it is the confinement of women to subsistence activities that underlies their exclusion from the development process. Industrialisation has served to limit women's access to employment. Men have monopolised jobs in large and in modern enterprises, at the expense of women. Overall, women are less likely to be employed than men because fewer sectors use female labour, and because labour-intensive cottage industries are being replaced by capital-intensive industries. Furthermore, she noted that the situation of older, uneducated women would deteriorate because the family enterprises in which they work may suffer competition from the growing modern sector (Boserup, 1990:24; see also Buvinic et al., 1983; Dauber and Cain, 1981).



Following Boserup's analysis, there have been conceptual shifts in the interpretation of women's status in development<sup>6</sup> (see Ramji, 1997; Pokharel and Kathmandu, 2001). The Gender and Development (GAD) approach, which emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was based on the premise that there is more to development than economic growth and the efficient use of money. Theorists in this school have challenged the idea that women want to be 'integrated' into the mainstream of Western-designed development, in which they have little chance of determining the kind of society they want (Mosse, 1993:161). One of the key assumptions underlying gender and development analysis is that men and women, because they have different gender roles and power, also have different interests (ibid., 165). Understanding these differences in gender interests is the only way through which different gender needs can be met. Hence, the most effective means to achieve gender equality is by adopting "gender mainstreaming" as a "transformative strategy" (UN, 2000). "Gender mainstreaming" is considered as an ongoing process, aimed at "assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated"(ECOSOC, 1997: 2 in UN 2000:7). Empowering women to attain socio-economic independence and gain self-reliance, social recognition is necessary to improve their condition, and one of the most effective means to achieve this goal is by offering them better options in wage employment.

Wage employment is considered as an essential key to empowerment (UNIDO, 1994; Leghorn and Parker, 1981). Leghorn and Parker argue that:

*Work leads to empowerment when it "makes survival easier for women, increases women's access to resources, or gives women more tools to fight with, more respect, or opportunities to get together and build networks...*

(Leghorn and Parker, 1981:226).

The process benefits not only women, but also the family, and society as a whole (UNIDIO-ECA, 1995; Bunch, 1974; Reskin and Padavic, 1994).

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<sup>6</sup> For further readings on the conceptual shifts from Women in Development to Gender and Development approach see Mosse, 1993; Razavi et al., 1995; Miller et al., 1995; Young, 1997; Rai, 2002.

Industry-related activities have been proved to have a higher income-generating capacity than agricultural related activities. However, despite the rapid increase in women's participation in wage employment, especially manufacturing industry, globally the "quality of jobs which many women hold, particularly in developing countries, is as poor as the attention that is given to their right to organise in order to defend themselves better..." (ILO-ICLNU, 2000:1; also see NLC, 2002). The reality is that, despite regional and sectoral variations, women still have an insignificant representation in industry as a whole, resulting in the undervaluation of their role, activities, and conditions of work. The reasons for this need systematic investigation. However, since women's experiences do vary by country, by region within countries and by economic sectors, it is necessary to study gender differences within the context of specific industries. This provides the rationale for this study.

Focusing on inequalities in wage employment, this chapter examines a body of literature on existing patterns of gender inequality within manufacturing industry, the causes and theoretical explanations underpinning the phenomenon, and its consequential effects on the socio-economic advancement of women. The aim of this wider framework is to provide a background understanding of the nature and complexities of the existing phenomena, which this study can draw from.

From a gender and development perspective, the first section provides a theoretical framework, which examines some key economic and feminist debates characterising gender inequality and the status of women in the labour market.

The second section considers the patterns and determinants of the position of women in industry, laying emphasis on manufacturing industry, which is considered one of the engines of growth in the economic development of nations through industrialisation (Colman et al., 1994; UNIDO, 1998). It examines some structural transformations in industry as a result of the impact of macro-economic policies, and its impact on industrial performance and employment patterns. It also looks at the 'push' and 'pull' factors influencing the movement of men and women into the labour market. The chapter then examines patterns of gender inequality in manufacturing industry. It focuses on four major forms of inequality in the work place: segregation, promotion, income, and authority and power (Reskin et al., 1994:31-32), under the three themes of gender segregation, equal opportunities, and authority and decision-making. It further reflects on some theoretical explanations of these inequalities.

The last section of the chapter expands on the problems encountered by workers in combining their work and family life. It also considers the consequential effects of inequality, not only on the socio-economic empowerment of women, but also on the family and the process of economic development as a whole.

## **2.1. Gender Inequality and the Position of Women in the Labour Market: A Theoretical Perspective.**

Women are considered to be disadvantaged and deprived to some extent and in some form in all societies. However, it is believed that the socio-economic status of women has seen some improvement since the latter part of the 1980s, given the tremendous rise in female labour force participation across the globe, in spite of the cross-regional and country variations. Even so, this increase has not been matched in most countries by qualitative improvements. For instance, the glass ceiling, though seemingly cracked, is still not broken (ILO, 1996, 1998; World Bank, 1995; UNIDO, 1998; UN Report, 1999).

There are various ways of theorising women's position in the labour market, and although this study takes as its starting point a gender analysis of development, this is not to the exclusion of an acknowledgement and understanding of other theoretical approaches. This section provides a brief overview of some of the key economic and feminist debates which offer divergent explanations of gender inequalities within the labour market.

### **2.1.1. Labour supply: Neo-classical/Human capital theory.**

According to Neo-classical/Human capital theory, education, skills, training and on-the-job experience constitute the human capital components of workers, as such investments hypothetically make them more productive than other workers (Momsen, 1991; Reskin et al., 1994:40; Anker, 1998). The theory focuses on the productivity and economic efficiency of workers for which they are selected and rewarded by employers according to their level of human capital accumulation in a non-discriminatory labour market. That is, in competitive conditions workers are paid according to their productivity (Bradley, 1989:64; Rees, 1992; Momsen, 1991; Reskin et al., 1994; Anker, 1997, 1998). The theory assumes that "workers seek out the best-paying jobs after taking into consideration their own personal endowments (e.g.

education and experience), constraints (e.g. young children to take care of), and preferences (e.g. a pleasant work environment)” (Anker, 1998:15). In explaining gender differences in employment, it is hypothesised that women are less productive than men because they have lower levels of human capital, in terms both of what they bring to the labour market (e.g. less education and less relevant fields of study), and of what they acquire after joining the labour market (ibid., 15). This is a resultant effect of women’s orientation toward their families and the interruptions associated with having children, since these inhibit their investment in education, training, and experience (Momsen, 1991:70; Rees, 1992:23; Anker, 1998). One of the basic assumptions underlying the human capital explanation of sex-segregation, which is a major cause perpetuating inequality in the labour market, is that:

*Since women generally anticipate shorter and less continuous work lives than men, it will be in their economic self interest to choose female occupations which presumably require small human capital investment and have a lower wage penalty for time spent on the labour market...*

(Blau et al., 1986: 241).

The supply component of the neo-classical argument, suggests a direct relationship between the accumulation of human capital, productivity and income, and thus measures the status of women in terms of their level of education, skill and job experience in a competitive labour market.

However, some writers have criticised the assumptions of this approach and have argued that they are contradicted by empirical evidence (see Walby, 1990; Reskin and Padavic, 1994; Reskin and Ross, 1995; Hakim, 1996; Anker, 1998; Wirth, 2001). For example, against the argument about the low capital accumulation and productivity of women, Anker writes that:

*In low-income countries with small formal/modern labour markets, there are often many more educated, qualified persons of both sexes than there are formal sector jobs (therefore much sought after). This implies all else being equal, that women should be reasonably well represented in a wide range of occupations in the formal sector (and at least in proportion to female-male educational levels). When this is not the case, it probably implies the presence of discrimination.*

(Anker, 1998:6).

In addition, Reskin and Padavic argue that:

*... more educated or experienced workers are not necessarily more productive and that female workers are as committed to their jobs as male. However, productivity is strongly influenced by the resources that employers make available to workers and the commitment that workers bring to the job. Employers are more likely to give male rather than female workers the kind of tools that enhances their productivity.*

(Reskin and Padavic, 1994:41).

Again it is established that women in jobs with higher or equal qualifications to men earn less (England, 1982; Beller, 1982; Hakim, 1996; Anker, 1998; ILO, 1998; Wirth, 2001). Emphasising this, Beller adds that even where women and men start with equal qualifications (such as in medicine and teaching), women quickly fall behind in the promotion race, even before taking time off for childbirth. Women who leave the labour market and return, characteristically enter at a lower level, their 'human capital' disregarded (Beller, 1982).

In general, from the human capital perspective, differences in education serve as a justification for the disparities in earnings. Some economists have, however, found that the gender differences in career choice and specialities in education, which result in the concentration of men and women into different occupations and professions, account for a significant part of the gender wage gap (Blau et al., 1984; Brown and Corcoran, 1997; Jacobsen, 2001; Wirth, 2001).

The labour supply explanation of segregation also assumes that the exclusive orientation of women around the world is towards family responsibility and childcare (e.g. UNDP, 1995; United Nations, 1991; Anker, 1998; Wirth, 2001). However, the increasing incidence of female-headed households (Buvini, 1995) implies that ever more women need to work continuously simply to earn a living<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, some writers have demonstrated that women's job commitment equals that of men (Bielby and Bielby, 1988; Marsden et al., 1993). Empirical studies conducted in five developing countries - Cyprus, Ghana, India, Mauritius and Sri Lanka - revealed that on average the difference between male and female absenteeism rates proved to be small. The study also indicated similar labour turnover rates for women and men

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<sup>7</sup> Even in Scandinavia, women continue to be mainly responsible for work and childcare, according to time use data (UNDP, 1995; United Nations, 1991).

(Anker and Hein, 1985 and 1986). Marsden and others argue that the kind of job a worker has affects commitment more than the worker's sex does (Marsden et al., 1993). Bielby and Bielby go further, as they found that women devoted more effort to their jobs than men do in jobs with similar levels of autonomy (Bielby and Bielby, 1988).

As such, the neoclassical / human capital theory fails to acknowledge the broader structural biases against women in society. Education is used as a justification of women's subordinated position in the labour market. Nonetheless, occupational segregation by sex remains very high all over the world, in spite of the greater heights attained by women over the last three decades in education, skill and experience. Women are still less well represented in decision-making processes, and they continue to earn less than men (Reskin et al., 1994; Anker, 1998; UNIDO, 1998; ILO, 1998; Wirth, 2001).

#### **2.1.1.2. The Taste and Preference Approach.**

In contrast to the human capital argument, Becker developed an alternative modern neoclassical analysis of labour market discrimination, which focuses mainly on employers' actions or taste and preferences. The model centres more on socially appropriate roles than the desire to maintain social distance, as "employers, co-workers and/or customers may all potentially have discriminating taste"(Becker, 1971) which affects decisions relative to productivity concerning a particular gender.

According to Becker (1971), employers, in common with many other citizens, are prejudiced against certain groups of workers. Usually, but not always, this prejudice is directed against persons who are different because of visible characteristics such as race, disability, age or sex (Anker, 1995). Becker argues that "the discriminatory taste may be held whether or not it is believed that women are less qualified than men for non-traditional pursuits". He maintains that "individuals with a taste for discrimination against women act as if there were non-pecuniary costs of associating with women - say in what is viewed as a socially inappropriate role"(Becker cited in Blau et al., 1986:245). Employers' prejudices are said to sustain disutility (i.e. a cost) when they hire someone from the group discriminated against. Therefore, according to this theory, employers behave rationally when they hire fewer people from that group, since they can thus avoid such a "cost" (Anker, 1998:18). According to Becker's model, "women are often considered to be higher-cost workers (even when

the same wage rate applies) because of a number of supposedly higher, indirect labour costs associated with women workers” (Anker, 1998:19). The element of cost is associated with women’s reproductive roles and responsibilities, which often interrupt or conflict with labour market commitments, and result in high rates of absenteeism and high turnover rates (Momsen, 1991; Anker, 1997, 1998). However, as before stated, this is a myth not borne out by empirical data. Anker argues that laws and regulations can also increase the comparative cost of employing female workers. For example, paid maternity leave increases the cost of women workers relative to men, and so can become an indirect form of sex discrimination if employers have to bear this cost. In addition are the costs generated as a result of labour laws and regulations stipulated by the government, or state or institutionalised policies such as laws which require separate toilet facilities for men and women (op. cit., 18). Nevertheless, these are not a justification for gender discrimination.

The model of employers’ taste for discrimination is consistent with the inequality between men and women that is observed in the labour market (Bradley, 1989; Momsen, 1991; Anker, 1998; ILO, 1998; Dollar et al., 1999; Wirth, 2001; Jacobsen, 2001). Wage differentials exist even between equally qualified men and women because discriminatory employers, as Blau et al. demonstrate, hire women workers only at discounted wages. He suggests, furthermore that less discriminatory employers will have more women workers than discriminatory employers, which will result in segregation by firm and lead to a fall in wages for women as supply exceeds demand (Blau et al., 1986:246). Again, employers contribute to occupational segregation by discriminating against equally qualified women in hiring, placement, access to training programmes and promotion for traditional male jobs (Blau et al., 1986: 241). Statistical discrimination<sup>8</sup> exists within firms as employers’ preferences play a key role in training and investment decisions which are less likely to favour women than men, because women have a shorter work life than men (Blau et al., 1986; Jacobsen, 2001:4).

Employers’ discriminatory attitude therefore affects skill acquisition, which is a component of the human capitalist argument. Similarly, such prejudice affects workplace decision making and authority concerning leadership and job autonomy, even though these processes are shaped by an interplay of factors, as established by a number of writers (Reskin and Ross, 1995; Karl, 1995; Bradley, 1999; ILO, 1998;

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<sup>8</sup> Statistical discrimination is a labour market phenomenon, where according to Blau et al. “employers judge the individual woman on the basis of their beliefs about group averages. For example, if they believe women are less productive or less stable employees, statistical discrimination against individual women may result. This also results in discrimination against women in pay and / or promotion” (Blau and Ferber, 1986:252)

Wirth, 2001). Wirth established that where women were competent, qualified and capable of achieving such positions, invisible barriers and discrimination inherent in the structures and processes of both organisation and society in general prevented them from breaking through the glass ceiling (Wirth, 2001:25). Corroborating this view, Reskin and Ross maintained that employers' propensity to assign female and male managers to different jobs, or organisations' failure to entrust female managers with as much authority as they gave equally qualified men in similar jobs (Reskin and Ross, 1995:140) further perpetuated the gap in authority.

In contrast with the labour cost arguments, however, some writers have shown that employers in most labour-intensive firms prefer women to men due to the comparative cost advantage that accompanies the employment of women. The nature and characteristics of the job, which may require 'nimble fingers' and 'manual dexterity' of women rather serves as discriminatory element, as these qualities are associated to the naturalising discourse concerning the gender stereotyping of women's perceived natural skills(Safa, 1981; Bullock, 1994). Employers' attitudes and ideologies concerning gender and work produce gender segregation (Rohini, 1991; Momsen, 1991; Elson and Pearson, 1997; Lim, 1997). For example, Momsen indicated that "many employers have preconceived ideas of the types of jobs suited to women. They consider only a very narrow range of jobs as open to women, and in this way women's opportunities are more restricted than those of men" (Momsen, 1991:75).

### **2.1.2. Dual Labour Market / Labour Market Segmentation Theory.**

Another economic theory used to analyse employment inequalities is the labour market segmentation theory. Segmentation is the differentiation of the labour market into distinct firm-specific labour markets, each offering quite different conditions of employment, career patterns and rewards (Hakim, 1996: 147). According to Gordon and others, labour market segmentation is the historical process whereby political-economic forces encourage the division of the labour market into separate submarkets or segments, distinguished by different labour market characteristics and behavioural roles. These segments, in their view, could cut both horizontally and vertically across the occupational hierarchy (Gordon, Reich and Edward, 1980:233). Labour segmentation theorists often refer to these labour market divisions or segments as "primary" and "secondary" sectors (Doeringer and Piore, 1971; also see Loveridge,



1983:159, 1987), “static” and “progressive” jobs (Standing, 1989), or “formal” and “informal” sector jobs (ILO, 1972); and within each segment, neo-classical principles are still held to (Momsen, 1991:71).

Dual labour market theorists (such as Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Loveridge, 1983) postulate that the core primary labour market consists of higher paying jobs, characterised by high status in terms of job security, with good career advancement opportunities, good working conditions usually with fringe benefits and often unionised. In contrast, ‘secondary’ jobs tend to be relatively poor as regards pay, chances for promotion, career advancement and working conditions. They also provide little (or no) protection or job security, and have tight supervision, with less job autonomy. The dead-end, low-wage nature of secondary jobs often leads to high absenteeism and turnover, as well as low commitment on the part of workers (Bradley, 1989; Momsen, 1991; Hakim, 1996; Anker, 1998). Separated by institutional barriers, the two labour markets are perceived as functioning independently of each other to a substantial degree, largely because firms in the primary sector have some market power which insulates them somewhat from competition, whereas those in the secondary sector face fierce competition. The theory also postulates that there is little or no mobility between the sectors: workers who enter one sector, by design or accident, remain there permanently, unless there is a marked change in their characteristics. For example, a move up to the primary market can come through improved educational qualifications (Hakim, 1996:148). Momsen, however, stresses that the distinction between primary and secondary sectors has become less marked in recent years in both industrialised and developing countries (because of increased subcontracting and the globalisation of trade), although the distinction still retains a significant degree of relevance (ibid., 71). The general hypothesis of this theory is that men are more likely than women to be found in the primary sector. Barron and Norris argues that women are an ideal source of recruits to the secondary labour market because employers perceive them to have little interest in training and careers, above - average turnover, and little solidarity as reflected in low rates of trade union membership, features which equally describe secondary earners (Barron and Norris, 1976).

Momsen criticises the segmentation theory for its failure to emphasise the differentiation within the third world capitalist sector (formal), where women are generally excluded from employment. She argues that “the level of labour absorption

is generally low and is biased against the employment of women because of their lack of formal educational qualification, their supposed lower job commitment and because capital intensive skills tend to be considered male skills” (op. cit., 71). In addition, she points out that “the model also ignores the wider range of technologies which exist in modern industry, some of which, such as light assembly work, discriminate in favour of women. It also ignores the increased demand for female workers created by the expansion of the modern sectors in female dominated occupations, and does not explain the high degree of gender segregation within the informal sector nor the frequent movement of individuals between the formal and informal sectors” (Momsen, 1991:72).

Hakim has established that there is no necessary relationship between occupational segregation and labour market segmentation (Hakim, 1996:149, also see Boserup, 1970:119-138; Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov, 1992).

Similarly, Anker maintained that:

*Economic theories fail to consider adequately a number of critical, non-economic and non-labour market variables and forms of behaviour, mainly because these lie outside the competence (and often interest) of economists. Examples of such variables are: why women come to the labour market with lower levels of education and in less relevant subjects; why housework and childcare are almost always the sole responsibility of women; why important labour market segregation based on sex persists despite a wide overlap in the abilities of individual men and women; why the sex stereotyping of women in society generally is reflected so consistently in stereotypically "female" occupations; and why occupational segregation by sex has persisted so strongly despite recent major increases in the education and labour force commitment of women.*

(Anker, 1998:22).

From the above discussion, it can be argued that although these economic theories provide some understanding of ‘how’ gender inequality exists, they fail to explain ‘why’ the phenomenon exists. They do not consider the socio-cultural processes, which dictate the social relations between men and women in society. Human capital theory does not provide an explanation of why women may be oriented primarily to their families rather than careers, but rather assume that gender roles in society are

fixed (Momsen, 1991:72). The understanding of the relationship between men and women within the economic sphere cannot be separated from their socio-cultural environment, as the norms and values governing social relations play an important role in defining their status in society as a whole.

### **2.1.3. The Critique of Economic Theories: Feminist Perspectives.**

Feminists have criticised the explanations of mainstream economic theories of inequality and the position of women within the labour market. There is, however, no unified feminist position. For the purpose of this study, this section focuses on two major theories within the larger framework that particularly consider gender inequality and women's position in the labour market. These are the Marxist-feminist and the Dual systems theories. It needs emphasising, however, that even within the framework adopted, it is difficult to provide simplistic categories to these feminist thoughts. This is because most often these ideologies tend to overlap.

Marxist feminists explain the position of women in contemporary society in terms of their relationship to capitalism (Zaretsky, 1976; Bradley, 1989). Capitalism as an economic system is based on exploitation, oppression and inequality, which is reflected in and reinforces the discrimination and oppression which women still face. Marxist feminists claim that the origins of women's oppression are economic and social in character, and coincided historically with the rise of class society (and are associated with the institutions of the family, private property and the state). Furthermore, the family is an indispensable economic institution of class rule, although it has changed its form as the social relations of production have changed<sup>9</sup> (McKinley, 1996). Marxist feminists therefore see gender inequality as determined ultimately by the capitalist mode of production, and the major social divisions as class related (Secombe, 1974; Zaretsky, 1976; Beechey, 1977, 1978; Hartmann, 1979). Marxist-feminism's approach to an analysis of gender and capital accumulation is based on Marx's theory of the reserve army of labour (Marx, [1867] 1954), which states that capital would discard workers into the reserve, and recruit them again as and when the need arose. This mechanism is a significant device to suppress wages through the availability of a surplus pool of workers (Rees, 1992:26). On the basis of this assumption, the relationship between the movement of women in and out of paid

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<sup>9</sup> Marxist feminists generally reject theories/arguments that the oppression of women originates in the sex-segregation of work (in other words, in the fact that the work of men and women is different because of their sex). The division of labour, by itself, does not give rise to social inequality.

labour and their 'disadvantaged' position within the labour market has been attributed to their position in the family. One of the major arguments posed in this context has been linked to the secondary characteristics of women. Women are seen as a cheap, easily manipulable reserve army of labour, which can be taken on in boom periods and discarded promptly during slumps, with minimum social disruptions or protests, and without draining government resources in the form of unemployment benefits. In this way capital feeds on, and reinforces, the dependency of women on their fathers and husbands (Beechey, 1977, 1978; Gorden, 1979; Hartmann, 1979b; Power, 1983; Bradley, 1989; Brydon and Chant, 1993). In addition, the 'natural disposability' of women serves as an added advantage to labour demand<sup>10</sup> (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Safa, 1981; Brydon and Chant, 1993). Marxists feminists add that the fluctuations of the market economy are seen as the immediate cause of the increase and decrease in women's participation in paid employment (Braverman, 1974; Beechey, 1977; Connelly, 1979; McIntosh, 1978). Beechey, for example, argues that capital employs women during economic upturns because they are cheaper than men; that is, they can be paid less than the value of their labour power (Beechey, 1978).

The reserve army argument has been criticised for its failure to consider gender-job differentiation, which is a major feature of segregation, and the changes in historical circumstances or context (Breugel, 1979; Braybon, 1981; Milkman, 1987; Summerfield, 1989; Bradley, 1989; Walby, 1990). Drawing on the importance of the 'notion of disposability', Breugel argues that whether women should necessarily be seen as part of a reserve army or not depends on particular historical circumstance (Breugel, 1979). She establishes that in the service sector, women are not necessarily the first to be laid off in a recession. Nor do they necessarily replace men as cheap labour. Rather, the expansion of the service sector and its heavy reliance on women (particularly part-time ) has meant that women's low-paid work in this sector has been protected, relative to men's, through periods of recession (Breugel, 1979; also see Rubery and Tarling, 1988; Walby, 1986, 1990).

Drawing on the concept of capitalism and social relations, some Marxist feminists also emphasise that domestic labour is crucial to capitalism, and since gender inequality is derived from capital, it is possible to locate domestic labour conceptually within capitalism. The prime focus of the 'domestic labour debate' is not gender

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<sup>10</sup> When women leave to get married or have children, a factory temporarily cuts back on production simply by freezing their posts, thereby avoiding the burden of making compulsory redundancies (Brydon and Chant, 1993).

inequality, but rather the relationship between domestic labour and capitalism. The central issue in the debate has been the relationship between domestic labour and the creation of value and surplus value (James and Dalla Costa, 1973; Seccombe, 1974; Fee, 1976). Writers such as James and Dalla Costa see domestic labour as production. They argue that housework is central to the working of capital, since without it the capitalist system will collapse. Hence, it is production. Further, they argue that domestic labour is productive of both value and surplus value, because the product of women's household labour ultimately becomes incorporated in capital, and they argue that capital derives benefit from this (James and Dalla Costa, 1973). Similarly, Seccombe argues that domestic labour creates value because it is eventually incorporated into capital via the husband's labour power (Seccombe, 1974:9).

Opponents of this argument claim that domestic labour is not directly exchanged on the market with capital and thus it does not produce value (Gardiner, 1975; Harrison, 1973; Fine and Harrison, 1976; Smith, 1978). Smith, for example, argues that there is no mechanism which could ensure that domestic labour is exchanged at its value, and thus cannot create value (Smith, 1978 in Walby, 1990:19). Furthermore, critics indicate that the theory fails to confront the issues of the interest of men in the perpetuation of domestic labour (Walby, 1990). According to Walby, "the debate about domestic labour thus occurs in a context which takes as a basic presumption the centrality of capital and is merely concerned with the exact delineation and relation of the elements of this system" (Walby, 1990:19).

Marxist feminist theories are criticised on a number of grounds. They fail to look at men's interests as men. In addition, there is an unwillingness to move beyond pre-given concepts of Marxist analysis. Marxist feminist arguments on the reserve army and the notion of disposability have been criticised by writers such as Walby (1990). Walby argues that the reserve army theory does not take sufficient account of patriarchal relations shaping gender inequality, thus its proponents are unable to see that women's position in the family is significantly determined by their disadvantaged position in paid work (Walby, 1990). She indicated that it is patriarchal work-place organisations such as male-dominated unions that have been the immediate obstacle to the entry of women into certain areas of the labour market, thereby shaping the labour process (ibid.). Walby maintains that most of these writings have little analysis of gender inequality, and are based on a mere presumption that capitalism is the problem, rather than patriarchy or men (op. cit.).

Similarly, socialist feminist writers (such as Eisenstein, 1979; Hartman, 1979; Walby, 1990) have tried to combine insights from Marxism with the core feminist concept of patriarchy. This has been done in various ways. Some have suggested that there is a single system of capitalist patriarchy. Thus, Eisenstein argues that capitalism needs patriarchal relations in order to survive and that patriarchy leans on capitalism for its support. The two systems do not merely shape each other, but should be regarded as fused into one system (Eisenstein, 1979; see also McDonagh and Harrison, 1978).

Dual systems theorists claim that gender inequality should be seen as the consequence of the interaction of autonomous systems of patriarchy and capitalism. They argue that patriarchy and capitalism are two separate social systems which can neither be reduced to each other nor conflated into one system (Walby, 1990:6; also see Hartmann, 1979a; Mitchell, 1975; Young, 1981). However, there is divergence of views even amongst dual systems theorists. One group allocates different spheres of society to the determination of either patriarchy or capitalist relations (see Mitchell, 1975; O' Brien, 1981), whilst a second group sees patriarchal and capitalist relations as articulating at all levels and spheres of society (Hartmann, 1979a; Young, 1981; Walby, 1990). The second type of dualist position holds that patriarchy and capitalism, although analytically independent, operate in partnership. Heidi Hartmann suggests that patriarchy has its base in men's control over women's labour. Based on this premise she defines patriarchy as "a set of social relations between men, which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men and enable them to dominate women" (Hartmann, 1979b:11). Hartmann argues that "job segregation ... is the primary mechanism in capitalist society that maintains the superiority of men over women, because it enforces lower wages for women in the market" (Hartmann, 1979a:208). She maintains that men have organised together to exclude women from much paid work, primarily, though not exclusively, through the device of job segregation by sex. This serves to lower the wages of women in the jobs that remain open to them, and thus pressurises women into remaining dependent on men with the family. Men demand a family wage, which completes this vicious circle, in which women are pushed away from paid work and into domestic work from which men benefit. Both men and capital are seen to gain from this arrangement. Hartmann argues that, with the family wage, capital and patriarchy find a mutual accommodation (Hartmann, 1979a).

Another contributor to the dual systems perspective, Sylvia Walby, supports Hartmann's view on the independent yet interacting social structure of patriarchy and capitalism, but like other writers (e.g. Young, 1981) criticises Hartmann's conceptualisation of patriarchal relations as a set of relations primarily between men, rather than between men and women. She adds that Hartmann "pays insufficient attention to the tension and conflict between capitalism and patriarchy, seeing these primarily as things of the past, with the current situation being characterised by partnership and accommodation"(Walby, 1990:44). Walby defines patriarchy as a system of interrelated social structures through which women are exploited (ibid., 51). She maintains that the key sets of patriarchal relations are found in domestic work, paid work, the state, and other practices of the civil society. She argues that division of labour in the household does not completely determine the form of patriarchal relations in a particular society; other sets of patriarchal relations also have significance. In her view, the most important set of patriarchal relations within capitalism is that of paid work. She argues that patriarchal relations in paid work are necessary, if not sufficient, for the retention of women as unpaid labourers in the household. The control of women's access to paid work is maintained primarily by patriarchal relations in the workplace and in the state, as well as by those in the household (Walby, 1990:55). She adds that paid work is an important site in capitalist relations, and this is transmitted to the relations between patriarchal structures when the system of patriarchy is in articulation with capitalism (ibid., 57). In her analysis of job segregation, Walby claims that struggles over female employment have usually resulted in one of two outcomes: the exclusion of women from the area of employment in question, or the segregation of women into jobs which are separate from those of men and which are lower-graded. She maintains that segregation is often the result of the struggle when patriarchal forces have been insufficiently strong to exclude women altogether (ibid., 88). In practice, these struggles have been fought at all levels of a particular occupation or industry, at moments when there are changes in production. These changes in production may be due to technical innovation, changes in the product market, or changes in the level of activity in the economy as a whole. She notes that changes in the organisation of capital often precipitate gender struggles over employment in particular occupations, since they both destabilise the old balance of gender forces and create and destroy particular forms of employment (ibid., 88). To Walby, therefore, patriarchy and capital relations are independent systems co-existing in all spheres and at all levels of society. There is an interrelation

between patriarchy and capitalism, but their relations are often riddled with tension and conflict (ibid., 46-47).

The dual systems theorists have been criticised for their differences in the conceptualisation of patriarchy. Walby, for example, provides a wider range of factors than does Hartmann. She conceptualises patriarchy in terms of six interlocking structures: patriarchal relations in paid work, the domestic mode of production, violence, sexuality, the state and culture. Her analysis suggests that these structures intersect in different ways in different historical periods, and in relation to changes in capitalist relations (Walby, 1990). Whilst her wider definition is seen by some as a weakness, as a result of the complexities characterising the concept, others see this as a strength. Generally, however, there is an over-emphasis within this perspective on the division of labour as the source of gender inequality (Bradley, 1989; Stanley and Wise, 1983; Rees, 1992; Hunter, 2003).

Gender inequality is a complex labour market phenomenon. Economic theorists argue that women's position in the labour market is determined by demand and supply mechanisms which are not only influenced by employers' economic rationality of profit maximisation and productivity, but also employees' capabilities and attitude towards work. Whilst economic theorists lay less emphasis on the effects of domestic relations on the participation of men and women in the labour market, feminist writers present a different account, which tries to integrate both the domestic and labour market mechanisms, thereby conceptualising both patriarchal and / or capitalist relations and how these factors generate gender inequality.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that these theories do not in themselves provide fully adequate explanations for inequality within the labour market as a result of the complexities of gender inequality, which involves an interrelationship of socio-demographic, religious/traditional, economic, legal and political variables. A whole variety of micro-, meso-, macro-economic, legal and demographic factors also come into play (Elson, 1998; Anker, 1998; UNIDO, 1994, 1995, 1998). It is suggested that a multiple-frame reference, which integrates the various socio-economic concepts, and that analyses gender division, discrimination, and labour market mechanisms within a framework of gendered social relations, would provide a better understanding of the interactive effects of work, family and social roles and expectations (see Bradley, 1989).



#### 2.1.4. Gender and Socialisation.

Another important dimension that I will be referring to in this study is gender socialisation. Socialisation is a process by which families, peers, schools and the media teach a society's expectations of "appropriate" dress, speech, personality, leisure activity and aspirations of each sex (Weitzman, 1979). Functionalist theorists have argued that because men and women are socialised differently, they are suited to different types of work, hence women predominate in the more nurturing, expressive jobs, whereas men are concentrated in jobs that require more technical proficiency and decision-making ability (Simpson and Simpson, 1969, in William, 1996:2).

Researchers have established that gender-role socialisation perpetuates inequality in the workplace by directly or indirectly influencing the occupational aspirations, choice and streaming that emanate from culturally held, sex-stereotyped assumptions and orientations about 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' jobs for each gender (Sharpe, 1976; Oakely, 1981; Wainwright, 1984; Reskin et al., 1994). The effects of gender socialisation in generating gender differences in the workplace are multiple. Reskin and Padavic point out that:

*Gender-role socialisation..., leads women to be oriented more to their families and men more to their jobs. Traditionally, boys have allegedly been socialised to compete for fame and fortune in the work. The difference in socialisation of females and males may incline them to seek only those jobs that society has deemed acceptable for their sex. Finally, men's gender-role socialisation may encourage them to accept a sexual division of labour at work that reserves for them certain jobs, an inside track promotion, a position of authority, and higher pay for their work, as well as a sexual division of labour at home that relieves them of most of the day-to-day domestic work,. Because men are usually the workplace decision makers, they are in a position to enforce these expectations.*

(op. cit., 41- 2.)

Similarly, this view suggests that women are socialised from an early age to 'choose' traditional feminine roles, which limits their abilities. This role determines the structure of jobs and division of labour between men and women in home and the work place.

The process of socialisation is not static but dynamic, thereby subject to changes based on historical circumstances. The concept of socialisation has been criticised on these grounds. As an unchanging process, critics of this theory claim that, although gender socialisation leads some young people to aspire to jobs that society labels as “appropriate” for their sex (Subich et al., 1989), such aspirations are virtually unrelated to the occupations they actually hold as adults (Jacobs, 1989b). Feminists have also criticised functionalist theory for being overly deterministic, since it seems to suggest a fixed pre-programming of human beings from early childhood, before they enter the world of work (Bradley, 1989). Again, the process is seen as dynamic. Bradley notes that “the individual’s exposure to social definition and redefinition of sex roles goes on all through adult life”. Thus, new definitions are attained through relationships that develop in the work environment (ibid., 69). Moreover adults, especially women, move back and forth between mostly female and mostly male occupations (Jacobs, 1989). These results question how much gender socialisation contributes to sex-segregation in jobs, especially as studies show the penetration of women into traditional male occupations over the past three decades (William, 1993; Anker, 1998; Anker and Melkas, 1998). Nevertheless, gender socialisation is an important factor in people’s gendered opportunities and behaviours.

The above theoretical standpoints by no means provide an exhaustive discussion of the complexities of inequality and women’s position in the labour market. Nevertheless, what this last section has provided is both the macro-theoretical framework and a set of tools with which we are now able to focus on the micro-gendered experiences of economic interaction within the labour market.

## **2.2. The Position of Women in the Industrial Sector: Patterns and Determinants.**

This section provides a global overview of the extent of women’s participation in the labour force, especially within manufacturing industry. It examines the patterns and determinants affecting the gender distribution of labour.

The industrial sector as a whole is traditionally regarded as masculine, as the majority of its sub-sectors and activities are exclusively male fields or are male dominated. However, the position of women cannot be underestimated, as various studies have revealed that women have played, and continue to play, a vital role in the process of

industrial development in many nations (Safa, 1981; Elson and Pearson, 1981; Lim, 1990, 1997; UNIDO, 1994-95; ILO, 1996; NCL, 2002).

Women's economic participation in the industrial sector is lower than in the agricultural and tertiary sectors. However, evidence shows a tremendous rise in female participation in this area across the world, especially in developing countries, since the 1970s (Elson and Pearson, 1997; Lim, 1997; ILO, 1996; UNIDO, 1994-1995). An ILO report revealed that in the mid-1980s more than half a million women worldwide were employed in export-oriented multinational factories in developing countries, with this number tripling to 1.5 million if non-multinational factories were included (ILO, 1985:27-28). UNIDO adds that, though women in manufacturing made up about 30 % of the global work force representing about a third of the proportion of men in manufacturing in 1990, women outnumber men in developing countries, especially in informal manufacturing (UNIDO, 1998:18). However, this increase has not been even within and across all regions (UNIDO, 1994-1995). For example, studies have shown that in Asia-Pacific and Latin America/Caribbean regions the average manufacturing participatory rate of women is relatively high (70%-80%). However, it is established that the characteristics of the pattern of industrial employment that had developed in most Asian and Latin American countries have not (yet) occurred in Africa and for that much West Africa. Women's industrial employment has been generally low (Dennis, 1983, 1991; UNIDO, 1995). In most African countries women's participation in the formal industrial sector lies between 2% and 40% (UNIDO, 1995). On the West Coast of Africa, women's share in manufacturing employment is relatively low. According to a UNIDO report, the rate of women's participation in manufacturing in countries such as Togo, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone is less than 10% (UNIDO, 1995).

The reasons for the wide regional variations have been associated with the policies of trans-national manufacturing companies, which will be discussed later in the chapter (Momsen, 1991; Bullock, 1994; UNIDO, 1994-95; Lim, 1997). According to Momsen, the influence of the international economy, as articulated by trans-national manufacturing companies, has created a new market for female labour. Manufactured exports from developing countries have been dominated by the kinds of goods, such as textiles and garments, normally produced by women workers (Momsen, 1991:84). Bullock maintains, however, that the extent of women's participation has varied at different stages and in different regions, as women have been both excluded from and

exploited by industrial development (Bullock, 1994:70). In most West African countries, as in Nigeria, Dennis associates the slow movement of women into modern factories to the ideological concepts characterising industrialisation in these countries, which is discussed in the latter section of this chapter (Dennis, 1991). She further suggests that the variations that characterise women's employment in the Third World is a result of a particular configuration of family structure, ideological conceptions of women and patterns of industrialisation (Dennis, 1991). In a study of industrial employment in Nigeria, Dennis emphasised that generally the non-formal sector was seen as a preferred form of employment for both men and women. For men, industrial wage labour represented a valued stage in a 'career' towards profitable trading or artisan enterprise. For women, however, the factory offered few jobs in which turn, offered a much less certain opportunity for career advancement (Dennis, 1991:110) (A more detailed discussion on reasons for working is provided in the subsequent section of this chapter).

In spite of these regional differences, it is observed that women are generally employed in the 'light' rather than heavy industries, ranging from food-processing, textiles and garments to chemicals, rubber, plastic and electronics (Momsen, 1991:84; UNIDO, 1994-1995; Lim, 1997; Kibria, 1998; Bhattacharaya et al., 1999; White, 1999). In most West African countries, it is established that in modern manufacturing, employers drew a distinction between light or simple work for women and heavy or technical work for men. Thus, a significant number of women are employed in textiles and seasonal food processing factories (Domenico, 1983; Dennis, 1983). (see further discussion on occupational segregation. See details in the same chapter).

We have thus seen a tremendous increase in the rate of women's participation in manufacturing (especially in most third world countries) since the late 1960s (ILO, 1996; UNIDO, 1994-1995, 1998). We also see, however, that the patterns of gendered labour distribution vary widely across regions.

### **2.2.1. Economic and Industrial Environment.**

*... a higher correlation between Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Manufacturing Value Added (MVA) per capita... is an indication of the general national income. These indicators are relevant to female economic participation in general, but do not necessarily reveal the role women play in manufacturing.*

*(UNIDO, 1998:20).*

In this section, the indicators of the economic and industrial system that try to capture the demand factors underpinning the economic participation of men and women in manufacturing industry are examined. This therefore provides a general overview of the different stages and processes of development (especially in developing countries) and relates the different phases of development to the employment pattern in manufacturing industry.

As already mentioned, manufacturing industry has been the main engine of growth for most developed and developing nations in terms of its performance and contributions towards GDP. However, it is proven that the performance and growth of an economy's industry is highly influenced by the development policies and strategy (either 'outward-oriented' or 'inward-oriented'<sup>11</sup>) it adopts (UNIDO, 1979, 1994, 1999; World Bank, 1985; Torado, 1989; Hewitt et al., 1992).

**Table. 2.1** Classification of Countries by Trade Orientation.

Classification of Countries by Trade Orientation				
Period	Outward-oriented		Inward-oriented	
	Strongly outward-oriented	Moderately outward-oriented	Moderately inward-oriented	Strongly Inward-oriented
1963-73	Hong Kong	Brazil	Bolivia	Chile
	South Korea	Cameroon	Mexico	Ghana
	Republic of Singapore	Cote d' Ivoire	Kenya	India
		Indonesia	Philippines	Sri Lanka
		Thailand	Senegal	Zambia
			Tunisia	Peru
			Nigeria	Ethiopia
				Sudan
1973-85	Hong Kong	Thailand	Cameroon	Ghana
	South Korea	Brazil	Mexico	Ethiopia
	Republic of Singapore	Chile	Philippines	Nigeria
		Malaysia	Kenya	Sudan
		Turkey	Pakistan	Tanzania
		Israel	Sri Lanka	Madagascar
				Peru
				India
			Burundi	

Source World Bank, (1987). In Colman et al., (1994:318), Table 9.16.

A study conducted by the World Bank on the trade policies of 41 countries between two periods, 1963-73 and 1973-85, revealed that, unlike most countries in Africa, most Asian countries such as Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore adopted a

<sup>11</sup>An 'outward-oriented' policy is characterised by the export promotion, especially promotion of manufacturing for export, less trade restriction, i.e. having few quotas and import licenses, with low levels of protection and realistic exchange rate. On the other hand, an 'inward-oriented' policy is more geared towards import substitution, which is characterised by high levels of protection, and extensive use of trade restrictions giving few incentives to exports (Todaro, 1989; Hewitt Tom et. al., 1992).

strongly outward approach towards development (Table 2.1) (World Bank, 1987). Such policies, it is evident, not only affected the overall economic performance of these countries, but also employment in manufacturing.

Corroborating this point, various studies have shown that the adoption of export-oriented policies by many developing and newly industrialised economies in the mid 1970s and 1980s paved the way for the industrial reconstruction and relocation of industries from developed to developing countries (see Jenkins, 1992; Lim, 1990, 1997; Elson and Pearson, 1981, 1997; Bullock, 1994; Safa, 1986). Governments encouraged such foreign investment by opening up their economies and allowing market mechanisms to operate without constraint (Safa, 1986:58). For instance, in Free Trade Zones (FTZs) and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) companies were provided with special concessions and exemptions from tax and/or from national laws and regulations, including foreign exchange controls and restrictive labour codes (Bullock, 1994). The economic strategy adopted by these NIE countries also increased the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP (UNIDO, 1994-1995, 1998).

In contrast, the process of import-substitution in African countries, as a development strategy towards industrialisation<sup>12</sup>, was considered as a failure in providing the basis for structural diversification and self-sustained economic development. In many African countries the growth in GDP per capita stagnated or started declining, as did the small manufacturing sector. The import-intensive manufacturing, lack of a diversified export base and inadequate allocation of resources towards the development of human resource had been a major problem facing these economies (UNIDO-ECA, 1995:11). During the second half of the 1970s and by the middle of the 1980s real GDP was lower than at independence. This decline was associated with a combination of factors such as poor macro-economic management, political instability, declining terms of trade and mounting indebtedness (UNIDO-ECA, 1995:6). This crisis had led to economic reconstruction and the structural transformation of the economy in the mid 1980s, as most African countries under the influence of the World Bank and IMF adopted the outward-oriented policy through its Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) (UNIDO, 1995, 1999).

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<sup>12</sup> Colman et al. claimed that for these developing (colonised) countries, the industrialization of a basically agricultural, primary export-oriented economy was seen as the means by which the chains of dependence forged during the colonial period could be broken, matching their newly acquired political independence with economic independence. Industry was seen as a means for creating employment opportunities, and absorbing excess labour leaving the rural sector (Colman et al., 1994: 279). However, UNIDO maintained that although agriculture had provided raw materials to the agro-based industries for most of these countries, the strategy of import substitution industrialization was heavily dependent on imports (UNIDO, 1995).

The various phases of development affected the pattern of employment in manufacturing within this period (Table 2.2). The developing economies' share of global manufacturing employment increased from a quarter in 1970 to over 54 % in 1996, while that of developed economies fell from almost half in 1970 to less than 30 % in 1996.

The changing pattern of employment between the developed and developing countries was one of the principal factors underpinning the rapid growth of women's participation in the labour market (Safa, 1986; Bullock, 1994; Lim, 1997; Elson and Pearson, 1981, 1997). The rapid economic growth, attained through the export-oriented industrial strategy and stable macro-economic environment within these NIE countries, also created favourable conditions for the growth of female employment in the regions concerned (Perkins, 1992; UNIDO, 1994:8).

**Table 2.2. Changes in Pattern of Employment in Manufacturing Industry, from 1970- 1996.**

	World	Developed Economies	Economies in transition	Developing Economies	Sub-Saharan Africa
1970 millions	149	71	39	39	1
Share (%)	100	-48	-26	-26	-0.6
1980 millions	175	70	44	61	2
Share (%)	100	-40	-25	-35	-0.9
1990 millions	203	65	42	95	2
Share (%)	100	-32	-21	-47	-0.9
1996 millions	205	60	33	112	2
Share (%)	100	-29.5	-16	-54.5	-1
Growth rate (% per annum)	1.3	-0.5	-0.5	4.2	3.3

Source: UNIDO Database in UNIDO (1999:38) *African Industry 2000*, Table 3.10

Lim claimed that “employment of women in these labour intensive industries enhanced the comparative cost advantage of the firms, as this cost was reflected in the low wages women were paid” (Lim, 1997: 222-224). That is, female labour was typically cheaper than male labour, and was also considered as a low-cost substitute for mechanisation (Bullock, 1994:70; Safa, 1986; Lim 1990:102). In addition to the cost factor, studies on women in world export factories in Bangladesh, Latin America and many other developing countries found that employers in these industries conventionally preferred women because of their assumed “nimbleness” and

“docility”, and willingness to accept a tougher work discipline than men (Safa, 1986; Elson and Pearson, 1981, 1997; Lim, 1990; Kibria, 1998).

Interestingly, these processes of change have affected the employment trends of men and women in varying directions in different countries. In most developing countries, the de-mechanisation of the industrial process in areas such as garments, electronics, metals and machinery led to massive unemployment for men, especially in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, but increased employment for women (Braverman, 1974; Safa, 1995; Lim, 1997; Arias et al., 2001). However, unlike the pattern of industrial employment Third World countries, the reverse was the case in most African countries, as men have continued to dominate employment in formal sector manufacturing (both private and public sectors) and the industrial sector as a whole from the 1960s to the present. Although there is public including government acknowledgement of the need to provide jobs for women as for men, it is the employers who have been resistant. Dennis provides some reasons. “First, established employers tend to believe that women do not work as hard as men and that women are more prone to absenteeism. In other words, employers, as the case is in Nigeria, do not perceive women as docile workers. Secondly, regulations concerning maternity benefits, maternity leave and shift work are disincentives to the employment of women, especially married women or women with children, in conditions of an over supply of cheap labour in the labour market” (Dennis, 1983:112). Women in Africa, in most cases are more likely to secure employment rather in the public sector for political reasons, than in private owned large-scale multinational factories (Dennis, 1983, 1991; Demenico, 1983, UNIDO, 1995). However, the retrenchment and reconstruction process under adjustment policies had a significant impact on women due to their concentration in unskilled occupations and economic sectors, as they were most vulnerable to cuts in public spending (UNIDO, 1995; ILO/JASPA, 1991; Palmer, 1991; Manuh, 1997). ILO revealed that the proportion of the female labour force in the modern sector had dropped from 6% in 1985 to 5% in 1990, indicating a loss of 2.5 million jobs for women in the sub region (ILO/JASPA, 1991). Confirming this, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) report on Africa revealed that the participation of the female labour force in industry-related activities was on average 7% in 1992, compared to the male participation rate of 17% (UNECA, 1992d, Table 8).



The above discussion suggests that the industrial or economic policies adopted by a country have significant effects on its industrial performance and employment trends. Hence, the shift towards export-oriented manufacturing influences the demand and supply pattern of labour. This also has other multiple effects that may be geared towards the development of human capital, and subsequently other social and demographic conditions, and affects the supply of labour (UNIDO, 1995).

The next section examines the factors influencing the movement of men and women into the wage labour market.

### **2.2.2. Factors underpinning the movement of men and women into industry: Gender and the 'Push' and 'Pull' factors.**

The economic participation of men and women is governed by an interplay of factors, which impact differently on them (UNIDO, 1994).

The evidence shows a phenomenal increase in women's labour force participation since the mid-1970s, especially in manufacturing. However, this influx has been largely towards the feminised sector, especially textiles and garments, electronics, and food processing (Heyer, 1988; Elson and Pearson, 1981, 1997; Safa, 1981; Lim, 1990, 1997; Tiano, 1990; UNIDO, 1994-1995, 1998; Kibria, 1998). The question is, what are the causes underlying this increased movement of women into the labour market and into these areas of industry? To answer the question, this section examines the driving force behind the movement of men and women into wage employment, considering the 'pull and push'. In this context the 'pull factors' include a broad range of conditions that either attract women into the labour force or expand their opportunities for paid employment. The 'push' factors are the economic needs that compel a woman out of the household to earn an income to contribute to its support (Tiano, 1990:201). This section also considers the determinant of choice of industrial sector.

The 'demand' school of thought places primary emphasis on the 'pull factors'; it associates the movement of women into the labour market with the global economic restructuring that has led to the relocation of industries from developed to developing countries. This trend called for a new category of workers, creating employment for women and unemployment for men in many countries (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Safa,

1981, 1995; Bullock, 1994; Lim, 1990). Studies of Third World export factories showed that the international comparative cost advantage of relocation and de-mechanisation of production using labour-saving methods favoured women, due to the nature of jobs which corresponded with women's assumed 'natural abilities' (also see section 2.3.1) (Bullock, 1994; Lim, 1997; Elson and Pearson, 1981).

The 'pull factor', which emphasises the structural changes as a result of changes in macro-policies, provides an understanding of the effects of these economic reforms. It only focuses on structural changes within the formal sector of industry, however, neglecting the women in the informal sector, where their dominance is even more pronounced. In addition, the provision of job opportunities for women, and male unemployment, are not sufficient conditions for entry into wage employment. This is because female participation in the labour market is being determined by an interaction of factors, of which the economic forms only a part. Again, although the transformation favoured women's employment and resulted in the unemployment of men in some regions, this pattern does not hold for most industries in other regions, such as Africa and most parts of the Islamic world, where women's participation is still low (UNIDO, 1994-1995). The theory also suggests that women would not have entered wage employment without the emergence of these industries. It further implies that women were drawn into paid employment in order to attain financial independence (Tiano, 1990:202). Yet other non-economic factors may have been equally significant (Heyzer, 1988; Khan, 1988). However, a full understanding of the movement of women into factories requires us to consider not only the pull but also the push factors that underlie this trend.

The 'push' factor arguments underpinning women's labour market entry have in most regions centred around the conventional theory of male unemployment, poverty and sustenance, although some writers have emphasised cultural as well as economic factors (Fernandez-Kelly, 1983; Tiano, 1990; Mahmud, 1992; Safa, 1995; Kibria, 1998). For example, in Mexico, the 'push' variant thesis maintains, that the effect of the Maquila programme in augmenting male unemployment made it necessary for women to earn an income to support their household (Tiano, 1990: 202). Fernandez-Kelly's work on the new category of workers in Mexico similarly suggests that male unemployment was a factor that precipitated a woman's entrance into the labour market. Her study established that the economic need to support their families forced many women to work for wages (Fernandez-Kelly, 1983:54-58).

In his work on Bangladeshi garment factory workers, Mahmud noted that two groups of women have been particularly likely to engage in these jobs: women in low-income male-headed households, and women heads of household. Thus impoverishment and the absence of a male breadwinner are two characteristics of wage-seeking women (Mahmud, 1992). Other studies of garment workers in Bangladesh have also highlighted poverty as a key factor that pushes women into the wage labour market. According to Kibria, “it is only under the tremendous pressures of extreme poverty that woman violate cultural proscriptions against their involvement in paid employment, particularly in jobs that require them to be in male-dominated public spaces” (Kibria, 1998:17). She adds, however, that while entry into the workforce is a matter of necessity, it has other aspects as well:

*... for these women, [garment] work is a way to enhance personal and/or household economic resources. It is also a way to gain a measure of economic and social independence*

(Kibria, 1998:17).

Furthermore,

*... a number of other push conditions and factors operated to provide the critical impetus for the move. In other words, economic scarcity alone does not provide a sufficient picture of how rural women become garments workers. Economic scarcity operates in conjunction with other push factors, such as family conflicts, marital breakdown, problems of harassment and uncertain marriage prospects...*

(ibid.,17).

Kabeer, similarly, pointed to the complexity and diversity of the economic motivations of women garment workers. She asserts that while for some the job is a matter of basic survival, for others it is a way of improving their standard of living, or of earning money for personal accumulation and expenditure (Kabeer, 1995). However Tiano, in her study of Mexcali, argued that women were driven by economic necessity rather than the desire to attain personal satisfaction (see Tiano, 1990:215). Confirming this view, Hadjicostandi in her work on 50 factory and home workers in Kavala, Greece, indicated that 80% of women revealed that family economic support or the capacity to supplement the family income were their main

motives for seeking employment (Hadjicostandi, 1990:72). On the other hand, only 14% of the factory workers and 20 % of the home workers decided to seek work to achieve both economic and personal independence (ibid., 70). She concluded that economic instability rather than personal independence led the women to seek paid employment (ibid., 73). Lim's study on Latin America and the Caribbean, where the tradition of female breadwinners and heads of household was strong, also showed that the women had to find work in order to support themselves and their children (Lim, 1997:106). It is established, however, that in most West African societies where traditionally women are not excluded from income earning activities or confined to the household but rather encouraged men and women's perceptions of women's engagement in wage labour market are rather complex. Multiple work, the constructing of a career, the quest to attain economic independence and family life become mutually reinforcing (Dennis, 1983, 1991; Domenico, 1983; Okali, 1983; Oppong, 1987; Clark, 1989). In a study of Ibadan factory workers, in Nigeria, Domenico revealed that both men and women were eager to work in new factories in order to make a living for themselves and their children and even to save capital for their own business (Domenico, 1983; also see Dennis, 1991). For these workers, he stated that "work is seen in very instrumental terms by both men and women as a means to the end of improving their life position, especially their family welfare and economic security". This instrumental orientation in his view, "reflects prevailing social condition and social expectation within these societies" (Domenico, 1983:257) which make them less economically dependent on their spouses (Clark, 1989; Dennis, 1983; Robertson, 1989 ). Corroborating this, Dennis in a study in Nigeria West Africa, stated that, "the ability of a woman to generate a reliable income successfully reinforces the position of a woman in her husbands household and also strengthens her ability to educate her children. It also enables her to establish an independent social position, which is important in a polgyonus society" (Dennis, 1991). In Dennis's view,

"a woman's personal and work life in West Africa is seen as an attempted construction of a career in which advancement in one sphere can be used to support and reinforce efforts in another" (Dennis, 1991:101).

She suggest that the, mutual reinforcing elements of a career work in the optimum manner, is when a woman reaches old age with a recognised position within the household, attains an independent social position, and children who enhance her

reputation and have to support her in her old age. She adds that without these advantages, she (the woman) is dependent upon the acceptance and approval of those around her without the resource to influence this process. Therefore, “the relationship which exist in polygynous societies necessitate and reinforces opportunities for women to generate income, making their position become accepted in such households” (Dennis, 1991:101). Given these factors, the scenes of economic and political instability, coupled with rapid structural changes in economic policies in Africa, and its consequential effects - removal of government subsidies on basic utilities( such as education, health), unemployment, migration- has rather increased the pressure on women as mothers and maintainers of the household to earn more; to sustain their families and themselves economically (Clark, 1989; Dennis, 1991; Manuh, 1997).

These criticisms of explanations, which place excessive emphasis upon either, push or pull factors, show the need to acknowledge and understand the interplay between both sets of factors (Tiano, 1990; Lim, 1997; Kibria, 1998). It also needs to be emphasised that although most women are pushed into the labour market out of economic necessity, there are regional variations as many women, especially those from the Islamic regions, may equally enter wage employment for reasons that are non-economic. Women’s desire to gain social independence is attained by entering into wage employment, as a way of escaping the cultural systems, religious practices of female seclusion, and structures of male supremacy (Heyzer and Kean, 1988; UNIDO, 1995). It needs emphasising that cultural reasons have been the major factor to account for the low participatory rate of women’s employment in the labour market in most Islamic countries (see UNIDO, 1995).

The above discussion suggests that the nature of interplay between push and pull factors varies from country to country. Whilst the studies cited explain the reasons ‘why’ women moved into wage employment, they do not provide a detailed understanding of the sectoral and occupational choices of workers. The question is why women tend to select some sectors and men opt for others.

Considering the determinants of sector choice and labour force entry, utility function theorists maintain that the decision to participate in the labour market is generally modelled as the individual’s maximization of lifetime utility (happiness), subject to budget and time constraints. If the utility derived from the (marginal) expected wage is higher than that derived from the (marginal) hour of non-market work, the individual enters the labour force (Khandker, 1988; Cunningham, 2001:5). However,

based on the premise of household needs and roles, Maloney argued that the sector of entry depends on the needs of the household, and the role of the individual in the context of the household. If there is a fall in household earnings, the new worker may need to enter the higher paying sectors in order to substitute for the fall in income (Maloney, 1998). Parallel to this argument, Cunningham claimed that given household roles, if the individual is also responsible for homecare, he/she may prefer the flexibility of contract work or of the lower paying informal wage sector. Citing Mexico, where 25% of household heads are single adults (women) who act both as primary breadwinners and caregivers, as an example, she maintained that the head would enter the informal sector in order to take advantage of the flexible location and time parameters that sector often offers (Cunningham, 2001: 8-9). In her work on the primary determinant of labour force participation patterns in Mexico, she contended that labour supply patterns are driven strongly by household role, such that household heads, regardless of whether they are male or female, behave similarly. The implication of this is that it may be more appropriate to take into consideration household needs and resources, rather than sex, when considering the labour supply of the head (*ibid.*, 2). Even though she affirmed that gender does affect labour supply decisions, she stated that:

*It has an indirect effect, entering through household role rather than directly. Women who do not have spouses or children to care for behave more similarly to men than they do to married women. In fact, women without either a spouse or children are more likely than any other group to be in the higher paying, inflexible formal sector jobs, bringing into question whether or not employers discriminate based on sex or on household structure. Married women, on the other hand, are secondary workers whose labour supply is very contingent on household responsibilities.*

*(ibid., 3)*

She suggested that it is not necessarily appropriate to use “women” as a target group, since they are a very heterogeneous group. In her view, household structure influences the labour force entry of wives, but not of single mothers. Wives with young children are less likely to enter the labour force, and when they do, they tend to go into the more flexible informal sector jobs that allow them to combine homecare and market work. Single mothers do not adjust either labour force entry or sector of

entry to take account of the presence of young children. They often do not have the option of selecting lower paying informal wage or contract jobs, since if they begin working, they do so with the intent of generating maximum income with minimum time input (ibid., 30-31).

The above discussion on the determinants of labour supply decisions suggests that sectoral decisions are affected by factors such as household needs and roles of the individual, household composition and earnings. Even though Cunningham's work is relevant in providing an understanding of the social context of labour force participation decisions, it does not address the reasons for the movement into sex-stereotyped sectors and occupations. It also fails to address other socio-demographic and human capital variants such as education, skill, and other external factors such as availability of job opportunities, which are components influencing supply decisions. While the work of writers like Cunningham has drawn our attention to some important factors, this area is under-theorised.

Despite the cross-regional variations, the above discussion suggests that labour supply and demand decisions are determined by an interaction of both external and intra-household factors. The external factors, mostly the global economic transitions, and employers' preference based on international comparative cost advantage, created job opportunities for women and resulted in the unemployment of men in many developing countries (Elson and Pearson, 1981, 1997; Safa, 1981; Bullock, 1994; Arias et al., 2001). However, the transformation not only creates employment avenues, but also causes changes to the structure of the household, with the growth of female-headed households; it challenges the myth of the male family breadwinner through the changing responsibility of women as increased numbers of married women enter the labour force (Moser, 1993; Safa, 1995; Creighton, 1998; Chant, 1997, 1999). Women become more than secondary earners. The decision on labour market entry for most women is based on economic need rather than personal satisfaction (Tiano, 1990; Hadjicostandi, 1990:72; Lim, 1997; Kibria, 1998). Within this frame, however, sectoral choice or allocation, as Cunningham argued, are affected by factors such as the needs of the household and roles, household composition, income and inter-gender heterogeneity, rather than straightforwardly on gender lines (Cunningham, 2001).

### **2.3. Gender Inequality in the Labour Force: Patterns and Determinants.**

This section examines the patterns and determinants of gender inequality within the labour force. It considers the following issues: sex segregation; human capital

development and advancement opportunities; authority and decision-making; and income. These will be discussed as factors which form the principal mechanisms through which inequality manifests itself within the workplace (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:31).

### **2.3.1. Sex Segregation in the Workplace.**

Reskin and Padavic refer to sex segregation in the workplace “as the concentration of men and women in different occupations, jobs, and place of work” (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:43). In the workplace segregation exists in two forms, horizontal and vertical. Hakim says that “horizontal job segregation exists when men and women are most commonly working in different types of occupations, whereas vertical segregation exists when men dominate the higher grade and high paid occupations within jobs, or when men are promoted further up career ladders within occupations” (op. cit., 145 ). Numerous studies have revealed that sex segregation in the workplace is detrimental to women, and also creates economic inefficiency and labour market rigidity; it underutilises human resource capacity, thereby impeding the growth and development of societies (Scott, 1994; Reskin et al., 1994; World Bank, 1995; Anker, 1998; Anker and Melkas, 1998; Wirth, 2001).

#### **2.3.1.1. Patterns of Occupational Gender Segregation.**

This section examines the occupational and sectoral distribution of men and women in the labour market. The international Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-68) provides six major non-agricultural occupational categories: professionals and technical; administrative and managerial; clerical related workers; production; sales; and services (ISCO-68, in Anker, 1998:130-37). For the purpose of this study, only the first four groups need to be discussed.

Anker, in his work on occupational segregation by sex in 56 countries in the world<sup>13</sup>, established that women tend to be overrepresented in the professional and technical group (49 out of 56 countries),<sup>14</sup> but were least well represented in Ghana, Haiti, Angola, Japan and the Republic of Korea (Anker, 1998:164). There is a relatively high representation of women (50 out of the 56 countries), in clerical occupations,

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<sup>13</sup> Anker's work was a cross regional and country study. The 56 countries studied were selected from OECD, Asia-Pacific, Middle East and North Africa, regions, transition economies and other developing countries (Anker, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> According to Anker, the overrepresentation of women was in only two occupation which were traditionally female: nurses and teachers. However, they were less represented in technical occupations such as engineers and computer programmers (see Anker, 1998:164).



with the exception of Ghana, China, Pakistan, India, Nigeria and Haiti. In contrast, Anker maintained that women were generally very much underrepresented in the administrative and managerial, category and in production occupations (54 out of 56), although in Latin America the trend was least pronounced (Anker, 1998:163-5). Confirming these finding, UNIDO studies on women in manufacturing maintained that women occupy only twenty percent of the professional-technical positions and less than thirteen percent of administrative - managerial jobs. These figures, according to UNIDO reports, are much lower than the average for all economic sectors (UNIDO, 1998).

The study of specific occupations extends the picture of the segregation. Anker in examining feminisation and masculinisation of seventeen typically male and female occupations in non-agricultural sectors, revealed that there were seven times as many male-dominated as female-dominated occupations. The most typically 'male' occupations are: engineers and related technicians, government administrators, managers, general foremen, blacksmiths and toolmakers (op. cit., 206, 254-261). The concentration of men in these occupations invariably reflected their dominance in related sectors and sub-sectors of industry such as heavy manufacturing industries, mining and construction. Women, on the other hand, are highly concentrated in light industries such as textiles and the cotton industry, and food-processing, in most regions (Momsen, 1991; Pearson, 1992; UNIDO, 1994-95, 1998; ILO, 1996).

Gender streaming not only manifests itself in men and women doing different jobs, but also in their vertical distribution within the organisational hierarchy. Most studies have indicated that the majority of women are found in the lower echelons of the organisational ladder. That is, women have an insignificant representation in top management or in positions of authority (Rohini, 1991; Harlan and Berhide, 1994; Reskin et al., 1994; Reskin and Ross, 1995; ILO, 1996; UNIDO, 1998; Smith, 2000). Harlan and Berhide, argued that the largest number of women are employed in the lower levels of the organisational structures, in dead-end jobs with little access to upward mobility (Harlan and Berhide, 1994). Studies of the textile and food industries in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Yemen have established that the percentage of women holding administrative and supervisory jobs is negligible; women are largely concentrated on the assembly line, and horizontal patterns of separation within individual work establishments are widespread (UNIDO-ESCWA, 1995). Various studies conducted in West Africa, show a similar pattern (Domenico, 1983; Date-Baah, 1983; Dennis, 1991). Domenico's study on Ibadan, revealed that

within the industrial sector although women dominate government factories (food-processing industries), senior and supervisory position within these establishments were held exclusively by men. Women were often recruited only for secretarial and clerical jobs as they were regarded as unsuitable for the operation of 'technical and sophisticated' machines (Domenico, 1983).

The ILO reports that globally nearly two-thirds of women employed in manufacturing are categorised as labourers, operators and production workers; only 5% are in professional and technical occupations, and 2% in administrative and managerial positions (ILO, 1996:5). Wirth recognises a gradual improvement in the rate of women's movement up the hierarchical ladder, but maintains that women's share of management positions still does not exceed 20%, globally (Wirth, 2001:25). The study further reveals that only a few women gain access to the highest positions as of executive heads of organisations, as representation here is between 1% to 5% (ibid., 38). The existence of invisible glass ceilings and walls serve as barriers to movements up the hierarchical ladder (Moore et al., 1997; Wirth, 2001). A more detailed discussion on women in positions of authority will be found in the section on leadership in this chapter.

The above discussion illustrates that occupational segregation exists within the labour market. This phenomenon also influences the structural and sectoral distribution of men and women. The segregation of men and women into different occupations and jobs can be linked to the sex-typing of jobs as men's work and women's work. This is a dimension of segregation, a mechanism that underpins it. Even though segregation and sex-typing of jobs are analytically distinctive variables, in practice they are usually found in combination. As Bradley argues, "sex-typing can be seen as the ideological face of the structural process of segregation" (Bradley, 1989:9-10).

#### **2.3.1.2. Sex-typing of Jobs.**

Sex-typing of jobs 'is the process by which jobs are 'gendered', ascribed to one sex or the other' (Bradley, 1989:9). In this view, sex-typing is based upon culturally held assumptions about which jobs are appropriate to a particular gender group. This section examines the classification of jobs as 'men's work' and 'women's work'. It also looks at the patterns of labour distribution based on these ascriptive characteristics.

Studies have shown that men and women are frequently allocated to jobs based on certain stereotyped criteria that are reflective of their gendered attributes and roles. Women's work, as perceived by society and irrespective of cross regional and industrial variation, shares common features that are related with their domestic activities (Murdock and Provost, 1973; Novarra, 1980; Cockburn, 1983; Bradley, 1989; Reskin et al., 1994; Hakim, 1996; Anker, 1998). Elaborating this, Anker maintains that the common positive stereotyped characteristics associated with women's work are a caring nature, manual dexterity, greater honesty, and pleasant physical appearance or attractiveness. In contrast to these, negative traits include women's physical weakness, less ability to do science and mathematics, difficulties in supervising others, less willingness to travel, and less ability to face physical danger or use physical force (Anker, 1998:24-25, 251). These negative traits of women at the same time connote the ascriptive masculine characteristics governing men's work. Game and Pringle present a classic (ideal) description of the nature of men and women's work. They argue that:

*...Women's work is ... usually indoor work, considered to be lighter than men's work; it is clean, safe, physically undemanding, often repetitive and considered boring, requires dexterity rather than 'skill', often has domestic association, it tends to lack mobility, being tied to a particular work station; it may well have association and requirements of beauty and glamour. By contrast, men's work tends to evoke images of outdoor, of strength and physicality; men's work may be heavy, dirty, and dangerous, it is often highly mobile (men have a curious monopoly of jobs in the transport sector), it requires skill and training. It is frequently highly technical, requires mechanical knowledge or scientific expertise at the highest level, it requires characteristics of innovation, intelligence, responsibility, authority, and power.*

(Game and Pringle, 1983, quoted in Bradley, 1989:9).

These culturally sex-stereotyped assumptions have been common criteria for the allocation of men and women into different jobs and professions, in many periods and societies (Safa, 1981, 1995; Bradley, 1989, 1992; Bullock, 1994; Reskin et al., 1994; Hakim, 1996; Anker, 1998). Anker's work on "Gender and Jobs...in the World" revealed that in production, female-stereotyped jobs were dressmaking, sewing, spinning, weaving, food and beverage processing; women constituted 85% of workers

in these sectors in most countries. In countries such as Hong Kong, Japan, Mauritius, Norway and Tunisia, women constituted 60-80% of tailors, dressmakers, sewers and upholsters, and 70-95% of stenographers and typists, in 1990. In the same countries, men constituted 94-98% of the workforce in engineering, and related technical, managerial, and supervisory jobs (Anker, 1998:258-287). In Bombay, India, Rohini established that engineering jobs were monopolised by men, whilst the majority of women were in jobs like packing and assembly in the textiles industry (Rohini, 1991:264). Studies on the electronics and metal industries also revealed that women carried out repetitive work in sub-assembly of electronics and electrical goods, and in a variety of miscellaneous packing and other activities (Lim, 1991; Momsen, 1991; Pearson 1992: 243).

A further feature of many of the jobs that women occupy is that they are in labour-intensive industries with low capital requirements, relatively simple technologies and low skill content. Such work often requires considerable degrees of manual dexterity and also involves speed combined with patience and vigilance (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Heyzer, 1988; Bradley, 1992; Pearson, 1992; ILO 1996).

While many of the gendered attributes of jobs have been widespread, gender barriers have been broken as a result of an interaction of factors, which include the process of industrialisation and technological innovations, development and education; feminist advocacy and others factors will be discussed later in the section. It can therefore be argued that, the culturally held assumptions and ascriptive features, which pertain to gendered jobs, can only be specified within a particular context and time frame.

There are many examples of changes in occupational segregation. Wolf argued that "in China and other traditional peasant societies, it used to be that men did the heavy work and women did the light work, but now there are more women workers than men workers, so that women do all and men just supervise them" (Wolf 1985:79, quoted in Bradley, 1992: 22).

Bevan has demonstrated that in, the 1870s, canning and preserving factories employed women in Britain and Scotland, as they formed three-fifths of their workers. However, as these industries developed, the actual cooking task was undertaken by men world-wide, despite women's vaunted superiority in the domestic sphere (Bevan in Bradley, 1992:164). A similar pattern was reported to have prevailed in the dairy, bakery and cotton industries in most developed countries (Lazonick, 1979; Pollert,

1981; Blom, 1990). Lazonick's work on cotton textiles shows a dramatic reversal of roles as a result of mechanisation. He claims that whereas, in the hand-based cottage industry, women had for centuries specialised in spinning and men dominated weaving, the new machines brought gender reallocation, with men operating the spinning mules and women tending the more automated, less complex weaving machines (Lazonick, 1979, in Bradley, 1993:19). Gender transitions have also been observed in the tertiary sector in professions such as teaching, law, medicine, nursing, administration, clerical and related jobs, catering, transport and service (forces) (Bradley, 1989, 1993; Williams, 1993; Jacob, 1995). Despite the fact that women were considered incapable of undertaking heavy tasks, highly technical work or mechanical tasks requiring scientific expertise, studies have shown that there has been some advancement in most of these areas, though the representation of women still remains minimal (Croll, 1983).

The sex-stereotyping of activities as men's work and women's work reflects and influences the sectoral distribution in terms of sex dominance in employment. Numerous studies show that the tertiary sector (commerce and services) is the second largest source of employment for women after agriculture, in most countries (Nuss et al., 1992; ILO, 1996; UNIDO, 1998; Anker, 1998). Anker's work revealed that, with the exception of Arab countries, women were overrepresented in the tertiary sector in all regions throughout the world, though there are some regional variations (Anker, 1998). Within the Asia-Pacific region, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, women constituted 75% and 71% respectively of the labour force in the service sector in 1994 (UNIDO, 1994; *The World's Women*, 1995:109; Anker, 1998). However, for most African countries, women on average are underrepresented, constituting 18% of the labour force in the service sector (Palmer, 1991; UNIDO, 1995:4; Nikoi, 1998:42). Within the service sector, women are predominantly in occupations like nursing, teaching, catering, sales, services and clerical related occupations, which tend to be regarded as female domains (ILO, 1992; Momsen, 1991:87; UNIDO, 1994-5, 1998; World Bank, 1998; Anker, 1998). Even so, studies have revealed an increasing trend of penetration into these traditionally "feminised" areas over the last three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by men (William, 1993; Reskin et al., 1996). In contrast, men generally dominate occupations such as architecture, engineering and related technical fields, legislation and government administration, management, sales, protective services, etc, which are considered male occupations (Anker, 1998).

Within trade and commerce, women dominate retail trade (petty commodity trading) in most developing countries, especially Africa and the Caribbean (Afonja, 1981; Momsen, 1991; Nikoi, 1998). Momsen's study of women in the informal sector in the Third World revealed that women make up 93% of the markets in Accra (Ghana), 87% in Lagos (Nigeria), 60% in Dakar (Senegal), and 77% in Haiti (Momsen, 1991). However, focusing on the gender disparity within the sector, Momsen maintained that:

*Although most traders in West Africa are women, they tend to concentrate on the sale of small quantities of home produced items in the local market while men control wholesaling and the long distance distributive trade in manufactured goods.*

(Momsen, 1991:87)

Although the agricultural sector still employs the largest proportion of women in developing countries, the activities undertaken by men and women are predominantly different, despite the fact that there are regional and country variations (Brown, 1970; Murdock and Provest, 1973; Bradley, 1992; Nuss et al., 1992; UNIDO, 1994-95; Nikio, 1998). The figure is particularly high in Africa, where the female and male economic activity rates in agriculture were 77% and 60% respectively in 1990 (UNIDO-ECA, 1995:4). In Sub-Saharan Africa, women are considered responsible for between 60% and 80% of agricultural production (Boserup, 1970, 1989; Leacock, 1986; Brydon and Chant, 1989; Charles, 1993; Nikoi, 1998). The agricultural sector is highly gendered with men and women undertaking different activities even though there are cross regional and country variations (Brown, 1970; Murdock and Provest, 1973; Momsen, 1991; Bradley, 1992; Nuss et al., 1992). Men in agriculture dominate commercialized or cash crop farming, and are also responsible for the heavy work, such as the clearing of bushes (Boserup, 1970; Afonja, 1981).

Notwithstanding the changes brought about by industrialisation and development, segregation still exists, as the majority of men and women are allocated to jobs based on accepted cultural assumptions.

From the above there is much evidence to prove the existence of sex-typing and segregation. It is evident that women are heavily concentrated in a narrow range of occupations, whilst men are more evenly distributed throughout the occupational spectrum. The question is whether these differences in job streaming affect people's access to positions of authority and decision-making in the workplace.

### **2.3.2. Gender: Leadership, Authority and the Decision-Making Process in the Workplace.**

This section examines levels of participation in leadership, and looks at the position of men and women in relation to authority and decision-making processes.

Leadership and authority is another major area of inequality within the labour market.

*Employers tend to reserve powerful positions for men; women are less likely than men to exercise authority at the workplace. Women supervise fewer subordinates than men and...are less likely than men to make decisions, especially decisions that are vital for their employers*

(Reskin and Padavic, 1994: 32).

Numerous studies have shown a gradual progress of women rising into management and leadership positions over the last three decades. However, this progress is slow, as women still form an insignificant proportion of those in policy-making positions (UNDP Report, 1993; Reskin and Padavic, 1994; Reskin and Ross, 1995; Anker, 1998; ILO, 1998; Smith, 2000; Wirth, 2001). Corroborating this, the ILO stressed that:

*While substantial progress has been made in closing the gender gap in managerial and professional jobs, for women in management it's still lonely at the top. Most female managers are still barred from the corporate levels of organizations worldwide, whether in the private, public or political sectors. Women hold less than 5% of the top jobs in corporations. And even when they manage to rise to the top, female executives nearly always earn less than men.*

(ILO, 1998).

The concern for integrating women in decision-making processes in economic development has gained significant global attention in recent times, as “participation in decision-making is proving to be one of the most resistant areas yet for gender equality” (ILO, 1998). Governments and international organisations have put in considerable efforts, formulating policies and action plans to increase the participation of women in decision-making at all levels. However, various reports reveal that this

has not made any significant impact, as the position of women in decision-making has not improved in most countries (United Nations, 1991; Karl, 1995; ILO, 1998; Wirth, 2001). According to a UN report:

*Women are poorly represented in the ranks of power, policy and decision-making.... Women are not just behind in political and managerial equity, they are a long way behind. This is in spite of the fact that women are found in large numbers in low-level positions of public administration...*

(United Nation, 1991: 6).

In the workplace, “managers wield significant influence and control over social and economic decisions...” (Anker, 1997:268). Reskin and Ross’s gender analysis of decision-making authority showed that men were more likely than women to decide issues pertaining to the following units as managers: goals and organisation in managers’ units; personnel; budget and spending unit; and matters related to other units. They pointed out that men had an advantage over women in decisions related to personnel. However, “the authority gap was greatest for bread-and-butter decisions for hiring, firing and authorising promotions and pay rises. Women were usually advisers; men called the shots”. It was further revealed that “men’s significant advantage over women in having the final say in decisions involving their own unit’s organisation and goals stemmed from their moderately greater involvement in shaping their unit’s goal, as managers exercised final authority in decisions concerning their units” (Reskin and Ross, 1995:137-8). This position is a reflection of the differences in levels of placement on the organisational hierarchy, as higher level post / managerial positions were associated with higher level authority, and the possibility of taking final decisions pertaining to one’s unit and beyond. As a result, women’s confinement to lower positions within the managerial hierarchy limited their opportunities to make final decisions (Reskin and Ross, 1995:146).

Women’s lack of power is further reinforced by other forms of occupational streaming. Wirth demonstrated that women occupied less strategic areas such as human resources and administration. Similarly, Reskin and Ross contended that female managers specialised in supportive services, whereas male managers specialised in revenue - generating activities. They also stated that women were more likely than men to be involved in public relations, a feminised speciality (op. cit., 135).



The above discussion suggests that gender inequality affects the level of women's participation and authority in decision-making processes in the workplace, and that level of placement within the organisational hierarchy is associated with access to decision-making authority.

### **2.3.3. Sex Differences in Human Capital and Career Advancement Opportunities in the Workplace.**

Human capital, according to Jacobsen:

*... refers to productivity-related attributes that people develop over time, such as those gained during the formal education process, from training (whether on-the-job or in other programs), and from the experience of working in various firms, occupations, and industries. It also refers to the physical and mental health, to the extent that healthiness increases productivity ...*

(Jacobsen, 2001:1).

Human capital is considered to affect the level of economic growth and development of a society (Birdsall and Sabot, 1995; Robbins and Cornell, 1999; Klasen, 1999; UNFPA, 2000; Lorgelly, 2000; Orloff, 2001; Jacobsen, 2001). Given this, the question is whether men and women have equal access to training and development opportunities in the workplace. This section examines the patterns of gender difference in acquisition of human capital, and career advancement opportunities in the workplace.

#### **2.3.3.1. Training and Development.**

*Equal access for young women and men to education, vocational training and on-the-job training is an essential prerequisite for women to obtain more highly skilled and better-paying jobs*

(Wirth, 2001:96).

It is evident that inequality exists in education, and that boys generally have greater access to secondary and higher education than girls in most regions of the world especially the developing countries (UNIDO, 1994-1995; World Bank, 1995; UNFPA,

2000). Although there are some greater variations of literacy among African countries, various studies, however, establish that on the whole female enrolment rates in secondary and tertiary education is generally low (Yeboah, 1993; UNIDO-ECA, 1992, 1995). There is also the assumption that women have low human capital in terms of their lower investment in education, skill and experience, which results in lower status jobs and pay. However, the determinants of women's education are based on an interaction of external elements beyond the control of women (Anker, 1998; Jacobsen, 2001; Wirth, 2001).

Human capital theorists argue that "individuals can increase their productivity not only through their investment in formal education but also by learning important work skills while they are actually on the job, through formal training programmes sponsored by their employers" (Blau et al., 1985: 201-2). The question is whether or not women in the workplace are provided with equal opportunities to develop their human capital. This section focuses on human capital required within the workplace.

Studies in both developed and developing countries have shown that women generally have limited access to training, and that employers invest less in training women (Lynch, 1991; Reskin et al., 1994:67; Harlan and Berheide, 1994; Jacobs, Lukens and Useem, 1994; Wirth, 2001). Highlighting the reasons of such gender inequalities in Africa, Steel stressed that the presumption that men should be the primary income-earners favours the development of training programmes for them. He emphasised that even though better training programmes that leads to more modernised ways of producing goods and services, and more modernisation tends to loosen cultural constraints, yet, women have been excluded from participating in those sectors which undergo more progressive change (Steel, 1977). (See also chapter 3 for further emphasis about gender inequality in training and development in the workplace in West Africa-Ghana). Studies of export factories have shown that even where women received on-the-job training the duration is often short, and this in most cases forms part of the probation period for new employees (Sharpston, 1975; Hossain et al., 1988). In Morocco, for example, Sharpston indicates that it takes six weeks to teach industrial garment making to girls who already know how to sew (Sharpston, 1975:105). In Sri Lanka, some women join the workforce without training in industrial sewing; some, after completing a course of sewing on Juky machines. Nonetheless, all new recruits into the export zone factories, with or without training are given on-the-job training on the machines they will be operating, and in a matter

of a few weeks they acquire the 'skill' (Goonatilake et al., 1988: 194). Hossain and others found that in Bangladesh, the average length of training period for the majority of female workers recruited for unskilled jobs was one week (Hossain et al., 1988: 120).

Generally, studies of opportunities for training and job development for low-paid workers have revealed that the firms most likely to invest were the largest ones, particularly financial and insurance companies, whereas manufacturing concerns were least likely to invest. Furthermore, the company employees most likely to participate in training were in management, professions and sales (Lusterman, 1985; Goldstein, 1989; Harlan and Berheide, 1994). Goldstein's study of multinational high tech firms illustrated how management's training decisions "lavished upgrading opportunities on [male] engineers and technicians", while offering female production workers training only for their assigned task in the factory. Even though companies experienced shortages in technicians, they went outside their firms to hire men, rather than re-train the women they already employed (Goldstein, 1989).

The skill acquired, educational status, and levels of training, are some of the factors that determine a person's promotion within the occupational hierarchy. Harlan and Berheide argued that "sex stereotyping in educational and training programs, as well as structural features of the labour market, impede women's upward mobility"(Harlan and Berheide, 1994:2). Given the above analysis, a question arises: do women have any opportunities for advancing their careers, if training and development is a tool for development and advancement at the workplace?

#### **2.3.3.2. Promotion as a means of career advancement.**

This section examines the gender differences in promotion, in terms of on-the-job mobility as a means of enhancing one's career. Career development and climbing a corporate ladder takes time, often as much as twenty years (Kotter, 1990) and the 'glass ceiling' and 'walls' are identified as the most significant organisational barriers to upward mobility and career advancement (ILO,1998; Smith, 2000; Wirth, 2001). Numerous studies have shown that women experience barriers to advancement that are related to differential rates of promotion on gender-typed job ladders, as well as difficulties in "crossing over" to male dominated ladders that provide more promotion opportunities (Reskin et al., 1994; Harlan and Berheide, 1994; Reskin and Ross,

1995). Even where men and women entered the same occupation, progression up the career ladder was comparatively slower for women than for men, as appraisal procedures differed for the two genders. "Men were evaluated on perceived potential, but women are more often judged on past accomplishment" (Karsten, 1994:16). Women in the labour market are also commonly denied access to promotion because of their position within the organisational structure. The majority are found at the lower ends of the structure, and such placement hinders their opportunities for career advancement (Rohini, 1991; Davidson and Cooper, 1992; Reskin et al., 1994; Harlen and Berheide, 1994; Reskin and Ross, 1995; Hakim, 1996; Wirth, 2001).

The gender difference in promotion, in terms of job mobility, is also a manifestation of horizontal segregation. Wirth indicated that women managers were less likely to be employed in manufacturing (op. cit., 47). In her view the existence of glass walls in the workplace makes it extremely difficult for women to move laterally into strategic areas, such as product development or finance and then upwards through the central pathways, to key executive positions in the pyramidal structure that is characteristic of large organisations (ibid., 47). Studies of manufacturing industries in India, Thailand and Sri Lanka revealed that promotion amongst women workers was rare, and was mostly a resultant effect of the nature of the job they undertook (Charoenloet et al., 1988; Goonatilake et al., 1988; Rohini, 1991). Rohini maintained that even where avenues for promotion existed, women were passed over in favour of men (Rohini, 1991). Reskin maintains that men who enter traditionally female occupations often rise to the top, despite being outsiders in a mostly female environment. Women, on the other hand, remain in the lower echelons, whether their occupations are predominantly female or male (Reskin et al., 1994:81).

Generally, the criteria for promotion vary across industries, occupations, and the position to be occupied. For example, Goonatilake, revealed that in Sri Lanka, in addition to skill requirement, promotion amongst women workers was granted on the grounds of good health, attendance and good behaviour. This was the only possible means for skilled or semi-skilled workers to be promoted to become a line leader / quality controller, a supervisor and finally a senior supervisor. They pointed out, however, "the more dominant consideration for upgrading to the position of a supervisor was based on patronage and loyalty relationship of the worker" (Goonatilake, 1988:195). In Thailand, Charoenloet et al. revealed that line leaders were usually promoted from the ranks of ordinary workers on the basis of outstanding performance, judged in relation to seven or eight criteria. However, evaluation of

work performance was done mainly by men, as supervisor or foreman (Charoenloet et al., 1988: 222-233).

The shift system is another criterion for not promoting women into higher grades regardless of the fact that women spent long periods on the job (Rohini, 1991). In her study in India, Rohini claimed that managers in most cases justified the promotion of men as heads over senior women by saying that the person in the higher grade has to be able to work shifts, which women cannot do (ibid., 276). Male attitudes are a further obstacle. Meyer and Lee's study of ten utility companies revealed that it was impossible for female craft workers to advance into supervisory positions, because it was hard for men to accept them as co-workers, much less to tolerate them as supervisors (Meyer and Lee, 1978:52).

The above discussion clearly suggests that women's limited access to promotion is based on an interrelationship of factors, as indicated by Harlan and Berheide, who maintained that:

*Social norms, cultural stereotypes and power and privilege in organizations provide the "invisible foundation" for organizational decisions about which jobs and how much opportunity are suitable for certain types of workers. These decisions determine the ways that complex organizations structure work, creating barriers for women and keeping them from advancing in organizational pipelines.*

(Harlan and Berheide, 1994: iii-iv)

Both men and women value promotion as a path to greater pay, authority, autonomy and job satisfaction (Markham et al., 1987:227). Inequality in promotion has consequential effects on the advancement of women. It also depresses women's wages and furthermore, as noted by Reskin and Padavic, it can lead to women leaving in frustration (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:85).

### **2.3.4. Gender Inequalities in Earnings.**

Wage employment is regarded as an important key to women's socio-economic empowerment (UNIDO, 1995), but despite the increasing trend of women in wage employment, gender inequalities in earnings remain widespread.

Reskin and Padavic maintained that “sex differences in earnings occur virtually in every occupation and every country throughout the world” (Reskin and Padavic, 1994: 101). Not only that, but in most countries many women earn less than the national stipulated minimum wage (Cunningham, 1987; Lim, 1990; Pearson, 1992; NLC, 2002; Kernghan, 2002). For example, investigations of export factories in China established that women earn just half of the legal minimum and overtime wage (NLC, 2002:1).

Reports from the ILO database show that whether wages are computed on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, or by industry, women workers all over the world earn less than men (ILO 1990). The average female–male pay ratio is roughly 60-70% based on a monthly reference period, 70-75 % based on a daily and weekly reference period, and 75-80 % based on an hourly reference period, with reasonably similar averages for OECD and developing countries (ILO, 1990 in Anker, 1998:30). The wage differential between men and women is much more pronounced in non-agricultural occupations and manufacturing industry (Humphrey, 1985; Cunningham, 1987; Tomaskovic-Devey, 1995; Reskin and Ross, 1995; Pearson, 1992; Anker, 1998; Eurostats, 1999; ILO, 1999, 2000; Jacobsen, 2001; Wirth, 2001). In manufacturing, an ILO report in 1990 revealed that the world average female–male wage ratio was roughly 62 % on a monthly, 71 % on a daily and weekly and 75 % on an hourly reference period. However, there are great variations across regional blocs, and between countries (ILO, 1990). In most Newly Industrialised Asian countries, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Korea and Japan, which are noted for the high female participation rate in manufacturing employment, women receive less than 60% of the monthly income of men in the same industry. Nevertheless, the report showed that the pay gap is much narrower for most African countries, such as Kenya and Swaziland, with a much smaller monthly differential ranging from 73% to 88% (ILO database, in Anker 1998: 31). Even so, it is established that like elsewhere, women in most industrial establishment in Africa are likely to be paid markedly less than male employees (Domenico, 1983:260)

The question is, why do these inequalities persist at a time when men and women are doing the same work, when women’s educational levels are matching men’s, and more are entering into male-dominated occupations?

The ILO Conventions and Recommendations, such as the Equal Numeration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Human Resources Development Recommendation,

1975 (No. 150), and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No.111), include statements designed to ensure the promotion of equal opportunity and treatment for all workers, and equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value. In collaboration with this, the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women, which marked the end of the second 'women's decade', also recommended the elimination of occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination (strategic Objective F5), and the insurance of women's equal access to, and full participation in, power structures and decision-making (strategic objective G1) (PfA, 1996). However, the above sections provide clear evidence that gender inequality still persists. Men and women are streamed into sex-stereotyped jobs and occupations, and they occupy different positions within the occupational hierarchy, where men are more likely to be represented in the decision-making process with much more authority, even though it is acknowledged some progress has been achieved for women. Furthermore, the data suggests that men are more likely to have access to training and development resources, and access to promotion in the work place.

As the above discussion makes clear, women constitute an insignificant percentage of those in leadership and positions of authority, due to limited access to promotion, and as a result of segregation and their placement in less strategic areas of the occupational hierarchy. The query is why gender inequality exists, irrespective of the policies and efforts made by international organisations to curb the phenomenon. The possible factors responsible for these patterns of gender inequality in the labour market (set out in the earlier theoretical explanations of gender inequality), can be explained by the interrelationship of a complex set of factors, which are political, legal, economic and socio-cultural.

One of the most fundamental premises of this study is that an understanding of women's position of inequality in the labour market requires the adoption of a holistic approach to factors affecting men and women's life. In particular, it is necessary to understand women's domestic and reproductive work. As Chant and Brydon argue,

*The 'household' is critical for the analysis of gender roles and relations, and is usually the focal point of the sexual divisions of labour*

(Brydon and Chant, 1989:10).

## **2.4. Work and Family Life: gender dilemmas in the home and in the workplace.**

Issues which pertain to work and family life are gaining global attention, as more women and mothers enter the labour market (Tenbrunsel, et al., 1995; Lewis and Lewis, 1996; Milliken, et al., 1998; Mirabelli, 2001; Baxter, 2002). Work-family issues have been related to important individual and organizational outcomes, such as absenteeism (Goff et al., 1990; Kossek and Nichol, 1992; MacEwen and Barling, 1994; Thomas and Ganster, 1995) and intentions to leave work (Aryee, 1992; Burke, 1988). In addition to these are the negative mental and physical health outcomes, which have been associated with high levels of work-family conflict (Thomas and Ganster, 1995; Barnett and Rivers, 1996; Boles et al., 1997; Frone et al., 1997; Frone, 2000).

To examine the effects of gender inequality on the socio-economic advancement of women, it is therefore necessary to consider the relations between the work and family lives of employees, especially working parents. This section examines the gender distribution of household responsibilities and decision-making effects of the role demands of working parents.

### **2.4.1. Gender Distribution of Household Responsibilities.**

The distribution of domestic labour is fundamental to the analysis of women's work, both from a conceptual point of view and in terms of the practical reality of women as lives. Although these domestic divisions vary across culture, society, history and time (Mosse, 1993; Le Feuvre, 2002), one specific underlying cultural ideology is widespread in many societies, -the doctrine of 'separate spheres' and 'the male breadwinner'. This sexual division defines men's and women's domains, and specifies who does what, and to what extent within each sphere. Based on this ideology, men's roles are much more related to the public sphere, whereas women's activities are mostly confined to the domestic setting (Osmond and Martin, 1975; Reskin et al., 1994; Safa, 1995; Sarmiento, 2002). In outlining the responsibilities of women, Karl maintained that:

*Women are almost universally responsible for caring for children and other members of the household and for all the domestic work that their caring entails. They often have primary responsibility for*



*their families' health and for the provision of food, water, and fuel, and their work is not only unpaid, but largely unrecognised as well.*  
(Karl, 1995:3).

Women who work outside the home bear a double burden, combining both work and domestic responsibilities, which serve as a barrier to advancement opportunities in the workplace. In contrast, the gendered expectations of men as breadwinners, and their position in the public domain, have contributed to their relative failure to share in domestic responsibilities.

In the last half century (since 1950s), socio-economic reconstruction has affected households as well as economic structures, leading to a growth in the numbers of female-headed households and also to more women, including mothers, working to support themselves and their families (United Nations, 1991; Mosse, 1993; UNDP, 1995; Lim, 1997). In spite of these changes since the 1980s, studies on attitudes to the sexual division of labour demonstrate that men and women in most societies still hold on to the conservative idea of men's primary responsibility as breadwinners, and women's being domestic work, even though attitudes towards wives an earning an income have changed (Hakim, 1991; Kieran, 1992; Vogler, 1994a). The ISSP survey of Western views on the roles of men and women revealed that countries such as Germany, Italy, Austria and Hungary strongly support the more traditional view. Similarly, in countries such as Japan and the Philippines, the conservative outlook on sexual division is widely accepted (Hakim, 1996:92-96). Ma and others claimed that in some cities in Southeast Asia such as Fukuoka, Seoul, Bangkok and Beijing, fourth-fifths of men and women in all age groups thought women should stay at home when a child was young (Ma et al., 1994 in Hakim, 1996:97). Running parallel to this view, studies on most polygynous West African societies have established that, traditional norms and cultural values encourage women to enter into income generating activities rather than been confined to the household to enable them meet a considerable demands of their financial responsibilities within the household. As such women's financial responsibilities were seen as much more primary and inalienable than physical care of children. Men within these societies acknowledged and valued their wives contribution, collaborating with each other through negotiations and compromise (see Oppong, 1983; Clark, 1989; Hafkin and Bay, 1987 Robertson, 1987; Dennis, 1991). Chapter 3 provides further detailed analysis on the position of women's role within a West Africa, especially in the Ghanaian household.

There is considerable inconsistency over how far behaviour has changed. Illustrating this, some researchers have found little or no change in men's contribution (Coverman and Shelley, 1986; Bittman, 1995) while others maintain that men's housework contribution has increased (Gershuny and Robinson, 1988; Robinson and Godbrey, 1997; Bianchi et al., 2000). Bittman maintains that the core housework activities of cooking, cleaning and laundry are still the main responsibility of women (Bittman, 2000: 207). However, there appears to be much variation between countries. Le Feuvre indicated that 80% of Spanish women declared that their spouse did not carry out a single domestic task, whereas this was the case for only 47.5% of Danish women (Le Feuvre, 2002). In developing countries, the ILO revealed that women spend between 31 and 42 hours per week in unpaid activities, while men spend between 5 and 15 hours in such work. In Kenya, women spend 10 times more time on domestic tasks than men do. Similarly, women and girls spend at least 20 hours more per week on domestic work in India (ILO, 1996:6). It needs emphasising that there are some regional differences amongst women in the degree of domestic burden. Momsen, for example, stated that in Malaysia married women spend on average 112 hours per week on housework, while the equivalent figure in the US is 59 hours (Momsen, 1991:73). She maintained that the burden of domestic tasks falls even more heavily on women in the Third World as few Third World, homes have the domestic appliances commonly available in industrialised countries (ibid.).

Attachments to the traditional sexual division of labour are widespread among women as well as men. A study on Armenian families showed that most women were content with their husbands not assisting in household affairs. The kind of assistance that was considered important by over 60% of women was men earning a higher income (UNDP, 1999). According to the UNDP report, this evidence suggested "the internalisation of the norm of women as family keepers since childhood as a form of inseparable element of their feminine identity, viz. of their gender role". It also suggested that women needed men to be successful in the public arena, most especially as breadwinners (ibid). Even in countries where feminist movements have stimulated intense public debate about the general division of labour, traditional attitudes remain widespread among both men and women (Vogler, 1994; Hakim, 1996; Warin et al., 1999).

Changing socio-economic trends have forced women into the labour market, yet the burden of domestic responsibilities still falls predominantly on women, although, as indicated, men ultimately accept women's income-earning role.

The next section examines the effects of combining both household and work responsibilities.

#### **2.4.2. The Dilemmas of Work and Family Life.**

Managing the conflict between work and family responsibilities has been recognised as a critical challenge for organisations (Kossek and Ozeki, 1998, Haar and Spell, 2001). These challenges have been intensified by the increased participation of working women and mothers (Osterman, 1995; Millikens, et al., 1998), the increase in the number of single-parents (Morgan and Milliken, 1992) and the rise in dual-career couples (Morgan and Milliken, 1992; Goodstien, 1995). This section focuses specifically on the consequences gender differences for in domestic roles, and the responsibilities of parent-workers.

The query is whether there are any gender differences in the effects of combining work and family responsibilities.

Some studies on work and family issues have acknowledged that the interrelationship between employees' work lives and families causes significant personnel and organisational problems (Voydanoff, 1980; Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Haar and Spell, 2001; Keene et al., 2002; Cariki, 2002). The gender-biased work environment is competitive, unfriendly and stressful, and place women under pressure to conform to the masculine double standard on the job, as Falk describes:

*An employee is a man in good health who has few demands placed on him by his family. This is the norm prevailing in working life ...the common denominator of the man in his traditional role being the yardstick for working life. Most men place work life before family, and women have to adapt to the working conditions which this has created. They are forced to take care of both work and the family or to drop one role or the other ... Adapting to the male pattern creates problems for women's physical and psychological well-being.*

(Falk, 2001:1).

Inter-role conflict between work and family life has been suggested as a significant source of pressure, and leads to health problems, poorer work performance, etc., for

both men and women (Kahn et al., 1964; Erdwins, et al., 2001; I-Heng Chen et al., 2002). Work conflict can be time-based, strain and behaviour based (Greenhaus et al., 1985:77). It is well documented by various researchers that both women and men experience tension between competing obligations to employers and families (Vannoy-Hiller and Philliber, 1989; Frone, et al., 1992a; Hochschild, 1997), as for most employees work and family obligations remain at odds, and work responsibilities continue to dominate family life (Loscocco, 2000; Gornick and Meyers, 2001). Some writers have noted that continuous changes in the nature of work suggest an intensification of work-family conflict (Kanter, 1977; Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985), and this is highlighted by the demographic trends noted above.

Some writers on 'Work-family Conflict'<sup>15</sup> have established that engaging in multiple roles is beneficial to both women and men, because these roles tend to confer a degree of social integration that is associated with access to more resources and an enhanced quality of life (Moen, et al., 1989; van Willigen, 2000; Barnett and Hyde, 2001; Keene and Reynolds, 2002). However, role conflict may negate the benefits of holding multiple roles when the roles obligations are conflicting (Marks, 1998; Voydanoff and Donnelly, 1999; Keene et al., 2002) in their competing demands for 'time and energy'. Women tend to be more deeply affected than men are, and this can be seen in numerous studies, which show that women work more hours a day than men (Goldin, 1990; Piza-Lopez, 1991; Mosse, 1993; Sarmiento, 2002).

Some researchers have also compared the conflict score between genders (Moen, et al., 1989; Crosby, 1991; van Willigen, 2000; Barnett and Hyde, 2001; Keene and Reynolds, 2002). Most of these studies established that women rather than men workers suffered more from negative aspects of work-family spill-over (Voydanoff, 1989; Becker and Moen, 1999). Hall's study in the US revealed that 73% of mothers compared with 35% of fathers encountered extreme stress (Hall, 1990).

The reasons for this trend are twofold. First, women retain greater responsibility for family matters even when they work. Thus, Carikci's study of Turkey revealed that women who were upper level managers were expected to undertake most family responsibilities, from childcare to parent care (Carikci, 2002). Secondly, as Pleck has argued, traditional gender role expectations may make work sacrifices for the sake of the family more normative for women than men, and family sacrifices for the sake of work more normative for men than women (Pleck, 1977). Studies on gender, work

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<sup>15</sup> Work family conflict is defined as a "mutual incompatibility between the demands of work roles and demands of family role"(Parasuraman and Greenhaus, 1997a.,3-4).

and family adjustments are in line with this (Voydanoff, 1989; Bielby et al., 1989; Becker and Moen, 1999; Keene and Reynolds, 2001). Voydanoff, found that family demands predicted greater role conflict for women, while work life characteristics predicted role conflict for men (Voydanoff, 1989). Bielby and Bielby found that women prioritize family as they balance multiple identities (Bielby and Bielby, 1989). Keene and Reynolds maintained that women's work suffered more than men's from family-to-work spill over, and that women more often than men refused overtime, rearranged their hours, or refused work assignments in order to accommodate family demand (Keen et al., 2002:1). In Zambia, FAO found that the women's burden was the biggest constraint on household food security. Its report stated that poor rural women simply did not have enough time during the day to do everything as they worked in their fields, which were often distant from home, collected fuel wood, prepared meals, and cared for the sick and elderly (FAO, 2002).

Some writers have also shown that adjustments at work due to family obligations may endanger workers' job prospects. Even when workers take time off for legally sanctioned reasons, there is a perceived risk of being passed over for promotion, and the best work assignments (Hardin, 1995; Shellenbarger, 1996; Judiesch and Lyness, 1999).

From the above discussion on the dilemmas of working parents, it is obvious that women are still faced with the conflict of meeting primary expectations as well as satisfying the demands of the workplace. Given the time constraint and less support from a spouse, it is evident that they are more likely to encounter depression, apathy, tension, irritability, fatigue, and anxiety associated with strain. These consequentially could also cause a lot of negative influences, including health problems, which impact on work performance to the detriment of individuals, and organisations.

## **2.5. Conclusion.**

Notwithstanding the efforts being made by international bodies, governments and various women activists towards women's empowerment and advancement, gender inequality still persists in all societies. Women workers continue to be concentrated in less prestigious, small sector, low income, gendered occupations that reflect persisting stereotypes about women's (natural) abilities and "feminised"

characteristics. The negative cultural and gendered stereotypes prescriptive to the workplace create problems which adversely affect not only women's careers and socio-economic advancement, but slow down the growth and development of families and society as a whole.

The above literature is relevant to this study as it provides a general understanding of women's issues in employment, and also builds a contextual frame of analysis. However, one drawback of much of the literature is that it focuses on women in isolation. A rational gender analysis recognises that "women's issues are not the same as 'gender issues'" (UNFPA, 2000). Understanding gender means understanding opportunities, constraints and the impact of changes as they affect both women and men. That is the perspective that will be adopted in this thesis.

The next chapter provides a brief description on the position of women in Ghana-West Africa, its labour market and the manufacturing industry, which is the focus of this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE SETTING OF THE STUDY.**

#### **3.0. Introduction.**

The industrial sector, particularly the manufacturing sub-sector, is considered to be the engine of an economy's growth (Steel, 1977; UNIDO, 1985, 1995; ISSER, 1998). This study examines the existing patterns of gender inequality in Ghana's manufacturing industry and by extension the causes of these patterns and their effects on the socio-economic advancement of women. In this chapter the introductory overview provides a background profile of the country's socio-political as well as economic conditions; it also looks at issues of gender inequality within the household and the labour market. The chapter also provides a more detailed account of the history and development of manufacturing industry in Ghana, which is the main sector to be studied in this context. The aim of the chapter is to provide the reader with a picture of the socio-cultural and economic context of this study.

#### **3.1. Background Profile of Ghana.**

Ghana is located in the Western part of Sub-Saharan Africa. It lies just north of the Equator and is bordered by Cote d' Ivoire on the West, Burkina Faso to the North and Togo to the east, with Benin and Nigeria beyond. The south rests on the coastal belt of the Gulf of Guinea.

Ghana achieved self-government in 1952 and political independence on 6th March 1957; it was the first British colony in Sub-Saharan Africa to obtain such status. After the trauma of six military governments and only two civilian administrations in the year from 1966 to 1981, the country currently practises modern multi-party constitutional democracy with an elected president. The legislative arm of government is comprised of a 200 member parliament. Since the 1990s, political transition has proceeded peacefully and this is widely recognised as a major achievement for the country and for the region (World Bank, 2002).

Ghana is divided into ten administrative regions (Fig 3.1) with the seat of the central government located in Accra, the country's capital. However, development among

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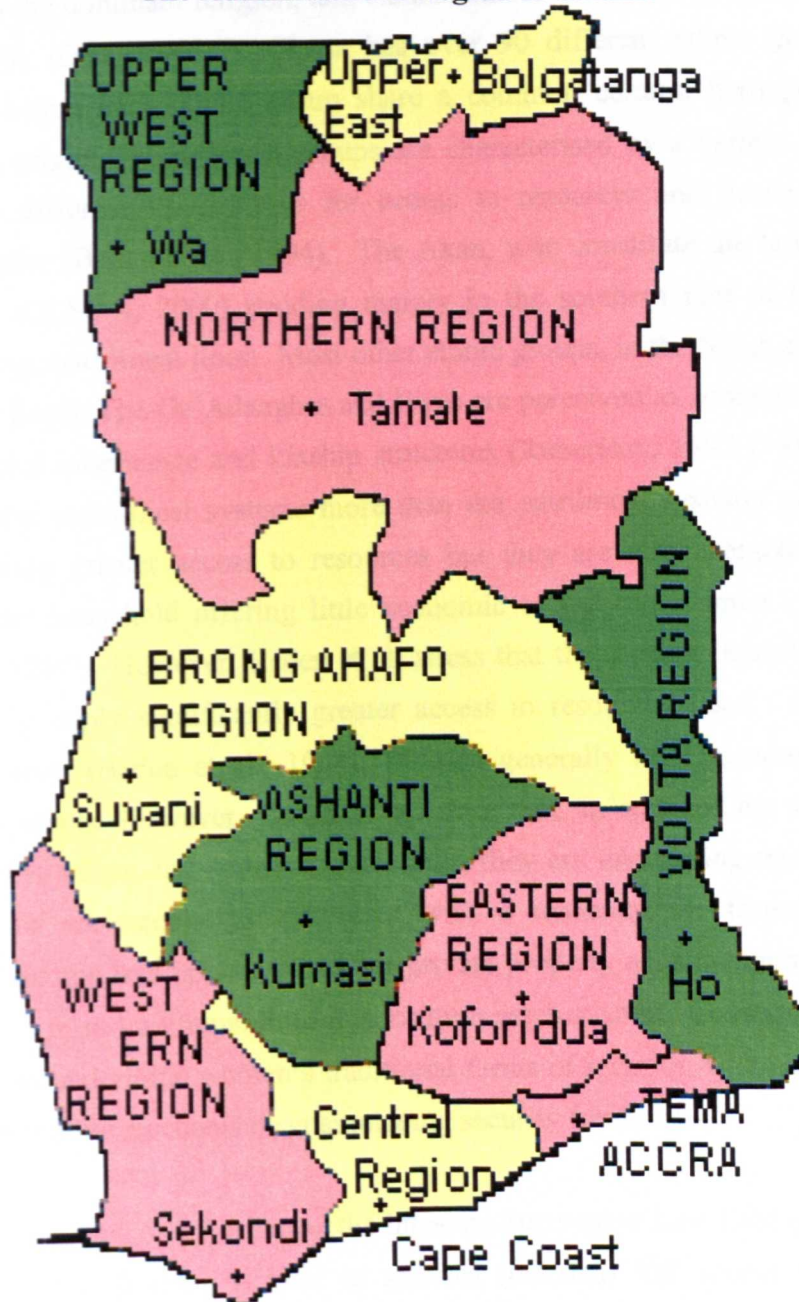
### **THE SETTING OF THE STUDY.**



the various regions is not equal. Most regions in the south are better developed in terms of modern infrastructure than the northern part, but current decentralization policies have brought development and growth into these areas (Andrea, 1981; Assiseh, 1999).

Fig 3.1.

**The Administrative Region of Ghana.**



The country has a population of about 20 million people of which about 52% are females. Of this population, 45% are under 15 years of age with 69% under 30 years (GLSS 4, 2000). The annual growth rate is 2.6% and while the overall population density for the country is about 79 per km<sup>2</sup>, it is significantly greater in the south. Ghana is predominantly a rural country in spite of the substantial increase in the level

of urbanisation from 32% of the population in 1984 to 43.8% in 2000. A steady increase in migration from rural to urban centres, with the Greater Accra and Ashanti regions being the most popular destinations in the country (GSS, 2002), is partly responsible for this.

Christianity is the dominant religion, and claims almost 70% of the population, while Islam has 15% (GSS, 2002:7). Ghana has over 90 different ethnic groups. The subdivisions within each ethnic group share a common cultural heritage, history, language and origin. The different groups are characterised by a variety of kinship systems with different implications for access to resources and decision-making power by gender (Baden et al., 1994). The Akan, who constitute the largest ethnic group (53%) (GLSS 4, 2000) residing mainly in the southern part of Ghana, are organised along matrilineal lines. Most other ethnic groups, in the North and also the East, are patrilineal. The Ga'Adangbes and Ewes are perceived as anomalous because of their bilateral inheritance and kinship structures (Robertson, 1987:115). It is also evident that the matrilineal systems more than the patrilineal systems give women outside marriage greater access to resources but they are also characterised by a weaker nuclear household offering little economic security to women ( see Okali, 1983; Clark, 1989). However, Baden et al. stress that this system (matrilineal) does not necessarily imply significantly greater access to resources<sup>16</sup> and / or a higher status for women (Baden et al., 1994). Women generally lack economic security under both systems. However, Baden et al. state that, in spite of the variation in kinship systems within and across communities, they are undergoing transformation in response to socio-economic pressures with a tendency for formal marriage contracts to become less prevalent and for private property accumulation to channel resources away from traditional lineage allocation mechanisms. Consequently, these changes tend to undermine women's traditional forms of security, without giving rise to reliable alternative mechanisms guaranteeing security (ibid., ii).

The government's law on inheritance, the Intestate Succession Law 1985 (PNDC Law 111), which gives children as well as spouses (married) full access to rights of inheritance of their parents' and partners' assets, has been recognised as one of the most favourable factors protecting women's security. This law renders the Akan system of inheritance in relation to the rights of children and spouses (especially women) to the property of their fathers and husbands respectively powerless. Further

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<sup>16</sup> Although women have a right to lineage land and other resources, lineage heads often discriminate in favour of men, especially in giving out land (Manuh, 1984; Awumbila, 2001).

discussion of the traditional structures and their effects on gender division will be found in the next section.

### **3.2. Gender Divisions in the Household Economy: The Socio-cultural Context.**

Gender and social-cultural relations within the household economy have an impact on the status of men and women within the labour market and within society as a whole. Issues relating to the household have thus gained an important position in recent analyses. This is because the household “is seen as the social mechanism through which, to some degree, all individuals’ welfare and labour allocation decisions are determined” (Brown, 1996:21). “It is also seen as a link between macro-and-micro economic changes; changes in personal welfare and between price or incentive policy reform and individuals’ resource allocative behaviour” (Kabeer and Joekes, 1991:1).

There is a commonly held view that women in West Africa, and Ghana in particular, enjoy a greater degree of economic and personal autonomy than women elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa (Clark, 1989; Dennis, 1991). Baden et al. have argued that whilst this may be true in a relative sense, in practice, the autonomy of the majority of Ghanaian women is highly circumscribed by the limited range of their economic opportunities and lack of upward mobility. Moreover, increased participation in market activity alone is unlikely to lessen gender inequalities, since the terms of women’s participation are highly constrained by inequalities at the level of the household (Baden et al., 1994).

The next section provides background information on gender relations within the Ghanaian household.

#### **3.2.1. Gender and Household Responsibilities.**

Traditionally in most parts of Ghana, males headed units of extended families, consisting of several wives and children and often extended with unmarried or elderly relatives (Bukh, 1979). Within the conjugal unit, there was a division of domestic responsibilities along gendered lines.

Women within the conjugal household as in most societies, are generally responsible for housekeeping (washing, cooking, and collecting wood for fuel and water), house maintenance and child-care. Men, on the other hand, are said to be freed from

domestic burdens to enable them to take care of public activities (Oppong, 1974; Lloyd and Brandon, 1993; Manuh, 1993, World Bank, 1999). The absence of male participation in domestic chores is strengthened in polygamous households where there are responsibilities shared amongst wives. Oppong and Abu reveal that fathers' involvement in child-care is minimal (Oppong and Abu, 1987). A recent household survey conducted by the statistical service confirms that household chores still fall mainly on females and that not more than a sixth of males in Ghana are likely to be involved in childcare and cooking (Table 3.1. below)

**Table. 3.1. Gender and Average Time Spent on Various Housekeeping Activities -Ghana**

Activity	Gender	Proportion doing that activity (%)	Average time spent (minutes per day)
Cooking	Males	12.3	55
	Female	64.7	107
Childcare	Male	12.5	108
	Female	41.3	204
Sweeping	Male	24.9	14
	Female	71.0	20
Fetching water	Males	37.7	33
	Females	60.2	41
Collecting wood	Males	16.0	30
	Females	34.6	37
Garbage disposal	Males	18.4	11
	Females	47.6	11

Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2000:38): Ghana Living Standard Survey Report of the Fourth Round (GLSS 4), table 4.14

The report noted further that female participation in certain household responsibilities such as childcare, fetching water, and the collecting of fuel is decreasing gradually as these domestic responsibilities are shifted to older children (GLSS 4, 2000). This is also a result of the rapid increase in women's participation in the labour market. Furthermore, some writers have maintained that both men and women in elite households have become decreasingly involved in domestic responsibilities as working wives and mothers delegate many childrearing chores and household tasks to relatives and house helpers (Oppong, 1975, 1983; Agyeman-Barwuah, 1983; Clark, 1989; Dennis, 1991). In Clark's study on "Asante Women traders" revealed that Asante women turn to use more surrogate helps- relatives, children etc. She stated that children conversely provide woman's main source of domestic help to eventually release her from cooking and childcare and enable her to continue working full time. She added that the type of compromise Asante women make between the demand of cooking and trading could be traced from the nature of the social relations in which the task is imbedded. The extent of the situation in her view "creates a contradiction

between motherhood and wifedom” (Clark, 1989: 326) as women’s financial duties towards children and other lineage kin (within this society) shaped the conflict between work and home in different directions than for the western middle-class women (ibid.). Women, like in most West African societies, were encouraged to enter into income-generating activities and be economically independent. In most Ghanaian societies (e.g. Asante communities) cultural values regard both men and women having a role in financial success, even though it may make considerable demands on women’s unpaid labour. Nonetheless women are encouraged to earn as much money as possible because of their domestic responsibilities as they put money into raising children, which reduces their capital accumulation, as much as they put time into raising children (Clark, 1989). Clark citing the Asante women states that “women who depend on their husbands income are not only described as ‘soft’ or unambitious, but bad mothers, since they do not take care to provide a secure future for their children” (Clark 1989: 334). Thus according to Clark, “the financial aspects of the Asante motherly role drive a mother to ensure a steady, high personal income, rather than discouraging her participating in paid work. Although a mother also has the responsibility to provide physical care for her child, including meals, her financial responsibility takes precedence” (Clark 1989: 326). It needs emphasising that as part of the socialisation process in Ghana, as in most West African communities, a woman has an important responsibility not only to materially provide for her children. A woman also teaches, especially daughters, as she grows up to earn her own income, either by following in her craft production or most likely as a trader (Dennis, 1991; Robertson, 1983; Clark, 1989). This according to Dennis supplements the socially prescribed necessity of being responsible for the immoral training of her daughter as their behaviour will reflect well or bad on her (Dennis, 1991:96). It is therefore evident that in Ghana, especially among the matrilineal Asantes, a woman based on these socio-cultural and economic conditions, “feel justified in resisting demands for domestic services which threatens her earning power and will challenge her husband to replace the lost income” (Clark, 1989: 334). However, a wife bears the cost of any substitutions for her own unpaid labour (ibid).

In contrast to the female role, the husband under customary law is under an obligation to maintain the welfare of his wife, children and entire household. Thus headship of the house and the role of family breadwinner are regarded as the major responsibilities for men (Bukh, 1979; Manuh, 1993; Brown, 1996; Awumbila, 2001). Abu’s work on the Ashanti reveals that, in general, men are expected to contribute to

chop (food) money and to pay for children's school fees. Additional expenditure for children (such as clothes) is to be met by the woman. Women's contribution is less prescribed but economic constraints mean that women increasingly have to meet household expenditure, example by supplementing chop money or contributing towards school fees (Abu, 1983; also see Clark, 1989; Robertson, 1987).

Although the financial support of the family is considered as a major responsibility of men, recent studies have shown that with the current economic crisis (discussed in a latter section) this responsibility is gradually shifting as women contribute more to it (Manuh, 1993). An attendant implication of this trend, according to Manuh, is that men are increasingly withdrawing from their former responsibilities in household expenditure. She maintains that since the prevailing economic crisis has made it impossible for the family to subsist on the earnings of the husband and father, increasingly many husbands find it impossible to, or are unwilling to, maintain families (Manuh, 1993: 179). Moreover, it is well recognised that women in Ghana contribute significantly to and spend a larger share of their income on the upkeep of the household, in spite of the customary gender division of responsibility (Robertson, 1987; Clark, 1989; Ahenkroa, 1991; Oduro, 1992; Manuh, 1993; Brown, 1996).

Similarly, recent economic and social trends have brought several changes to the composition and organisation of the Ghanaian household (Brown, 1996:21). With regard to household structure, Brown maintains that a new type of female-headed household has emerged from both necessity and choice (*ibid.*, 22). Statistics confirming this indicate that women head 33.6% of Ghanaian households. Of this percentage the proportion is higher in the rural coastal areas (40%) and in urban areas (39%) apart from Accra (GLSS 4, 2000:2)

Brown asserts that the change in the structure of the household has brought with it a change in the pattern of division of work and the sharing of the responsibilities within it (*op cit.* 22). However, evidence suggests that in spite of these structural changes there are still some aspects of continuity in domestic roles and responsibilities especially for women. Women still spend more hours performing these domestic responsibilities than men (Ardayfio-Schandrof 1986; Haddad, 1991; Lloyd and Brandon, 1993; Baden et al, 1994; GLSS 4, 2000). A survey report on Ghana confirms this, showing that women spend more than 5 hours (a day) in cooking and child care whereas men spend only 2.8 hours (Table 3.1) (GLSS 4, 2000). Similarly, Lloyd and Brandon, comparing male and female-headed households, conclude that female heads work eight hours more per week, than male heads, and do twenty hours

of non-market work. They also establish that there is a strong relationship between male-female co-residence and the division of labour between the sexes. In households where men co-reside with wives, they work less hours; the opposite is true for women, who work longer hours when they co-reside with adult men (Lloyd and Brandon, 1993: 125-8).

It is clear that women are tied up with childcaring (the reproductive role) and domestic responsibilities more than men within Ghanaian society and that this affects the nature of their participation in the labour market. We shall consider if their participation is also affected by the distribution of productive resources and nature of decision-making within the household economy.

### **3.2.2. Household Decision-Making.**

Brown claims that although structural transformations with households have created new responsibilities for women in the household economy, their access to the necessary resources and their involvement decision-making has not improved in a commensurate manner (Brown, 1996:29). Many of the obstacles have their roots in traditional society (Bukh 1979; 52; Benneh, 1992; Brown, 1996).

The allocation and distribution of economic resources within the Ghanaian household economy is influenced by a multiplicity of factors. Differences in ethnicity, kinship structures, culture and status within the family and household and education have affected gender relations in terms of access to resources and decision-making power (Bukh, 1979, Oppong, 1974; Dumor, 1983; Haddad, 1991; Manuh, 1993; Baden et al., 1994; Brown, 1996). Unlike most developed and developing countries, the features that characterises women's rights to economic independence in Ghana, allocation of resources and decision-making power can be linked to a better understanding of the patterns and structures of the rights of inheritance and systems of marriage prevailing in these communities. In traditional Ghanaian society, lineage membership confers rights to access to land and other economic resources (Oppong, 1974; Brown, 1996; Oware-Gyekye et al., 1996). Rights differed, depending on whether one lived in a matrilineal or patrilineal society or was male or female (Brown, 1996). In both the matrilineal and patrilineal systems, the wife, traditionally, is considered as an outsider in the husband's family and would not inherit any of his property other than that granted to her by him as a gift in token of appreciation of years of devotion (Oppong,

1974; Oware-Gyekye et al., 1996; Dolphyne, (ed.) 2000:27). However, with the enactment of the inheritance law (PNDC, Law 111) in 1984, this custom changed. The lack of security for women (especially married women) within these systems, encourages women to become economically independent, acquire wealth and property in their own right through direct purchase, through inheritance from a female relative, or through their own industry (Baden et al., 1994; Okali, 1983; Clark, 1989; Robertson, 1987). To the extent that a woman can to acquire wealth in these ways, she becomes less dependent on her husband and her economic assets is alienated from the household resource as discussed further in this section.

Within the conjugal unit, the status of the men as household heads and breadwinners gives them control over the necessary economic resources for discharging these responsibilities (Awumbila 2001:39). The gendered mechanism and ideology governing the allocation and distribution of wealth has, therefore, direct consequences on the pooling of resources within the conjugal family and household. Corroborating this, Baden and others explain that the pooling of resources and joint decision making between men and women in households is generally not the norm, with men and women tending to have separate income and expenditure streams (op. cit.). This is especially true in the southern areas, where marital links are relatively weak and divorce is relatively easy (see Oppong 1983; Okali, 1983; Clark, 1989; Robertson, 1987). Given the relative insecurity of marriage, and the probability of another wife being taken, women have little incentive to budget jointly with their husbands or to reveal their sources of income; indeed women's insecurity within marriage promotes a strategy of minimising their own contribution whilst maximising that of their partner (Baden et al., 1994). The practice of women owning separate property in marriage is recognised in Ghana law (local and customary) (see Robertson, 1987). According to Robertson, a woman's property cannot be seized by her husband, and thus 'no one can touch' the money made from her trading even though she make financial contribution to the home and may cater for the husband in times of unemployment and financial crises or grant him loans (ibid).

In Ghana, the traditional attitude towards gender relations affects the power of decision-making both within and outside the household. Some women are not expected to speak in public and must ask permission to do so from elders (Manuh, 1984), as women are mostly marginalised in major household decisions (Rattray, 1927:81; Manuh, 1984; Ardayfio-Schandorf 1992; Benneh, 1992; Brown, 1996).



Joint decision-making is still rare in Ghanaian households. In a study in the Western Region of Ghana, Ardayfio-Schandorf discovered that the husband was the main decision-maker in the family and would only consult his wife when he felt like it (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1991). Asante argues that decision-making is more likely to be autocratic where the husband has a higher level of education and occupational status and is older than the wife (Asante, 1978). Ardayfio-Schandorf goes on to argue that although women share in economic responsibilities in the household, they are virtually left out of decision-making processes (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1992). In most of Ghanaian society, for example, women are not involved in deciding how many children they will have, as these decisions, are generally made by men (Nukunya, 1992; Buor, 1996). Recent studies have shown, however, that reproductive decision-making is also determined by other external factors such as education, employment status, income, place of residence, family and marriage types and the extended family system (Obeng-Afriyie, 1985:13; Ageh-Gbede, 1990; Rockson, 1991; Buor, 1996). Buor for example maintains that “with the increasing rate of formal education among women, however, their participation in such decisions is sine-qua-non”(Buor, 1996:42). Thus among the intelligentsia elite, the decision to have children is more likely to be based on mutual consultation and negotiation between couples (Blood, 1972:27; Buor, 1996:43). Again, the increasing rate of female-led households, and the consequent changes in family structures, has influenced reproductive decisions (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994:35).

Similarly, decisions pertaining to household finance depend on a level of mutual financial openness (Oppong, 1984; Ewusi, 1987). As stated above, in most Ghanaian families, the spouses manage their incomes separately (Brown, 1996:26). It is established that although women’s economic independence may increase their access to participate in household decisions in Ghana, like in most West Africa societies, men generally have more say on the ‘oughts’ of conjugal resource allocation than women. According to Abu, women’s attitude is rather to deal with each situation as they come (Abu, 1983: 164). Oppong, however, argues that households in which wives have higher education are more likely to have joint financial arrangements and to take decisions together. She, stresses, however, that households in which changes toward co-operation are most marked are those in which husbands are third-generation educated and in which wives have higher education (Oppong, 1974b: 151).

Thus recent studies have shown that the position of women in household decision-making is gradually changing as a result of the increase in their level of education, occupational status and contribution to domestic income (Oppong, 1974b; Benneh, 1992; Germain and Smock, 1994; Awumbila, 2001). In a study of the matrilineal urban elite in Accra, for example Oppong claims that the wife's position in decision-making had more weight, when she had educational, occupational and financial resources and used these in providing for the needs of the family (Oppong, 1974b). As such, in spite of the male dominance in decision-making processes it has been found that women on some occasions and matters take decisions on their own (Oppong, 1975a; Ardayfio-Schandroff, 1991; Oduro, 1992). Ardayfio-Schandroff, in a study in the Western Region of Ghana, notes that the wife makes major decisions affecting the household where the husband is financially irresponsible (Ardayfio-Schandroff, 1991). Similarly, Oppong's study on the family system among married nurses in Accra shows that decisions on food and remittances to parents are the sole prerogative of women (Oppong, 1975a).

Brown points out that the absence of men through migration, divorce, separation and other means has paved the way for women to take important decisions relating to the household (Brown, 1996). In female-headed households, women enjoy greater decision-making power (Folbre, 1990; Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1992; Brown, 1996). Ardayfio-Schandorf's work revealed that on average, 82.2% of all female-headed households in Ghana take major decisions and bear economic responsibilities affecting their households. This is to be compared to 67.2% of married women who take major responsibilities in the household (ibid). However, Folbre notes that while the female household may enjoy more decision-making power as well as a more equitable distribution of resources within the household than those who live with adult males, they pay a very high price in loss of access to male market income. Furthermore, they have to bear an even larger share of the cost of children than women in traditional male-headed households (Folbre, 1990). Corroborating this, Bukh, in a comparison of male and female-heads of household, pointed out that the female head of the household has to cope with subsistence responsibilities while at the same time her access to resources tends to be poor and limited (Bukh, 1979:43). In Ghana, the female head faces severe constraints in terms of ownership of housing, access to land, credit and access to education (Haddad, 1991; Awumbilia, 2001:41). Haddad's work for example, revealed that male-headed households in Ghana on

average own and cultivate more acres of land per capita and have more access to credit than female-headed households (Haddad, 1991) have.

Nevertheless, despite the structural changes taking place within households with the rapid growth in female led households, gender power relations within Ghana still tend to acknowledge male superiority and female subordination. It is inevitable from the above that inequality exists within the household economy. This pattern of inequality emanates from the interplay of socio-cultural elements that are centred on the socialisation process (including initiation rites), which traditionally regards/acknowledges women's position as inferior. Abbam indicates that even women themselves have been brainwashed to accept this situation and so mistake absolute male protection for privilege. She adds that a woman's social position in Ghana depends on her husband's position: "if she succeeds in doing something it is the husband who has been the influencing factor since a woman is not capable of achieving anything on her own"(Abbam, 1988 cited in Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1990:19). In most communities, as part of the initiation rites, females were taught to be obedient wives and to respect their elders. They were told that a man could marry more than one woman (Nukunya, 1969; Oppong, 1974; Manuh, 1984). Thus, this inferior position of women in traditional Ghanaian society continues to be reinforced by a number of factors including social practices, religious beliefs, and practice of polygamy, child marriage, and widow inheritance (Brown, 1996:32).

The above information, relating to the household, shows that cultural and other hidden discriminatory attitudes have been barriers to the progress of women in household decision-making and related activities. Most women have laboured to care for several children and are occupied with domestic chores from dawn to dusk. Such background information is important as it provides a general understanding of the socio-cultural norms, which affect the relationship between men and women within the household.

### **3.3. The Economy: An Overview since Independence.**

Ghana was formerly one of the richest countries in tropical Africa (Assiseh, 1999:7). The economy is mainly rural, and well endowed with natural resources. To a large extent it depends upon the export of cocoa, timber, industrial diamonds, bauxite, manganese, coffee, and gold as these remain the main sources of foreign exchange. The emerging industrial sector's products include cassava, fruits, and cocoa by-

products (World Bank, 2002; Ghana Home Page 2003; CIA, 2002). The country has twice the per capita output of the poorer countries in West Africa. Even so, Ghana remains heavily dependent on international financial and technical assistance as the domestic economy continues to revolve around subsistence agriculture, which accounts for 36% of GDP and employs 60% of the work force, mainly small landholders (World Bank, 2002; CIA, 2002).

Prior to 1961, Ghana enjoyed a relatively high standard of living in comparison with many of the West African regions, and economic development in the late 1940s and early 1950s seemed promising (Robertson, 1984). Ghana had an open economy with the private sector as the main engine of growth. This period saw an increase in government activities towards the trade sectors, while capital formation declined, a strong growth in exports mainly led by cocoa as the country became the biggest exporter of cocoa in the world (Robertson, 1984:39; Nyanteng, 1997:2).

The independence and post-independence eras saw a drastic move by the government towards industrialisation as a strategy for achieving economic development. The economy became increasingly closed, an import licensing regime was introduced (Vordzorgbe, 1997; Dordunoo, and Nyanteng, 1997), and an import-substitution industrialisation policy was implemented with the complete absence of a capital market (Lall et al., 1994:24). The proliferation of state farms and industries had no linkages between them and the industries established depended solely on foreign capital and raw materials (Genoud, 1969:145). With its stringent macro-economic policies, deterioration began creeping into the economy, particularly as the world market price of cocoa which provided the country with about 70% of its foreign earnings to decline after 1959 (Vordzorgbe, 1997: 2). The country had run into foreign debts with a balance of payment deficit accruing from an excess of imports over exports.

The 1970s was a period characterised by political instability and inconsistencies in government macro-economic policies. However, Ghana's economy experienced the highest GNP on the continent before an economic crisis in the late 1970s (World Bank, 2002). According to Dordunoo and Nyanteng, the experience of improved growth in GNP was the result of government policies implemented in 1972, "Operation feed Your Self" and "Operation Feed Your Industries," which reinvigorated the ailing agricultural sector. Aided by the persistent upward trend in world market

prices of cocoa, which began in 1973 and reached its all time peak in 1977, the economy performed well in the first two years (1972-1973) (Dordunoo and Nyanteng, 1997:3). However, it began to deteriorate steadily through the rest of the 1970s, largely as a result of poor domestic policies, economic mismanagement and also external terms of trade shocks, particularly rising oil prices. Some writers associated the downward trend of the economy with the detrimental trends of international fluctuations in demand and prices in the 1970s which caused a downturn in the world market price of cocoa, and the strict economic controls which led to a huge black market and smuggling (Green, 1987; Kapur et al., 1991:2; Rothschild 1991:5-6; Vehnamaki, 1998). Dordunoo and Nyanteng, however, argued that the economic deterioration in the 1970s was characterised, in varying intensity, by persistent high inflation, large budget deficits, declining production of exports, flourishing illegal economic activities, hoarding and profiteering, and political instability (Dordunoo and Nyanteng, 1997:3; also see Ansa Asamoah, 1996). Discouraged by the deterioration in the economy, political instability and poor policy performance, aid donors gradually reduced their support, which further worsened the balances of payments situation (World Bank, 1984; Alderman, 1991; Vordzorgbe, 1997).

The Ghanaian economy had drifted into jeopardy and total collapse by the 1980s. The country's per capita income had fallen by a third, and inflation was running at over 100% early in the 1980s (World Bank, 2002:1). However, the economy rebounded after launching one of the first and most stringent economic recovery programmes in the region in the early half of the 1980s (*ibid.*, 1). In 1983, the government launched an aggressive programme of stabilisation and economic liberalisation. Reforms in macro-economic policies led to the birth of the IMF and the World Bank's Economic Recovery Programme under Structural Adjustment (SAP). A framework, implemented in several stages, was oriented towards financial and trade liberalisation (export-oriented economy), which created a 'market-friendly' environment that was characterised by promoting growth and development through private sector initiative. Ghana's economic expansion was largely export-led with new export promotion and investment policies. Despite the depreciation of the cedi<sup>17</sup> and wage rises, the new market economy gave birth to thousands of small-scale businesses, operating primarily in sole proprietorship and partnerships. According to Assiseh, the small-scale business sector experienced the fastest growth rate of all, close to 6.7% per annum on average between 1990 and 1995 (Assiseh, 1999: 12-14). Corroborating this,

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<sup>17</sup> 'Cedi' is the name of the currency used in Ghana

the World Bank maintained that GDP growth averaged 5%, and physical and social infrastructure was largely rehabilitated in the decade that followed the structural reforms (World Bank, 2002).

Ghana's economic reconstruction has had a significant impact on employment and the standard of living. The privatisation of government enterprises led to massive retrenchment of public sector workers (see the discussion in section 3.3.4). The process had a different impact on men and women given the employment freeze on lower level jobs. Manuh maintains that the process affected women most as redeployment schedules listed jobs such as cleaners, cooks and caterers, porters, sweeper, clerical officers, secretarial personnel and similar workers, where a sizeable proportion of those employed were women (Manuh. 1997:279). The massive retrenchment in the public sector left thousands of urban households with only one working parent and reduced the purchasing power of many more (Boeh-Ocansey, 1995). However, Boeh-Ocansey states that most people who lost their source of income entered micro-enterprises and small business (MSEs) (Boeh-Ocansey, 1995:51). The influx of people into the informal sector led to overcrowding and this, according to Brydon and Legge, was sharper for women as their opportunities to expand their enterprises were more restricted than those of men (Brydon and Legge, 1996). Although Brydon and Legge do not provide a reason for the gender differences, it is possible to attribute this to the complexity of inequality in relation to allocation of economic resources (see section 3.2).

Overall, the downward side of the SAP in Ghana can be seen in the unprecedented currency devaluation, high rates of unemployment, increasing socio-economic and spatial disparities, increasing mortality rates, and falling nutritional levels. Access to health services and education had been curtailed through the implementation of user payment etc (see Boeh-Ocansey, 1995; Konadu-Agyman, 1998:133-137).

In 1995-97, Ghana made mixed progress under a three-year structural adjustment program in cooperation with the IMF. On the negative side, public sector wage increases and regional peacekeeping commitments have led to continued inflationary deficit financing, depreciation of the cedi, and rising public discontent with Ghana's austerity measures. Political uncertainty and a depressed cocoa market led to disappointing growth in 2001. A rebound in the cocoa market was expected to push growth over 4% in 2001-02 (CIA, 2002).

In 1999, Ghana suffered a major terms of trade shock, with falling prices for Ghana's two main exports, gold and cocoa, and rising prices for petroleum imports. In the latter part of 1999, the exchange rate depreciated rapidly and inflation increased significantly (World Bank, 2002). According to the World Bank, these problems were compounded by delays in the adjustment of domestic petroleum prices and electricity rates, resulting in an accumulation of large bank debts at the state-owned monopoly importer, Tema Oil Refinery (TOR) (ibid).

The Government of Ghana has continued to implement a program of economic and structural reform with the support of the IMF and the World Bank. Overall, performance in 2002 has been mixed. Ghana's economic development has been concentrated along two roads; one is the fiscal policy transfer to cocoa cultivation and mining areas and the relatively heavy presence of public amenities in the cities. The other is the liberalisation of the economy that has favoured the export crops of the southern regions and the export industries, small enterprises and manufacturing industries of the cities (Vehnmaki, et al., 1998: 61).

The question is whether the various economic reforms have had any impact on the industrial sector and especially manufacturing. The next section examines manufacturing industry within the context of the economic development of Ghana.

#### **3.4.0. Historical Development of Ghana's Manufacturing Industry.**

Since World War II, there have been five distinct phases in the history of the manufacturing industry. Prior to 1961, Ghana had an open economy with the private sector as the main engine of economic growth. There was virtually no restriction on foreign account transactions including imports of goods and services (Vordzorgbe, 1997; Dordunoo and Nyanteng, 1997:2). The early factories were owned and managed by British or Europeans as multinational companies dominated the economic environment. Although local craftsmen ran small enterprises, most of these lacked the capital and the technical knowledge needed to achieve independent, self-sustaining growth (Peil, 1972; Nyanteng, 1997). Lall and others maintain that the colonial government at that time was not very keen on developing manufacturing as compared to the primary sector (Lall et al, 1994). In their view, the colonial legacy was one of economic activity mainly based on primary products and exports, and there was little manufacturing activity apart from traditional crafts and repair work

associated with mining and plantation activities (*ibid.*, 25). However, after World War II, the colonial government showed a renewed interest in the opportunities available in the colonies leading to the expansion of existing industries, installation of more advanced machinery and the introduction of new types of manufacturing. This led to the government granting support to existing industries through the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), which was established in 1948<sup>18</sup> (Peil, 1972; Ansa Asamoah, 1996). According to Peil, the highest rate of growth in manufacturing establishment occurred in the late 1940s and early 1950s with the expansion of the market at the time (*ibid.*).

Ghana's quest for industrial independence was highlighted during the independence and post-independence era as the socialist government viewed industrialisation as a key factor to modernisation and development (Andre, 1981; Ansa Asamoah, 1996; Vordzorgbe, 1997). The industrial strategies and development policies (Five and Seven year D-Plans) over the period were characterised by an emphasis on import-substitution through high levels of effective protection and reliance on administrative controls rather than market mechanisms to determine incentives and resource allocation. In addition, there was reliance on large-scale public sector investment (Ansa Asamoah, 1996; Asante, and Addo, 1997; Nyanteng, 1997). It is said that the effective protection package had exceeded 100%, for nearly half of manufacturing industries. This created a strong shift from consumer imports to local manufacturing, or assembly of imported parts (World Bank, 1985; Asante and Addo, 1997). However, the government's policies did not, on the whole, favour the development of an indigenous small and medium scale industrial sector. Policies were constantly biased against agriculture, which provided the raw material on which local, small-scale processing activities could be based (Asante and Addo, 1997:185-86). However, in the late 1960s the new government adopted policies to promote indigenous Ghanaian business, in particular petty retail traders and small and medium manufacturers. In their support for the 'indigenisation' of all retail and a number of manufacturing enterprises, the military government passed a decree in 1968, which restricted certain activities to Ghanaians. These policies had some lasting effect<sup>19</sup> as well as stimulating manufacturing industry. By 1970, manufacturing as a share of

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<sup>18</sup> Early industries that were established or aided by the IDC included, cassava-processing, brick and tile industries, local pottery, soap-making, weaving and woodworking. Many of these industries failed due to inadequate planning, poor demand for the products and poor management (Peil, 1972:17).

<sup>19</sup> In Ghana today a large number of small-scale enterprises (SSE's) are still reserved for Ghanaians only especially in manufacturing. These include the manufacturing of cement blocks, suitcases and all types of wallets and bags, and production of articles using foam materials. In the textiles industry, traditional textiles and hand printing (tie & dye) are also restricted to non-Ghanaians (Department of Trade and Industry, 1991).



GDP had risen to 13% (Addo et al., 1997:186). Between 1970 and 1980, the country experienced a series of military coups and this had negative effects on manufacturing industry and process of industrialisation as a whole, leading to its subsequent decline after experiencing an all time peak in 1975. Manufacturing industry began to lose its momentum after 1977 and manufacturing output as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined from 14% in 1977 to 7.4% in 1982 (Min of Industry Science & Technology, 1992; Asante and Addo, 1997: 186). By 1983, Ghana's economy had virtually collapsed (IMF, 1995) with inflation running at over 110%. Industrial capacity utilisation was estimated at only 21% of installed capacity in medium and large factories. Output growth of the manufacturing industry had fallen to -5.4% (UNIDO, 1999:52).

Asante and Addo group these constraints into exogenous factors and domestic policies, raw material shortages, physical bottlenecks, manpower and political constraints. These, combined with an unfavourable international economic environment and a distorted domestic incentive and policy framework, had an adverse effect on the manufacturing sector (Asante and Addo, 1997:191). Some writers attribute the poor performance of manufacturing to the trade policies adopted before and during the 1970s and early 1980s (World Bank, 1985; Nyanteng, 1997; Addo et al., 1997). In Addo and Asante's view, the discouragement of export promotion by an increasingly overvalued exchange rate that provided massive protection for import substitution in Ghana and yet a high dependence on imports of raw materials and spare parts on the contrary led to deteriorating balance of payments by rising import demands and stagnant export revenues (op. cit.). In pursuing unselective industrialisation policies behind high barriers of protection, Ghanaian manufacturing industry failed to develop adequate industrial capabilities and infrastructure. In addition, the poor initial base of industrial skills and macroeconomic and primary sector policy mistakes exacerbated the problems created by the trade regime, leaving Ghana with a low capacity to respond to changes in the incentive framework other than import substitution economies (Ministry of Industry, Science & Tec, 1992).

Although the strategy for industrialisation was based on import substitution, the resultant structure of production was heavily dependent on imported raw materials and spare parts (World Bank, 1995). The textiles industry was one of the industries, which although meant to be based on domestic raw materials, became heavily dependant on imported raw materials. Furthermore, the drastic declines in domestic

production of rubber, sugar, and tobacco, and stagnation in cotton and palm fruits, constrained production in processing industries. Most of these firms were forced to shut down because of the macroeconomic policies – biased against agricultural producers – pursued by successive governments (Addo et al., 1997:194). According to Addo and Asante, these macro-problems were also compounded by other physical factors such as the deterioration of the transportation system and shortages of agricultural inputs, spare parts for equipment and shortages in electrical power supply (ibid., 194-6)

The launch of the Economic Recovery Program (ERP) in 1983 marked the turning point for manufacturing industry and the industrial sector as a whole (UNIDO, 1999), even though these reforms had multiple effects. To address the problems inherited from the past efforts of industrialisation, the major objectives for the industrial sector under the ERP were to:

- increase production of manufactured goods through greater use of existing capacity,
- remove production bottlenecks in efficient industries through selective rehabilitation,
- encourage the development of local resources to feed industries and promote the development of agro-based and other resource-based industries, and
- develop economically viable linkages among local industries and between key economic sectors (Boeh-Ocancey1995, World Bank, 1995; Addo et al., 1997)

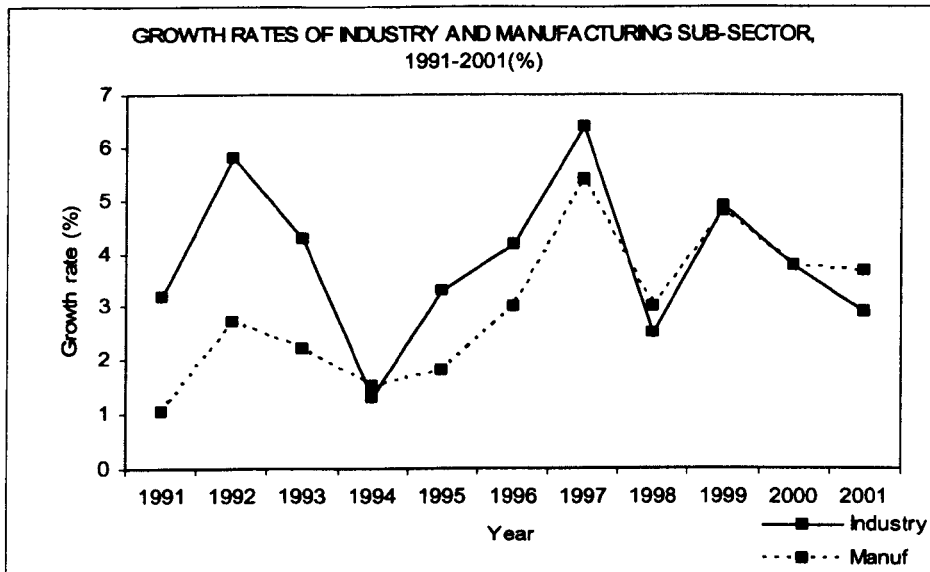
#### **3.4.1. The Impact of the Economic Reforms (Liberalisation) on Manufacturing Industry.**

During the two periods of structural adjustment (1983-1986 and 1987-1991), industry recorded an increase in growth rate from 1.1% in 1991 to 5.4% in 1997, although there has been a decline since then (Fig. 3.2).

As the economy opened up, industries such as processed foods, beverages, clothing and textiles, and leather that had been highly protected previously, experienced great difficulty in adjusting to the new order. Nevertheless, over the entire period 1983-1989, manufacturing production recouped the ground lost in the 1970s at the rate of more than 10% a year (UNIDO, 1999: 51-52). Confirming this, Addo and others stated that between 1984 and 1995 manufacturing experienced some positive growth

in capacity utilisation, which increased from 18 % to 46% in 1993. The liberalisation of the foreign exchange market eased the flow of raw materials and essential spare parts (Addo and Asante, 1997). Addo and Asante also indicated that sub-sectors which were locally resource-based, such as the tobacco, beverages, wood and food-processing industries, showed a remarkable increase in capacity utilisation (ibid., 197).

**Fig 3.2. Developments in Output, 1991-2001**



Data compiled from ISSER (2001, 2002). The State of the Ghanaian Economy in 2000, Table 6.1 and 2001 Table 6.3

Subsequent to this period of growth, in general, there has been considerable slowing down and fluctuation in growth rates for manufacturing output. Addo and Asante attribute the decline in the growth rate between 1988 and 1995 to the pace of liberalisation (Addo and Asante, 1997). According to Lall, “the low level of capacities in Ghana have meant that rapid liberalisation, unaccompanied by supply side measures to develop skills, capabilities and technical support, have led to significant and costly de-industrialisation” (Lall, 1995 quoted in Addo et al., 1997:196). Asante, indicates that 63 out of 115 firms state that the pace of trade liberalisation is either fast or too fast while 43 % of 103 firms state that trade liberalisation has adversely affected their business (Asante, 1995).

The poor performance of manufacturing industry over the last decade has been attributed largely to the unfavourable macroeconomic situation that persisted throughout the year 2000. Consequently, lending in the financial market was expensive, translating into higher cost of credit (ISSER 2001:110). Although credit to the sub-sectors increased significantly in 1999, most manufacturing firms borrowed at

a higher cost and this was coupled with the rapid depreciation of the local currency vis-à-vis other currencies. Firms, especially import dependent ones, were forced to produce at higher cost or cut back production. The high cost of credit also implied that Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) could not access credit from the financial market, making their operation difficult. The situation in the late 1990s was aggravated by the influx of cheap imported manufacturing products in the name of trade liberalisation, which impeded the efficient operation of domestic firms on the local market. Finally, the problem of distortions in tariffs, import duties and domestic tax systems, which has exposed local manufactured products to unfair competition, has not been overcome (ISSER, 2001:111).

At the end of the 1990s with the rate of inflation having risen above 40.5%, the exchange rate depreciating by 49.8% and with high lending rate and government domestic borrowing, the industrial sector, which continues to be dominated by the private sector, became overcrowded, leading to development constraints (ISSER, 2001:107). Official policies see the industrial sector, particularly the manufacturing sub-sector, as the driving force to move the economy of Ghana to a middle-income economy (Ghana's Vision 2020). However, according to economists 'this assertion seems to be a mirage' as manufacturing performed unimpressively, below 1999 levels, in the years 2000 and 2001. The growth rate had fallen from 4.8% in 1999 to 3.7% in 2001 (ISSER, 2001, 2002) (see Fig 3.2).

The next section provides an overview of the food-processing and the textiles and garment sectors, which form the central focus of this examination of gender inequality in manufacturing.

### **3.4.2. Industry Description: The Food Processing and Textiles and Garment Industries.**

The section gives a brief description of the nature and performance of the food processing and the textiles and garment industries in Ghana.

In Ghana, the food processing industry is the largest industry<sup>20</sup> in the country (Lall et al., 1994), and has the largest value added of the manufacturing sub-sectors.

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<sup>20</sup> Classification by size is based on the number of enterprises and workforce.

Furthermore, in 1987, it had the largest number of enterprises as well as of employees in manufacturing industry, after textiles and wood.

The food-processing sector uses both traditional rural technologies for simple processing and preservation of produce and beverages and complicated manufacturing or industrial applications for making more complex convenience foods (Lall et al., 1994; Amenovr, 2000). The activities of the sector cover: processing of cocoa products and confectionery; dairy products; manufacturing of bakery products; sugar refinery; canning and preservation of fish; canning and preservation of fruits and vegetables; animal and meat preservation and agri-food processing. The activities under agro-food processing (Home processing) mainly entail the processing of smoked fish, maize flour, flour from other grains, husked or polished rice, cassava flour, shelled groundnut, gari, butter from shea and other nuts (GLSS 4, 2000).

In Ghana, much of the sub-sector is concentrated at the simple end of the spectrum. As in most developing countries small scale, local activity, like baking, coexists with capital-, skill- and marketing- intensive activities (mostly under the control of giant multinational companies) addressing different markets and using radically different technologies. The balance between the small simple activities on the one hand and the large-scale, complex activities on the other depends largely on levels of income and industrialisation. Moreover, the sub-sector has relatively low exports of a non-traditional variety, despite Ghana's agricultural resource base (partly processed cocoa is the country's main traditional export). Lall and others maintain that small-scale food processing activities in Ghana are generally quite proficient in using simple technology to meet local demands with little packaging and product differentiation (Lall et al., 1994).

The textiles and garment sub-sector is the largest manufacturing activity in Ghana in terms of the number of enterprises. It is the second largest after woodworking in terms of employment, and the third largest (after food processing and woodworking) in terms of value added (Lall et al., 1994). The industry in Ghana comprises two distinct but overlapping sub-sectors, which are the textiles sub-sector and the garment sub-sector. Ghana's textiles industry includes vertically integrated mills, which primarily engage in the production of fabrics for use by the garment industry. Cotton processing (ginning, spinning, weaving, printing and finishing) is the major activity of the textile industry where the main products include: traditional African prints (wax, java, batik, tie and dye); bed sheets, school uniforms, household fabrics, curtain

materials, kitchen napkins, diapers and towels. Production of fabrics based on man-made fibres (synthetics) is also undertaken on a large scale. The main products here include, suiting fabrics, underwear, knitted blouses, shirts and socks. Other textile products of the sub-sector include, jute bags, fishing nets, ropes, twines, elastic braids, shoelaces, lamp wicks, sewing threads and metallic zip fasteners. There are also many knitting and garment firms (Mensah, 1997).

At the time of independence in 1957, large-scale textile industry in Ghana was virtually non-existent. However, local home spinning and handloom weaving of local fabrics could be found in the Northern and some parts of the Eastern and Volta regions. Also in existence was the popular 'Kente' weaving industry in the Ashanti and Volta regions (Mensah, 1997; Min of Trade, 1997). Associated with the local spinning and handloom weaving was the dyeing of fabrics by local women. Thus the indigenous processing of textiles was on a small scale level. The indigenous textile industry could hardly meet the national requirement so the bulk of the textile requirements of the country were imported.

The modern textile industry in Ghana began in the early 1960s. Following the adoption of the objective of import substitution after independence, a number of textile manufacturing plants were set up, both by the state and by private investors. Initially, foreign owned companies largely controlled the industry. However, subsequent government economic policies in Ghana, particularly in the mid-1970s, led to increased state participation. For almost two decades (1960-1977) the industrial sector and specifically the textile sub-sector was the leading sector stimulating growth in the economy (Min of Trade and Industry, 1994). Most of the large-scale firms in the textiles sub-sector are concentrated in the Accra, Tema and Akosombo areas (Mensah, 1997).

The garment sub-sector in Ghana comprises mostly small and medium scale enterprises of which about 69% are located in Accra. The industry is dominated by small scale dressmakers established as one-person businesses. (Ministry of Trade and Industries Report on the Textiles sub-sector, 1994:2). The major product groups of the garment industry may be classified as men's, women's and children's wear. The industry also engages in the production of miscellaneous items like umbrellas, bed sheets, zip fasteners, elastic braids, sewing threads and handkerchiefs (Mensah, 1997).

According to Lall and others, the sub sectors utilise two very different types of technology. On the one hand textile production is a large scale, capital intensive activity, with correspondingly high requirements of engineering and technical skills. On the other hand, garment manufacturing remains a largely labour-intensive operation with low capital and less technically sophisticated skill needs (though there is a segment of the industry that use sophisticated computer aided techniques) (Lall et al., 1994). Similarly, they maintain that technology has not changed much in the garment sub-sector as technical efficiency is determined less by the equipment than by operator skills, and an ability to meet rapidly changing product design requirements (ibid). It should be emphasised that within each type of activity the size of enterprises in Ghana is relatively small. There is only one firm with over 100 employees, and it has a workforce of 195. This is small by South-East Asian standards, where employment is often over a thousand within a firm (ibid., 201).

#### **3.4.2.1. The Impact of Liberalisation on the Food and Textiles Industries.**

In 1970, the textile and garment industry's share of the manufacturing value addition was about 15%. It accounted for 27% of total manufacturing employment (UNIDO 1986). About the same period, the capacity utilisation rate was 60%. By 1982, however this had declined to about 10% and 20% for the textile and garment sub-sectors respectively. The steep decline in the manufacturing sector in general between 1977 and 1982 was part of the general economic decline in the country but the decline had been particularly severe in the textile and garment industries. In 1993, the contribution of the textile sub-sector to total manufacturing output was 7.12% compared with 15% in 1970 (Statistical Service in Mensah, 1998: 3 - 4).

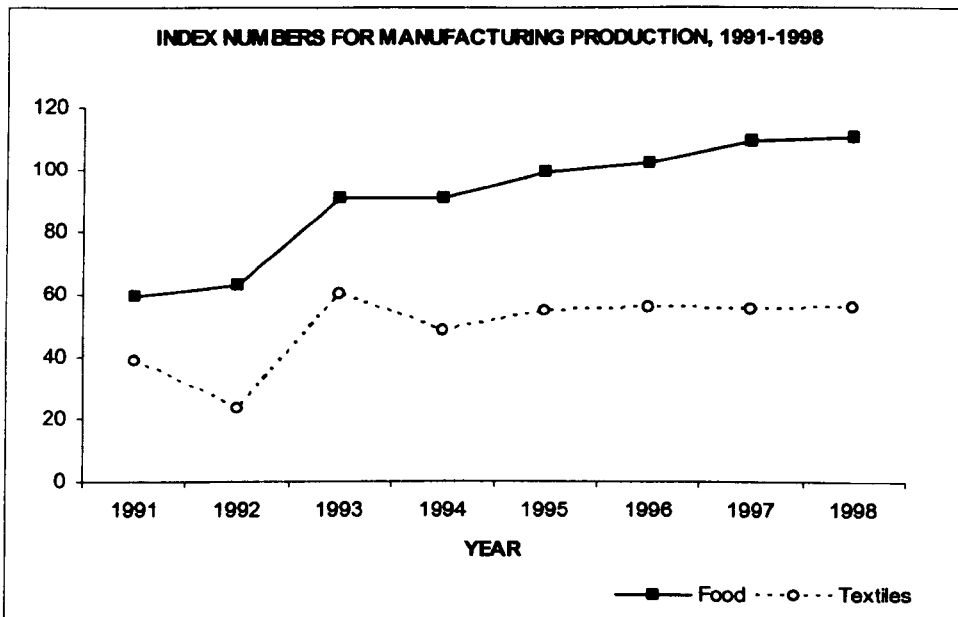
The downward trend of the economy prior to 1983 led to the shutdown of a number of textile factories, particularly small to medium-scale ones, and the subsequent laying off of their workers. The new economic reform in 1983 had a significant impact on some industries. Addo and Asante maintain that two industries, the wood processing and metal working industries, have benefited from the adjustment programme, as both had recovered 1977 levels of production by 1991 (Addo and Asante, 1997, also see Takeuchi, 1999<sup>21</sup>).

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<sup>21</sup> Capacity utilization in the wood processing increased from 32.5% in 1985 to 70% in 1990 and has kept almost the same level since then. In metal working, capacity utilization increased from 16.2% in 1985 to 58% in 1991, and remarkably, increased to 80% in 1993 (Takeuchi, 1999).

Takeuchi also stressed that the rate of capacity utilisation in the food processing industry increased from 31.2% in 1985 to 51.0% in 1991 and 52.35 in 1993 (Takeuchi, 1999: 184). The food-processing sector has experienced steady growth since the launch of the adjustment, though its index of production in 1990 (57.5 with 1977 as the base year) was lower than the average for all manufacturing (63.5). Given the sector's heavy reliance on local materials and its orientation to local markets and taste, it is less subject to direct import competition than most other parts of manufacturing. Several processed foods<sup>22</sup> and drinks do suffer such competition and have been hurt by imports, but in general, this impact has been relatively small and confined to products consumed by high-income Ghanaians (Lall et al., 1994). Addo claims that successful performance was in part due to exporting (op. cit.) (Fig 3.3). The food-processing sector within the 1990s has shown an impressive performance compared to the textiles sector (Fig 3.3) (ISSER, 2001).

**Fig 3.3 Industrial Performance of the Food Processing and Textiles and Garment sectors, 1991-1998.**



Data compiled from Statistical Service, Quarterly Digest of Statistics in ISSER (2001) The State of the Ghanaian Economy in 2000, Table 6.4.

Despite these remarkable improvements, Boeh-Ocansey argues that Structural Adjustment brought problems. The process of liberalisation resulted in local industries, particularly small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs), facing stiff competition from foreign firms (Boeh-Ocansey, 1994). In particular, superior quality

<sup>22</sup> Boeh-Ocansey, notes that while the sale of some locally processed foods such as edible oils, brand fruit juice and alcoholic beverages suffered from SAP, other small food-processing industries flourished (Boeh-Ocansey, 1994)



imported products from Singapore and Holland were selling more cheaply than the locally manufactured competing brands and substitutes. Takeuchi claims that the textiles and garment industries were the areas most affected by the ERP (op. cit.). Previously, these industries were completely protected by the import substitution policy. Although the 1990 figures had shown some substantial increase in capacity utilisation, from 31% in 1985 to 41.3% in 1993, there were fluctuations in overall performance between the periods for large and medium scale factories (Table 3.2).

**Table 3.2. Estimated Rate of Capacity Utilisation (%) -Large & Medium Scale Factories, 1985-1993**

Industry	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Textiles	19.7	17.0	24.0	33.0	45.0	35.0	45.0	67.0	41.3
Garments	25.5	27.0	25.0	35.0	22.0	22.0	30.0	35.0	53.3
Food Processing	31.2	36.0	42.0	60.0	51.0	55.0	51.0	49.0	52.3
All Manufacturing	25.0	25.0	35.0	40.0	40.6	39.8	40.5	44.5	87.3

Source: Quarterly Digest of Statistics, Statistical Service in Takeuchi (1999:184) (table 4) Some Suggested Measures for Industrial Development of the Republic of Ghana. *OECF Journal of Development Assistance*, Vol.4, No. 2.

Baah-Nuakoh points out that these industries could not reach high rates mainly due to the stiff competition they faced from imports, coupled with a high percentage of imported raw materials (Baah-Nuakoh, et al., 1996). It is established that in 1979 there were some 138 medium/large scale garment manufacturing companies in Ghana registered with the Ministry of Industry. Since then some 50 new medium size firms have joined the active list bringing the medium/large number to some 72 by 1995, most of them being concentrated in Accra. It is the large/medium firms which have suffered most from various constraints including competition from imported new products and imported second-hand clothing, the poor state of machinery, liquidity and marketing problems (Mensah, 1998). Takeuchi adds that the garment industry has also suffered from obsolete machinery and low quality of products<sup>23</sup>. Many new securities, capital market institutions and instruments such as the stock exchange company, business assistance funds and many others, have been introduced in the financial sector. However, rising interest rates of over 30% and beyond did not make it attractive for Small and Medium enterprises (SMEs) to take advantage of these initiatives. Takeuchi, moreover, says that, in contrast, companies with foreign ownership do not have such problems (op. cit.).

<sup>23</sup> Most of the textiles and garment enterprises were established during the period of import substitution. Since then they have not been able to renew their machinery and equipment. Most of these according to a World Bank survey in 1990 had been in existence for an average of 13 years (op cit., 184)

The decline of manufacturing industry also reduced employment levels, with multiplier effects (World Bank, 1985; ISSER, 1999, 2001). Between 1975 and 1982, total formal industrial employment decreased from 158,500 to 68,000. The manufacturing sectors were hardest hit with employment declining by 70.6% from 77,000 to 22,600 over the period (World Bank, 1985; ISSER, 1998:189). Under the period of ERP/SAP, employment figures fell further due to massive retrenchments. The figure for formal industrial employment decreased from 104,100 in 1984 to 47,200 in 1991 with employment levels in manufacturing also decreasing from 46,300 to 20,600 over the same period. Public sector cuts were even deeper as 200,000 public sector workers had lost their jobs by 1994, with only 50,000 new jobs being created by the government by 1995 (Owusu Agyekum, 1995).

Currently, it is reported that the issue of unemployment cannot be tackled adequately without growth within the private sector (ISSER, 2001: 110). There seems to be a gradual increase in employment in the industrial sector as a whole, which emanates from the growth of divested state enterprises and the birth of multinational companies under the establishment of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) and the Free Zones Board over the last few years. However, ISSER maintains that “the best source of employment opportunity in the country is the micro and small industrial enterprises” (ISSER, 2002:125). Even though a few manufacturing industries are able to take full advantage of economic restructuring, trade liberalisation and investment promotion policies, the majority have not been able to adjust to the new conditions and competitive environment. However, the structural adjustment that caused many to lose their incomes also served as a springboard for the birth of thousands of small-scale manufacturing firms. It shows that some industries (textiles and garment, food processing) are not able to produce to full capacity due to stiff competition from foreign imports as well as foreign owned enterprises. These are the very industries that women tend to dominate. Although information on the development patterns and performance of these industries does not provide information on gender inequalities, it sets a framework, which facilitates a broader understanding of how these development strategies impact on employment patterns and distribution in the sectors.

### 3.5.0. Gender and the Labour Market in Ghana<sup>24</sup>.

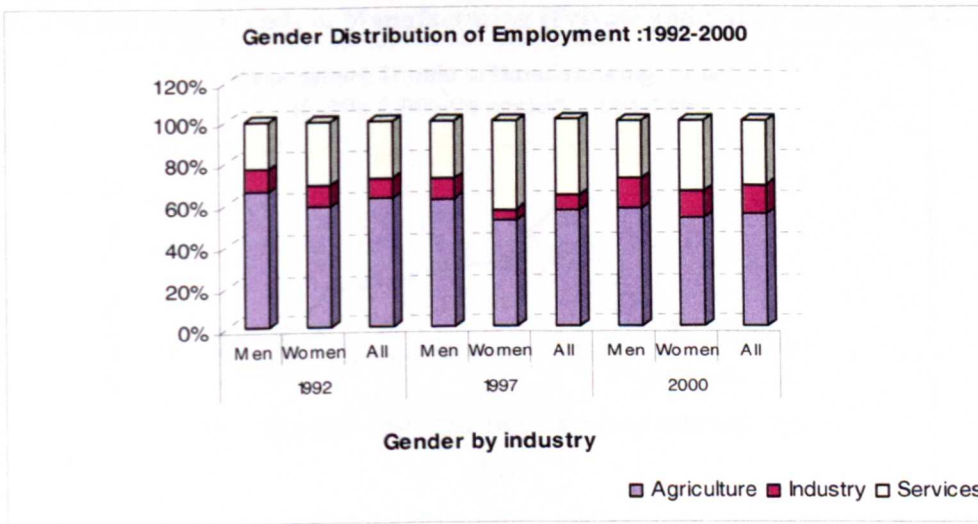
This section examines patterns of inequality in the labour market. The section is presented in the following sequence: employment distribution and segregation; education, training and promotion; authority and decision-making process; and wage differentials.

#### 3.5.1. Employment Distribution and Segregation in Industry.

The country's employment structure shows that the private sector employs over 91% of the working population in Ghana of whom 80.4% are in the private informal sector of the economy (Table 3.3; see also Fig 3.5). The formal sector (public and private) is much more important as a source of employment in Greater Accra (33.3%) and the Ashanti Region (23.2%) than elsewhere (GSS, 2002; GLSS 4, 2000).

Ghana's labour market is highly sex-segregated in both the traditional and modern wage sectors (Baden et al., 1994; CWIQ, 1998; Verner, 2000; GSS, 2002). The employment distribution in general shows that the proportion of males exceeds that of females in all sectors with the exception of the tertiary sector (services). However, studies shows that the gender gap is narrowing most especially with women's participation in industry increasing from 5% in 1997 to 13% in 2002 (Fig 3.4).

**Fig 3.4 Gender Distribution of Employment (Age 15+ - 64): 1992-2000**



Data compiled from: GSS, Ghana living standard Survey, Third Wave, GSS, Ghana Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire (CWIQ), 1997, in Ghana Human Development Report (1998: 50 Box 4:1), and Ghana Statistical Service, (March 2002) '2000 Population & Housing Census, Summary Report of Final Results', Table 11 pp. 32-33.

<sup>24</sup> Due to inadequate literature on the patterns of employment in manufacturing industry, which is the focus of this study, the writer draws on some related literature on the labour market as a whole.

**Table 3.3. Gender and Employment Status (age 15+) 2002 (%).**

Employment by Sector	Gender	
	Men	Women
Public	7.5	4.3
Private formal	9.8	5.8
Private Informal	75.6	85.1

Source: Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), (2002:35). 2000 Population & Housing Census, Summary Report of Final Results table 13).

**Table 3.4. Percentage Distribution of Men and Women by Employment Status, 2000(%).**

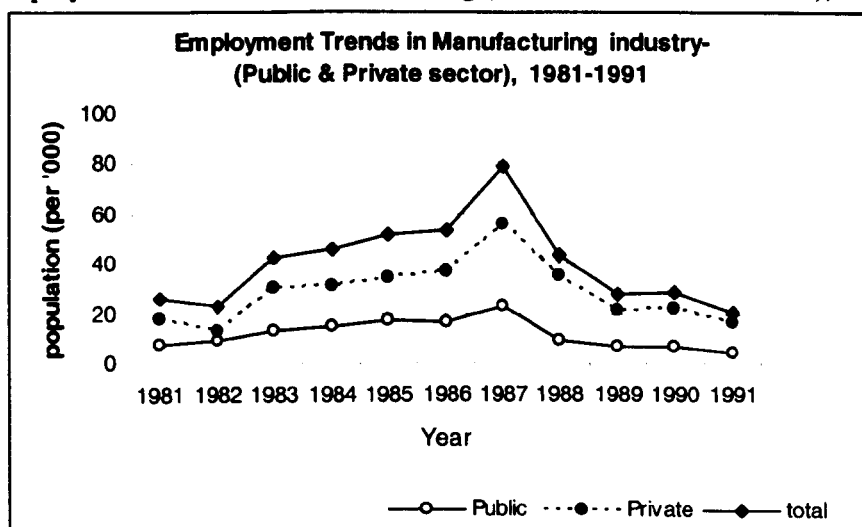
Employment by Sector	Male	Female
Employees	19.7	9.3
Self-employed with no employees	60.6	70.8
Self employed with employees	5.3	4.9
Unpaid family workers	8.0	9.7
Apprentice	4.3	3.4

Sources: Ghana Statistical Service (GSS),(2002:34). 2000 Population & Housing Census, Summary Report of Final Results table 12

The gender distribution shows a higher representation of men in the formal sector (both private and public) (Table 3.3) (GSS, 2002). Other studies of Ghana confirm a similar pattern (see UNIDO, 1995; Manuh, 1997; CWIQ, 1998; Nikoi, 1998; GLSS, 2000). A higher proportion of women work in the informal sector and the great majority of these are self-employed with no employees (Table 3.4).

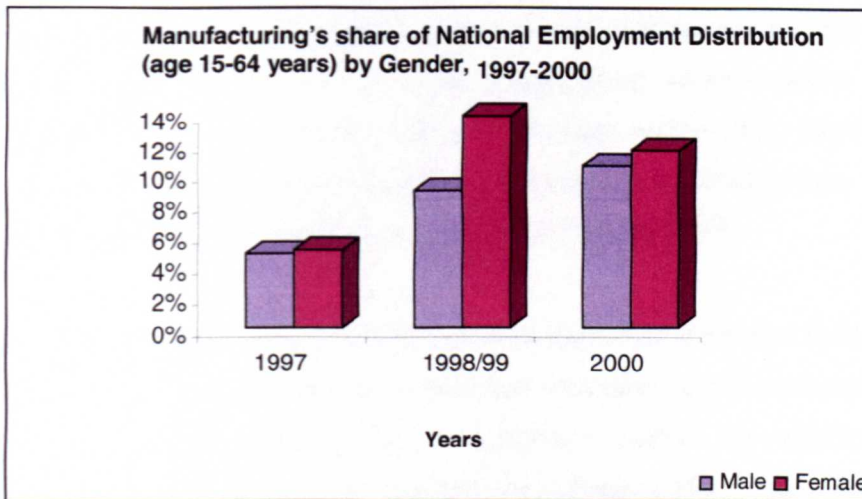
Manufacturing industry in Ghana employs about 1/8<sup>th</sup> of the entire workforce with a high concentration of its labour force in the private sector (Fig 3.5).

**Fig 3.5. Employment Trends in Manufacturing (Private and Public Sector), 1981-1991.**



Data compiled from Quarterly Digest of Statistics in ISSER (1998:118), the State of the Ghanaian Economy in 1997 table 6.5.

**Fig. 3.6 Employment Trend - Ghana's Manufacturing Industry by Gender, 1997-2002.**



Data compiled from: Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ) Survey 1997. Main Report extracts from summary Table 3b and 3c. Statistical Service, Accra, Ghana March 1998: pp. 21-22); Ghana Living Standard Survey Report of the Fourth Round (GLSS 4) (2002) table 4.7 p 32; Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), (2002). 2000 Population & Housing Census, Summary Report of Final Results table 10 )

**Table 3.5 Manufacturing Share of National Employment Distribution (age 15-64 years): Gender and Administrative Region (%) .**

Gender	Greater Accra* (1997)		Ashanti (1997)*		National (1997)*		National 2000 <sup>a</sup>	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	urban	Rural	urban
Male	1.9	9.5	5.5	10.5	3.3	8.2	6.8	13.6
Female	4.5	6.3	1.9	3.8	4.3	6.6	10.7	20.9

Key: \* data from CWIQ (1998), a-: GLSS 4, (2000)

Data compiled from: Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ) Survey 1997 Main Report extracts from summary Table 3b and 3c. Statistical Service, Accra, Ghana March 1998: pp. 21-22). Ghana Living Standard Survey Report of the Fourth Round (GLSS 4) (2002) table 4.7 p. 32

In the urban areas, manufacturing employs 18% of the labour force (GLSS 4, 2000:31). Evidence from various studies shows that there are more women than men in Ghana's manufacturing (Nikoi, 1998; Baden et al 1994), and the gender distributions over the years confirm this (Fig. 3.6). There has being an appreciable increase in the rate of women participating in manufacturing in urban areas from 6.3% in 1997 to 21% in 2000 (Table 3.5) (CWIQ, 1998; GLSS 4, 2000).

The preponderance of women in manufacturing is evident in the informal sector, where they make up about 91% of the self-employed, and 7.9% of employees (Baden et al., 1994; Nikoi, 1998; CWIQ, 1998). However, men dominate formal sector employment, amounting to 15.3%, compared to 6.9% women (CWIQ, 1998: 20 Table

3b). The dominance of men in formal sector industry can be traced from the early stages of industrialisation in Ghana (Peil, 1972). Peil's early study found that modern industries in Ghana only employed women for administrative work (ibid). This trend persists today as women have an insignificant representation in formal sector manufacturing. Only six out of the over 50 large and medium firms in Ghana employ women. In the six, women form the majority (over 70%) in two, which are mainly large-scale fish processing firms (see GFZB Report, 1999).

It is evident that the nature of the firm in terms of its scale/size (large, medium, small) - the number of employees, organisational structure, capital formation- or sector of the industry, formal/ informal, has a significant impact on working conditions and advancement opportunities of its workforce (Person, 1991; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Wirth, 2001; ILO, 2004). Large and mediums scale firm usually associated with the formal sector due to the nature and composition of firms in terms of its technological advancement and production capacity, capital accumulation and formation, highly skilled/professional work force etc., invariably attain certain advantages both within the internal and external markets than firms (small -micro) within the informal sector do have. As well structured and organised enterprises, formal sector, unions and government also play a vital role in influencing the working of the market mechanisms that govern the labour market to the advantage of its labour force. Unions and the state play a role in wage bargaining and legislations. The state also confers special privileges in terms of protective legislation. Job stability is also high because of labour legislations and unions. This gives workers not only better wages and work conditions but also greater security in employment, because firms develop internal labour markets (Scott, 1994; ILO, 1976, 2004). In absence of these facilities, workers within the informal sector become prone to harsh reality of the labour market making them worse off than their counterparts. The differentials in work conditions and career advancement opportunities of the workforce based on advantages accrue to these firms as is evident in the section and subsequent chapters in this study (see chapter 6-9).

There is a paucity of available information on the various sub-sectoral distributions in manufacturing industry. The employment distribution shows male dominance in all areas except the food processing and textiles and garment sub-sectors where women are mostly self-employed (Bortei-Doku, 1990; Baden et al., 1994; Oduro, 1997; Ghana Human Development Report, 1998; Verner, 2000, GLSS 4, 2000). In the

food-processing industry, women constitute about 89% of those working in agro-processing (cottage industries). Their main activities are the processing of maize flour (this is undertaken by 50% of households and spreads across all three main ecological zones), the processing of flour from other grains, and the processing of cassava flour (involving 44,000 households, living mainly in the savannah and rural forest zones). Other major food processing activities include the processing of shelled groundnuts, husking and polishing of rice and the preparation of gari (GLSS 4, 2000:66). The processing and preservation of agricultural produce or fish (fish smoking) in most ecological zones in Ghana are considered the prime responsibility of women (GLSS 4, 2000). In all localities more than four-fifth of those involved in fish processing are women (GLSS 4, 2000: 66). It is possible to associate the preponderance of women in agro-processing activities to the process of socialisation within these communities, as girls were usually trained to carry on such trade by their mothers (see Clark, 1989; Robertson, 1987; Dennis, 1991). It should be emphasised that the acquisition of occupational skills as part of the gender socialisation process varies within communities in Ghana as a result of their geographical location, natural resource and socio-cultural endowment. A major economic activity within the geographical location or a traditional trade handed down from generations becomes associated with the people as an occupation. Such vocations then become incorporated in the process of socialisation. For example some handicrafts or artisan trades, such as cloth-weaving (Kente), in Bonwire and its surrounding environs, traditional dying and printing in Ntonso, pottery-making in Pankono, carving in Ahwire in Ashanti Region and embroidery, smock-making, and leather products in northern Ghana, were automatically learnt by the majority of the populace as their main occupation. Moreover, children would learn these trades on their own, as they grew up, even when they were not taught by parents as evident in chapter 7 of this study (also see video, kente-weaving).

#### **3.5.1.1. Occupational Distribution.**

Various studies of Ghana's labour market have demonstrated that women are under-represented in managerial and professional jobs, but strongly represented in lower grade and menial jobs (Baden et al, 1994; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; GLSS, 1996, 2000; Verner, 2000).

In manufacturing, men dominate professional and technical occupations, while the majority of women are engaged in productive occupations (RPED, 1994, GFZB, 1999). The Regional Program on Enterprise Development for Ghana's (RPED) work on manufacturing revealed a comparatively high percentage of men holding managerial and professional positions (Table 3.6). However, 25.4 % of all female manufacturing workers worked in administration compared to only 8.8% of men.

**Table 3.6 Gender and Occupation in manufacturing sector (%)**

Occupation	Full sample	Female	Male
Administration	11.8	25.4	8.8
Commercial	6.7	7.6	6.5
Manager	10.0	5.4	11.0
Production	54.9	54.1	55.1
Professional	3.5	1.6	3.9
Support	13.2	6.0	14.7
Total percent	100	100	100

*Note:* The values show the percentage of each category of workers with each level of education. The classification of employees by occupation is: manager (encompassing managers, supervisors, and foremen); administration (administrative workers and clerks); commercial

(commercial workers, salespeople, maintenance workers, and technicians); support (support staff); production (production workers); and professional (engineers, accountants, and others).

*Source:* Round Three of the 1994 Regional Program on Enterprise Development for Ghana in Verner (2000:17) Table 3.

**Table 3.7. Actual Employment Schedules of Free Trade Zone Enterprises -1999 (%)**

Occupational Classification	Men	Women	Total
Managerial	6 (236)	2 (38)	4.9 (274)
Technical & Supervisory	11 (424)	4 (70)	8.9 (494)
Factory workers skilled	41 (1557)	72.6 (1229)	50.4 (2786)
Factory workers unskilled	42 (1613)	20.9 (354)	35.6 (1967)
total	100 (3830)	100 (1691)	100 (5523)

Author's calculations from: Ghana Free Zone Board Annual Report 1999, Annex VI pp. 30-31.

The employment data from 66 firms under the Ghana Free Trade Zone Enterprise, of which about 90% are in manufacturing, reveals a similar picture. Women constitute less than 7% of both managerial /technical and supervisory staff, but form a higher proportion of skilled than of unskilled factory workers (Table 3.7)

The trends of employment suggest an increase in women's participation rate over the last decade; however, there is a clear indication that gender imbalances exist within the various areas of the Ghanaian workforce. Men and women are streamed into different jobs, occupations and industries with more women engaged in informal sector activities than men.



### **3.5.2. Determinants of Segregation in Employment.**

A multiplicity of interrelated factors – economic, socio-cultural, legal and political – contributes to and explains the gender streaming in employment trends in Ghana.

Various economic indicators explain gender differences in the supply and demand of labour. One of the major factors that explains the gender gap in the occupational distribution and the dominance of women in the informal sector in Ghana is the gender differences in access to, and the quality of education received by, women (Akuffo, 1978; UNIDO, 1994; Ofei-Aboagye, 1998; UNESCO, 1998b; Canagarajah et al., 1997). Further discussion on access to human capital (education) is dealt with in the subsequent section. In addition, the system reproduces gender stereotypes of people thereby strengthening gendered occupational segregation. Girls are routed towards arts and home management subjects, boys towards more scientific and technical subjects, again perpetuating gender inequalities in the labour market (Scadding, 1989; Ghana, Statistical Service 1992:100 Gage and Njogu, 1994:4). Gage and Njogu show that although the National Vocational Training Institute offers classes in auto mechanics, electrical work, metalwork, building, printing, dressmaking and catering, most women are enrolled in dressmaking and catering, whilst the other technical classes are dominated by men (Gage and Njous, 1994: 42). According to a Ghana Statistical Service report, enrolment inequalities in terms of discipline are evident at all levels at higher education, with women over-represented in the arts and humanities, and men in the more scientific and technical fields (Ghana Statistical Service, 1992:100). The educational system does not promote the teaching of sex-stereotyped subjects in single-sex institutions of the opposite sex. For instance, pure technical courses such as auto mechanics, electrical, technical drawing etc are not offered in female institutions; likewise vocational subjects like home science, clothing and textiles are not offered in male institutions. However, these subjects are offered in co-educational institutions. Teachers and parents also play a role in strengthening these stereotypes through the direction they provide. Even within the informal apprenticeship system, Oduro notes that the participation in apprenticeship is largely determined by the gender of the entrepreneur. She maintains that “male entrepreneurs tend to train men, while women train women. This therefore serves as a significant means for the occurrence of occupational segregation by gender, limiting the choice of women who traditionally concentrate in few skilled areas, usually the food processing and garment sectors” (Oduro, 1997).

Factors, which contribute to the concentration of women in the informal sector, include the ease of transferring learned domestic skills to the workplace, the difficulty of combining domestic responsibility with work life in formal organisations and the difficulty of acquiring newer, more complicated skills through apprenticeship or other forms of training (UNIDO, 1995; Ofei-Aboagye, 1998:31; Enyago, 2001). It is further argued that the lack of employment opportunities, and the quest for survival based on the economic hardships in the country, has caused most women to seek alternative employment in the informal sector (Manuh, 1997; Ofei-Aboagye, 1998; Enyago, 2001).

On the demand side, advertising practices and the attitudes and practices of employers towards women make it difficult for them to enter and succeed in many areas (Akuffo, 1990; ISSER et al., 1998). Such preferences have contributed to the under-representation of women in the formal sector of the economy. Ofei-Aboagye indicated that hiring practices are sometimes influenced by considerations about the implications of maternity for service in an organisation: whether a woman will be a worthwhile investment given the breaks for childbirth and health care (Ofei-Aboagye, 1998:32). Corroborating this, Anker noted that in Ghana, 21% of employers in Accra (1982) indicated that they sometimes refused to hire women because of the fear that they would become pregnant (Anker, 1998:28). The preference for men is a reflection of their dominance in the formal (private and public) sector of the economy as already indicated in the tables above (GFZB Report, 1999; GSS, 2002). In most large and medium scale (multinational and local) firms, employers mostly recruit men onto the production floor whereas women, employed in the minority, are mainly in the supportive services (clerical) (GFZB Report, 1999).

Laws and labour regulations are another reason for male dominance in the formal sector. Ghana, as a member state of the ILO, has signed and ratified most of these laws and regulations, which are also enacted as part of its Industrial and Labour Acts. According to Ofei-Aboagye, regulations such as the Night Work Convention (No.4), that were aimed at protecting the interests of women, have become deterrents and indirectly affect the employment of women in certain industries (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996:122).

It is argued that Ghana has no laws which debar men and women from entering into any occupation (Agyeman Rawlings cited in Assiseh, 1999), yet, like most cultures,

society defines what jobs and occupations are “appropriate” for men and women, as these are guarded by strong religious and cultural norms. Most traditional and artisan handicrafts, such as cloth weaving, blacksmithing, wood carving are gender linked and women are forbidden to undertake such activities as they are preserved for men (Rattray, 1927; Christian 1959). Rattray’s work also shows that in most societies in Ghana pottery making was associated with women because they were said to use that in barter trade for food. She maintains that the only exception to pottery making was the making of statues or pipes representing human or animal forms from which women were forbidden. The making of these anthropological or zoographic beings was said to require greater skills. Another reason had a more spiritual connotation; that is, the original forms of these animals were used for ceremonial or ritualistic purposes and hence possessed some form of magical properties, which could endanger individuals and the community if they came into contact with women during menstruation. Therefore, to avoid this great danger, a woman was entirely forbidden to make such pottery (Rattray, 1927 in Klingshirn, 1971:142). Similarly, menstruation was given as a reason for the exclusion of women from most gender-linked craft such as cloth weaving. It was perceived as a form of contamination of the tools or materials used (ibid). Women, however, grew the cotton and spun the yarn. Other male-dominated trades included gold and blacksmithing, woodcarving and ivory. Boys are taught these skills as part of their socialisation and with the understanding that they will inherit the trade from their fathers.

### **3.5.3. Determinants of Labour Force Participation.**

Age and education are important variables affecting labour force participation. This section provides an overview of how these variables influence men and women within the labour market.

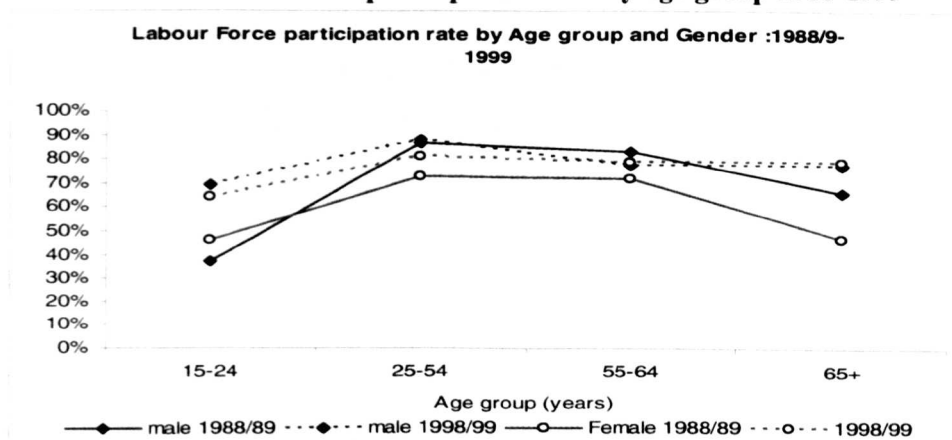
#### **3.5.3.1. Gender and Labour Force Participation Rates by Age Group.**

The labour force participation rate (age 15-64) in Ghana has increased from 55.8% in 1988 to 77% in 2000 (GLSS 2, 1996; GLSS 4, 2000). Employment trends show that the economic participation rate has been higher for men between ages 25 and 64 in Ghana than for women over the last decade, 1988-2000 (Fig 3.7).

However, this gender gap is closing as more women enter the labour market. The increase is evident in all age groups and most especially for the 25-54 years age group as women's rate of participation increased from 72% in 1988 to 81% in 1998 (GLSS 4, 2000).

Although various studies on Ghana have established that employment participation for women falls after the age of 54 years (ISSER et al., 1998), the survey reports reveal a contradictory trend. The labour force participation rate of women within the age of 64 and above has increased from 46% in 1988 to 78% in 1998 a rate that is comparatively higher than that of men (66% in 1988 to 77% in 1999) (Fig 3.7)

**Fig. 3.7 Gender and Labour Force participation rates by age group 1988-1999**



Data compiled from Ghana Living Standard Survey Report on the Second Round (GLSS 2, 1996: 60 table 60) and GLSS 4 (2000: 28. table 4.2)

In general, the average female participation rate has become equal to that of men during this period. However, there are still wide disparities in the sectoral participatory rates for men and women. The overall gap in labour participation is gradually closing: nonetheless, the rate is still higher for males in the prime age group (26-60 years) (Canagarajah et al., 1997). Canagarajah and others, attribute the low participation rates for women in the late 1980s and early 1990s to the differences in education between men and women. The wage differentials between males and females were another possible factor leading to lower female participation rates (ibid). The reasons for the substantial increase over the decade 1988-1999 for women of the prime age could vary from increased hourly wages/earnings, increased levels of education and lower fertility rates. It is argued that one of the possible features of an increasing labour force is an increase in the stock of educated labour (primary and above) (Canagarajah et al., 1997:11). It is possible that this argument is only applicable to formal sector employment. However, Canagarajah and others failed to

acknowledge the fact that increased educational levels are not a sufficient condition for the rise in female employment in Ghana (Canagarajah et al., 1997:11; also see Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Manuh, 1997). Female labour force participation is highly influenced by an interrelationship of factors that are economic, socio-demographic and cultural. It is established that economic pressure has been the driving force behind the increase of women in wage employment, especially in the informal sector, over the past decades (since the 1980s) (see Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Brydon and Legge, 1996; Manuh, 1997; Brydon, 1999). Again, it can be argued that the increase in the rate of participation of women aged 64 years above, which is the age of retirement, is restricted to the formal sector employment but likely to be more suitable for the informal sector employment where there are no such restrictions on the age of entry.

Educational attainment, then, appears to be an important factor in subsequent participation in the labour force. Hence, the next section examines the pattern of gender differences in education and its impact on labour supply.

### 3.5.3.2. Educational Characteristics.

Investment in human capital begins with education. There has been a tremendous improvement in the rate of literacy in Ghana as the adult literacy rate (reading and writing) has increased from 40% in 1988 to 54.1% in 2000 (GLSS 2, 1996; GSS, 2002).

**Table 3.8. Educational Characteristics by Gender, 2000 (%).**

Levels of Education	Educational Attainment (%)		Current school Attendance (%)	
	Men	Women	Male	Female
None/Pre-school	48	53	13	15
Primary	19	18	53	55
MSLC/JSS	21	19	17	16
Sec/SSS	6	5	9	8
Voc/Tech	2	2	2	2
Post-Sec	2	1	2	1
Tertiary	3	2	4	3

Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2002: 54-55). 2000 Population and Housing Census, Summary Report of Final Results table A8.

The level of literacy is higher for males (62.9%) than for females (45.7%). Yet the gender gap has narrowed over the decades as the literacy rate for females has increased from 27% in 1988 to about 46% in 2000 (ibid). This is evidence that major

strides have been made over the years to improve women's access to education in the country. However gaps in gender enrolment in education at all levels still remain pronounced in all regions (UNIDO, 1995; CWIQ, 1998; Ghana Human Development Report, 1998; GLSS 4, 2000; GSS, 2002). The 2000 census survey of Ghana reveals that relatively more men than women have attained secondary and higher education (Table 3.8) (GSS, 2002). Corroborating this, the GLSS 4 report states that only half as many females as males have secondary or higher education (GLSS 4, 2000:8). The World Bank similarly maintained that although girls made up 47% of primary school pupils in 1994, they only made up 35% and 26% of senior secondary and tertiary students respectively (World Bank, 1996 in Pomary, 1999:113-4).

Literacy is an important requirement for employment (UNIDO, 1998; World Bank, 1995) and is essential for secondary education.

**Table 3.9. Education by Manufacturing Sector (%)**

Educational Level completed	Total manufacturing	Manufacturing sector			
		Metals	Textiles	Food Processing	Wood
None	9.3	3.7	10.0	16.6	7.8
Primary school	3.3	2.0	3.8	3.9	3.5
Middle school	45.8	50.8	46.7	35.5	58.3
Secondary school	13.5	12.6	13.8	15.4	8.7
Vocational school	13.6	15.0	10.7	13.5	13.0
Professional and Technical school	13.3	15.6	13.9	12.0	7.9
University	1.3	0.3	1.0	3.1	0.9
Total Percentage	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Round three of the 1994 Regional Program in Verner, (2000:12) Table 2.

According to the Regional Programme on Enterprise Development for Ghana (RPED) the majority of workers in the formal manufacturing sector have completed middle or secondary education. However, 9.3% of all manufacturing workers have not completed any level of education (Table 3.9). The RPED report established three notable features: first, middle school is the most common level of education completed (46%); second, almost twice as many employed females as males have not completed any education; and third, fewer of the workers employed in Accra (9%) have completed less than secondary education, compared with workers employed elsewhere in Ghana (RPED 1994 in Verner, 2000: 12). The cross-sectoral comparison showed that the food-processing sub-sector had the highest number both of workers without any education (16%) and of university graduates (3%) (Table 3.9).

The majority of workers in the formal manufacturing sector have completed middle or secondary education (Verner, 2000).

Various studies have thus shown that women in Ghana have poorer access to education than men although girls make up a high percentage of primary or basic level enrolment; yet the rates of female participation fall as they move along the educational ladder (World Bank, 1996, Pomary, 1999; Ghana Human Development Report 1998, GLSS (ed.) 2 & 4 1996, 2000). The reasons for this trend have been multiple, based on the interplay of factors emanating from the socio-cultural to economic.

Despite government policies to boost and promote equal education at the basic educational level for all, some parents still refuse to send their daughters to school. This appears to be the result of parental preference for males and cultural attitudes towards the education of the girl-child (Greenstreet, 1972; Akuffo, 1978; Abbam, 1987/88; Eyango, 2001). As in other developing countries, there is a traditional under-valuation of girls' education, based on the perception that education of the girl-child is irrelevant considering her future role as a mother and wife and the expectation that she will be taken care of by her husband (Greenstreet, 1972; Robertson, 1987; UNIDO, 1995). These attitudes, however, are gradually fading with the increase in gender awareness and sensitisation programmes but its remnants lead parents to place greater emphasis on educating their sons than their daughters in times of inadequate resources (Akuffo, 1978).

Coupled with such cultural norms, parental poverty is considered one of the major factors accounting for the low educational levels of females in Ghana (CWIQ 1998; Ghana Human Development Report 1998). Oteng notes that about 83% of women who had low levels of education were compelled to drop out of school due to the financial constraints of the parents (Oteng, 1971).

The low rate of female participation in education in Ghana has also been attributed to teenage pregnancy, early marriage, domestic responsibilities of girls and women, and traditional perceptions of womanhood (Deble, 1980; Clark, 1994; Ministry of Education, 1994b, CWIQ, 1998). Marriage and children are considered important aspects of life in Ghana and women are accorded greater respect in society when they

marry or have children. Hence, after a certain age<sup>25</sup> a woman should have children or marry, lest she loses her respect in society. This ideology, therefore, serves as a deterrent to women pursuing higher education.

Power relations in marriage have been seen as a further deterrent. Blege notes that parents and husbands express dissatisfaction with girls who have 'too much' education (Blege, 1972). Other reasons provided for not attending school or high dropout rates were the cost of education. The cost education especially at the secondary and tertiary levels in Ghana is relatively high, and therefore discourages parents from sending their daughters to school considering their financial constraints and large family size. Again the, lack of interest in school, failure to pass exams, and lack of educational relevance in providing viable employment opportunities (Greenstreet, 1986; Etta, 1994; CWIQ, 1998: 28 Ghana Human Development Report, 1998:38; Eyango, 2001).

Alongside these demographic characteristics there are other discriminatory elements within the labour market that impede women's advancement in the workplace. Amongst these, training, decision-making and wage differentials will be discussed below.

#### **3.5.4. Training - Development and Career Mobility in the Workplace.**

According to Ohlott and others, "opportunities for skills training on the job and participation in decision-making are invariably seen to be the most significant career-promoting developmental work experiences"(Ohlott et al., 1994 quoted in ISSER et al., 1998:43). Gaining equal opportunities for access to equipment, resources, training, experience and all the things that potentially enable workers to perform well and develop have become important issues in economic development. The improvement in human capital enhances the growth and productivity of societies (ISSER et al., 1998; Dollar et al., 1999; Jocaben, 2001).

As aforementioned, Ghana, as a member state of the ILO and UN, has ratified and enacted most of their conventions, such as Conventions No.100, No. 111 and the UN's Convention on the Elimination of All Discrimination Against Women

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<sup>25</sup> In Ghana, the mean age of marriage for girls is about eighteen and a half years.



(CEDAW), in its constitution, laws and regulations (UNIDO, 1995; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; GOG, 1992). For example, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana obliged the state to afford equality to all and make provision for equal access to work. The ratification of these conventions provides men and women with equal rights and treatment in principle, irrespective of their economic situation or social circumstances, and thereby makes firms liable to such enactments. The query then is whether equality in relation to human capital and career advancement, is actually practiced within the Ghanaian labour market.

### 3.5.4.1. Training and Development.

A joint study conducted by ISSER and DFID, on 'Women in Public Life', in Ghana revealed that access to the factors of productivity in the workplace was sometimes clearly gender biased and that this undermines women's motivation and performance (ISSER et al., 1998:28). Some writers have established that employers discriminate against women when training and investment decisions are made (Ofei-Aboagye 1998, 1996; Asare, 1980; ISSER et al., 1998; Verner, 2000). Ofei-Aboagye, found that men generally had an advantage over women in relation to opportunities for training in the workplace and that women formed a minority of participants sponsored on company training programmes (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996:39-40). Furthermore, on a management training programme organised by GIMPA in Ghana, women constituted less than half the percentage of male participants, 33% (125) compared to 67% (258) in 1990/1991 (Ofei-Aboagye:1996). It was noted that women enjoyed equal opportunities only in basic training or in the foundation programmes and short courses, but not in upgrading or long courses (ibid., 87). In contrast, Asare argues that unlike the junior employees, the managers and manageress were trained for the same duration and to perform the same jobs (Asare, 1980).

**Table 3.10. Gender, Residence and Training (%)**

Training	Full sample	Gender		Residence	
		Female	Male	Accra	Other
In-house	28.0	33.0	27.0	25.1	34.2
By outside providers	36.2	24.7	38.7	38.0	35.4
None	35.8	42.3	34.3	36.9	30.4
Total percentage	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Round Three of the 1994 Regional Program on Enterprise Development for Ghana, in Verner (2000:22, table 6) Wage and Productivity Gaps: Evidence from Ghana.

RPED in their survey of the Ghanaian manufacturing sector established that around 64% of employees receive formal structured training but that men were more likely than women to receive training outside the firm (Table 3.10). In fact, 42% of female workers are not trained, compared with only 34 % of male workers (RPED in Verner, 2000) (Table 3.10). These differences are intensified by the fact that women are under-represented in occupations that are more likely to have access to training. The RPED study showed that more than 40% of administrative, professional, managerial and supportive staff obtained training from outside their firms, with university graduates receiving the most training (76.9%). Workers with less than secondary education in the manufacturing sector were more likely than others to have limited access to training (Verner, 2000:24). Notwithstanding these gender differences, it is clear that there is a general under-investment in training and development within Ghana's labour market, although there are some sectoral and regional variations as workers within the country's capital are more likely to gain access to training (Verner, 2000). Verner claims that firms in Ghana provide little or no training for several reasons: the country has imperfect capital markets, limited access to information, and other market failures (ibid). He further argues that in-house training does not pay off in terms of higher wages or increased productivity (ibid).

#### **3.5.4.2. Promotion.**

Improvement in human capital plays an essential role in facilitating career mobility upward in the workplace as it enhances the skill, experience and productivity of the individual as well as in the organisation. In Ghana, some writers have demonstrated that access to promotion is biased towards men (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; ISSER et al., 1998). Ofei-Aboagye found that only 35% (14) of women were provided with equal opportunities in promotion. She notes too that even where these opportunities were offered, women could only go up to a certain levels on the hierarchy, especially within the financial sectors. Although promotion was competitive and depended also on vacancies, women needed to prove that they were equally qualified and could do the job (ibid). Similarly, ISSER's study of women in security services in Ghana, pointed out that to compete effectively with men, women had to perform more remarkably than their male colleagues (ISSER et al., 1998: 68). In contrast, Heymaan's analysis of the role played by women in the development process makes the claim that promotion was based on the individual's ability rather than by gender and that in Ghana, there was no discrimination against women in terms of job

opportunities and conditions of service (Heymaan, 1981). In line with this argument ISSER and DFID, point out that, although women did not feel that there was gender discrimination in promotion, it was established that being promoted or not was the outcome of a number of interacting factors, and the procedures were described as opaque and erratic. Such a situation made it rather difficult to determine whether a particular case was a direct result of gender discrimination. ISSER et al, claim, however, that the opacity in the procedures for promotion works in men's favour because they have more opportunities for informal social interaction, and are less constrained to interact freely with other men through whom they could access information about opportunities and resources and whom they could lobby (ibid., 29).

The criteria for promotion generally varied amongst organisations and industries. However, elements such as work performance, skills, experience and long service were common denominators. It is noted, however, that unofficial criteria was also adopted. As a Corporal in Ghana's army claimed,

*meeting the basic training and field experience requirement, length of service, well groomed appearance ... coupled with less tangible assets such as good character and loyalty, are important strategies for catching your superior's eye, character supersedes everything for promotion.*

(Male Cpl. Army, 1996 quoted in ISSER et al., 1998:67).

The reproductive role of women was a further impediment to their career advancement opportunities in the workplace (Asare, 1980; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; ISSER et al., 1998). In their study ISSER et al. claimed that women conceded that their heavy workload at home sometimes made it difficult to devote full attention to their work, although very few had to turn down training programmes or job assignments because of family obligations. They stressed that failure, for to go on transfer was used against women seeking promotion (op. cit., 68). Asare claims that household responsibilities, which result in high levels of absenteeism and lateness to the workplace, affect the prospects for promotion of women in the organisational hierarchy (Asare, 1980), but are these 'high levels' real or perceived? Other factors which serve as a hindrance to women are the perception that men are more productive and loyal, that men are not absent from work and that men often work longer hours and are committed to their jobs (Ofei-Aboagye, 1998:93). In addition, ISSER et al.

argue that unfavourable cultural attitudes among male colleagues hinder women's career advancement (ISSER et al., 1998).

It is clear from the above that institutions display subtle informal and formal discriminatory practices against women, and this is reflected in the lack of transparency in task assignments, nomination for training, and promotion. As ISSER et al., pointed out, women came face to face with subtle but recurrent discriminatory practices, hidden in exclusionary practices in organisations. They added that culture made women subservient to rather than competitive with men (ibid., 78).

### **3.5.5. Gender and Wage Differentials in Ghana's Labour Market.**

Equality of opportunity and treatment in employment also covers entitlements to pay, and working conditions. The Equal Remuneration Act of 1951 (Convention No.100) enunciates a fundamental principle opposing wage discrimination and supporting the rights of every worker. The principle of equal pay for work of equal value means "rates and types of remuneration should be based not on an employee's sex but on an objective evaluation of the work performed" (ILO, 2000). Ghana as a member state of the ILO has ratified the ILO's Convention No. 100, but the question is whether wage differentials by gender continue to exist in Ghana's labour market, despite this legislation.

There is some literature examining wage differentials in Ghana but these studies say little about gender (Jones, 1997; Teal et al., 1998; Barr and Oduro, 2000; Blunch and Verner, 2000; Verner, 2000; Blunch and Verner, 2001). However, some variables, such as cross industry differences, unionisation of industry, literacy, education and productivity, that have been investigated have potential relevance for gender. This section discusses some of these factors.

Earnings vary across industries and by sector and this has a significant impact on gender and earnings. There is inadequate evidence to support this; however, there are likely relationship complexity due to the variations in industries as a result of the nature, ownership (government / private), size and organisation of firms.

In her study on wages and productivity, Verner established that employees in the wood sector are paid lower wages than employees in the textiles, metal, and food sectors (Verner, 2000:38). Verner adds that the differences in occupation and job

distribution is another factor accounting to this differential as women tend to be employed in lower-paying jobs or occupations, (ibid).

However, there are some variations in earnings within industry as Blunch and Verner, maintained that government employees account for 59% of the highest earnings quintile and just 6% of the bottom quintile. In contrast, private sector employees accounted for just 32% of the highest earnings quintile and 84% of the bottom quintile (Table 3.11). Adding to these, Jones maintained that the extent of unionisation of workers influences the wage differentials. He noted that although the minimum wage was binding for both union and non-union workers, only about half of all non-union workers appeared to be paid a wage that equalled or exceeded the minimum wage (Jones, 1997:8).

**Table 3.11. Earnings by Sector (% of Total).**

Earnings quintile	Government employees	Employees of public enterprises	Private sector employees	Other
Highest	59.3	7.04	31.66	2.01
Next to highest	52.29	6.42	38.07	3.21
Middle	29.46	10.71	54.46	5.36
Next to lowest	17.14	2.86	71.43	8.57
Lowest	6.25	3.12	84.38	6.25
All quintiles	45.81	7.05	43.46	3.69

Source: Ghana Living Standards Survey 1991/92, in Blunch and Verner, (2000:16) table 12.

Income distribution differs for men and women (Verner, 2000; Blunch and Verner, 2000; Blunch and Verner, 2001). According to Blunch and Verner, women account for larger shares of the lower and middle earnings quintiles, while men dominate the upper income levels (Table 3.12) (Blunch and Verner, 2000:16).

**Table 3.12. Gender and Earnings.**

Earnings quintile	Men	Women
Highest	52.74	47.26
Next to highest	53.55	46.45
Middle	46.40	53.60
Next to lowest	43.62	56.38
Lowest	33.8	66.2
All quintiles	45.98	54.02

Source: Ghana Living Standards Survey 1991/92 in Blunch and Verner, (2000) table 14

Confirming this Verner maintains that on average, females were paid significantly less (17% less) than males in manufacturing (Verner, 2000:29). Like most writers Verner attributes the gender differentials in earning to differences in human capital (education and productivity) (Verner, 2000:31; also see Canagrajah et al., 1997). She maintains that females do not obtain a significantly lower return than do men in any of the six levels of education, and that the gender-wage differentials by level of education are not very strong, as wages did not seem to increase significantly with the level of education for all levels (Verner, 2000).

Most empirical studies on wages in Ghana have established that, in general, human capital characteristics explain only a small part of earning differentials (Teal, 1997; Teal et al., 1998; Jones, 1998; Blunch and Verner, 2000, 2001). Blunch and Verner, moreover maintain that a positive earning premium to education is only obtained at a certain level (Blunch et al., 2000:24). Citing examples, they argued that in the non-unionised sector education (apart from professional and university education) seemed to have relatively little or no importance, as a wage-promoting factor. In contrast, formal education is a very important wage-generating factor in the unionised sector. Unions manage to force management to acknowledge formal education (Blunch and Verner, 2001:22).

The above information is relevant to this study because it provides a general understanding of the causes of wage differentials in Ghana; however the existing literature fails to establish the causes of gender wage differentials. Although Verner provides some arguments to explain the gender inequality in wages, she is inconsistent in using the human capital argument, thereby not providing conflicting views to the cause of this phenomenon.

It can be concluded that the causes of wage differentials are complex as they are based on an interrelationship of factors, which include differences in occupation, human capital, industry, sector and unionisation. The interrelation of these factors may impact differently on men and women but these aspects have yet to be explored.

### **3.5.6. Gender, Authority and Decision-Making in the Workplace.**

The importance of women's participation in decision-making at all levels of society has gained prominence in issues concerning the economic development of society (ILO, 1998).

In Ghana, men are more likely than women to be in positions of authority and decision-making. The percentage of women in top executive and managerial positions has been relatively lower than that of men (ISSER et al., 1998: xiii, Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; GLSS 4, 2000: 31). Women in Ghana constitute only 9% of those in the highest level of decision-and-policy-making in the country (ISSER et al., 1998:25). A report on the gender distribution at the top level of Central Government institutions in Ghana showed that only 25 out of 239 top government officials were women (Table 3.13).

**Table 3.13. Gender Distribution at Top Level of Central Government Institutions.**

Categories	Men	Women	Total	Percentage of women
Ministers	31	6	37	16.2
Deputy Ministers	30	4	34	11.7
Chief Directors	15	0	153	0.0
Directors	138	15	15	10.0
Total	214	25	239	10.4

Source: Office of Head of Civil Service, 1996; Newspaper Report, 1997 in ISSER et al., (1998:25)

Similarly, the 1998-1999 survey report of Ghana revealed that women formed 0.1% of those in management and administrative positions (GLSS 4, 2000).

The ability to influence the power structures depends on the authority levels and placement within an organisational hierarchy (Reskin and Ross, 1995). In line with this, Ofei-Aboagye argued that women's ability to influence decision-making was limited because they largely dominated the lower echelons of the organisation and were relatively poorly represented in groups that make and/or influence decision (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996). Ako claimed that although women were capable of holding top-level managerial and supervisory positions, the majority had not been exposed to that challenge (Ako, 1978). However, Ofei-Aboagye maintained that where women find themselves in decision-making positions, their opportunity to participate is limited. Most often women in such positions are not consulted when decisions are taken. (op. cit., 85).

Why do men tend to hold higher-level positions than women within the organisational hierarchy? Many explanations for women's limited access to decision-making positions and power in Ghana, like other developing countries, centre on human capital characteristics such as low education and experience (Ako, 1978; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; ISSER et al., 1998). Ofei-Aboagye adds that women are also

constrained by social and reproductive roles and by the social expectations of gender-appropriate behaviour. Furthermore, women are said to lack support, encouragement and self-confidence in taking up these positions (op. cit., 51). Supporting this, Ako stressed that the stereotyped division of rights, responsibilities and sex roles, complacency, nonchalance, lack of confidence in themselves, lack of recognition of their abilities and traditional attitudes of both men and women are some of the obstacles that impair women's effective contribution (Ako, 1978).

From the above discussion, it is possible to suggest that stereotyping and lack of access to authority and power in decision-making by women in most Ghanaian societies are the offspring of the existing socio-cultural relations between men and women. It is an indisputable fact that "Ghanaian women are effectively under the control or authority of men (initially their father or other male members of their kin group and later their husbands) for much of their lives, although they may gain in status and influence with age. As a result, women's decision making role in Ghana is constrained in both private and public spheres"(Baden et al., 1994). Traditional systems of political authority were and remain largely male-dominated. Where women do exercise political power in the traditional framework, it is largely in parallel structures or by indirectly influencing the opinion of male authorities (Bortei-Doku, 1990; Baden et al., 1994). Despite the fact that the traditional system operates separately and independently from 'modern' institutions, societal attitudes concerning male power and superiority have permeated the modern structures. Robertson adds that the role of females in decision-making structures within the public sphere was historically undermined by the colonial authorities (Robertson, 1984a, 1987). These and other reasons have resulted in the women being under-represented at all levels in modern politics (Baden et al., 1994). Nevertheless, this trend is gradually changing with the existence of national machinery on women's affairs and female organisations that have had some success in lobbying for legislative change for women.

### **3.6. Conclusion.**

It is evident that the position of men and women within Ghanaian society remains unequal and that it is influenced by a multiplicity of factors that emanate from the economic, socio-cultural, political and the legal structures of the society. These structures affect the allocation and distribution of socio-economic resources by gender.

Although the above information provides some evidence of inequality in Ghana's labour market it does not provide a very detailed account of gendered inequality



within manufacturing industry. Moreover, the above evidence fails to take into account the significance of inter- and intra- sectoral variations and its impact the activities of men and women. It does not tell us why men and women enter into feminised industries. It also fails to provide a gendered and social analysis of the impact of such gender division on the socio-economic advancement of women in society.

In light of the above shortcomings, the subsequent chapters provide empirical evidence of patterns of gender inequality in the food and textiles and garment sectors of manufacturing industry in Ghana.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **METHODOLOGY**

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#### **4.0. Introduction.**

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted within this study and explains the rationale for combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It also details the methods and procedures that were employed in the collection of data.

The central purpose of this study was to find out the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of the existing pattern of gender inequalities in Ghana’s manufacturing industry, and its effects on the socio-economic advancement of women. Hence, the research has two objectives. The first objective is to find out what the patterns of gender inequalities are in both the food processing and the textiles and garment sectors. It basically examined the ‘how’, that is, the choices that the actors make in the labour market. The second objective is to examine the ‘why’, that is to identify the root causes or structural (explanatory) factors that yield gender inequalities. However, before these issues could be dealt with, there was a need to establish empirically whether gender inequality really exists in the manufacturing industry in Ghana, by finding out some basic characteristics of such inequalities in some selected industries in the region.

This research adopted a multi-dimensional approach focusing on women and men in both textiles and food processing manufacturing industries in Ghana. The gender and sectoral analysis helped to provide a better understanding of the existing socio-cultural dynamics that governs the relationship of men and women in the allocation and distribution of power and economic resources within two different contexts. Hence, this study sought to establish a comparative gender and social analysis between men and women in both sectors in Ghana. The research design took the peculiarities of each into consideration. The methodology included a body of empirical propositions and research designs that involved both quantitative and qualitative (case study) methods of research (Yin, 1984; Kuper et al., 1985). The intentions of this study were to compare:

1. Male and female workers – within the sectors
2. Male and female workers across the sectors
3. Examine the future prospects of employees in the sectors studied.

Since the main purpose was to determine the nature and causes of gender inequality, the study was based on concepts and variables derived from the literature on this subject.

#### **4.1. The Rationale for Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches.**

Issues about gender inequality and the empowerment of women are culturally and politically sensitive in Ghana, as such issues are enmeshed in the traditions and the values of the people. Gender issues have often been misrepresented as a ‘fight’ between women and men for power. In addition, the ideology behind gender and empowerment of women has been highly politicised in affiliation with a revolutionary government (PNDC<sup>26</sup>). The ex-first lady (1981-2000) set up a women’s movement in the name of the revolutionary government, whereby all activities were seen as directly or indirectly promoting the party politically and not women’s interests per se. Given this socio-cultural and political background to the study, there was a clear need to adopt a research strategy that would take cognisance of the context and address issues effectively and sensitively, as well as validating the data.

##### **4.1.1. Triangulation.**

Triangulation was employed in the study to compensate for the different views and weaknesses that might weaken any one approach. Triangulation, according to Jick, is a combined method of study in which the researcher uses multiple methods of data collection, for example a survey and in-depth interviews, and analysis (Jick, 1979). The use of the term ‘triangulation’ as advocated by Denzin was based on the assumption that any bias inherent in a particular data source, investigator, and method would be neutralised when used in conjunction with other data sources, investigators and methods (Denzin, 1978). Greene et al., advance five main reasons for combining methods in this way:

*Triangulation in the classic sense seeks convergence of results; it is complementary, in that overlapping and differences facets of a phenomenon may emerge (e.g. peeling the layers of an onion ); developmentally, wherein the first method is used sequentially to*

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<sup>26</sup> The P(NDC) government reigned from 1981 to 2000.

*help inform the second method; initiation, wherein contradictions and fresh perspectives emerged and expansion, wherein the mixed methods add scope and breath to a study.*

(Green et al., 1989, quoted in Creswell, 1994:175 ).

The purpose of employing both quantitative and qualitative methods was to provide the researcher with a better understanding of the social and economic environment studied. Pragmatists have argued that “a false dichotomy exists between qualitative and quantitative approaches and that researchers should rather make the most efficient use of both paradigms in understanding social phenomena”(Creswell, 1994:176; also see Rossman and Wilson, 1985; Lancy, 1993). The adoption of the mixed method was advantageous because it provided a better understanding of the concepts being tested or explored, and one method could be used to inform the other, therefore extending the breadth of the inquiry (Greene et al., 1989). Although adopting the mixed-methodology design added complexity to the study, the design, as Creswell observes, “best mirrors the research process of working back and forth between inductive and deductive models of thinking in a research study”(Creswell, 1994:178).

#### **4.1.2. Quantitative Approach.**

Quantitative research emphasises the importance of numerical description in the collection and analysis of data. As a research strategy, Bryman maintains that:

*it entails a deductivist approach to the relationship between theory and research, it embodies a view of social reality as an eternal, objective reality; and has incorporated the practices and norms of the natural scientific model...of positivism in particular.*

(Bryman, 2001:20)

The quantitative aspect employed a survey design. According to Robson, “surveys are well suited to descriptive studies where the interest is, say in how many people in a given population possess a particular attitude, opinion, or whatever... the quasi – experimental approach attempts to liberalise the experiment to cope more realistically with the condition outside the laboratory. It shares the same notions about the nature of scientific activity as true experimentation” (Robson, 1993:47-48).

The survey technique is built upon the simple premise that if one wishes to 'know what people think, then, an obvious strategy is to ask them' (Weisberg and Bowen, 1977, 1980). Indeed, asking people what they think in a survey is an extension of normal human communication. Surveys can handle research questions focusing on the process, timing, location, frequency and quality of human interaction. Robson indicates that surveys (unlike experimental or quasi-experimental investigation) can accommodate questions that do not require control over the events being looked into. He argues that with the single exception of the telephone survey, survey-by-questionnaire offers the researcher a mode of conducting fieldwork which is more efficient in terms of professional time and cost-effectiveness than the alternative techniques of individual interview or case-study (Robson, 1993).

Numerous authors and researchers have demonstrated the important use of questionnaires as a research tool (Robson, 2002; Creswell, 1994, Bryman, 2001). Based on its potentially broad application, the questionnaire has become an effective and efficient tool adapted in many diverse social enquires such as health and life styles (Blaxter, 1990).

Oppenheim suggests that one major function of the questionnaire from a research point of view is that of measurement. The specific parameters involved derive from the individual researcher's specification of the main variables to be measured (Oppenheim, 1992). He cautions that it is important to access the opinions of the group being surveyed with a minimum of distortion, otherwise it is possible to end up with opinions derived from a source (including investigator bias) other than that of the respondent's own value system. Oppenheim comments that research attempts to sample a particular universe of content, in the respondent's mind. In doing so, it does not set out to obtain the whole of this universe of content, but only enough of it to enable the researcher to outline its salient features, i.e. those features which pertain to the purpose of the enquiry at hand (ibid).

In this study, a general survey was conducted on the target industries. Given the wide scope of the area to be covered, the study employed questionnaires. The purpose of adopting this method was to cover a wider population in order to "generalise from the sampled population so that inferences can be made about the characteristics, attitude, or behaviour of that population" (Babbie, 1990 quoted in Creswell, 1994:118). It was also considered to be an efficient tool for a cross-sectoral and gender analysis.

The questionnaire was designed to elicit information from respondents regarding their background, opinions, and attitudes which might have some bearing on some of the causes of gender inequality. The questionnaire was useful as a method of collecting data, as it covered a wider area and larger population within a short time. It was also cheaper in terms of cost (finance, energy and time), easy to conduct and faster compared to interviews. The method also provided greater anonymity and this made respondents feel less threatened or insecure about sharing their personal sentiments (see Brymann, 2001; Robson, 2002). Despite the advantages of the survey questionnaire, it also had problems such as poor response rates, lack of in-depth understanding, superficiality etc. The qualitative approach was used to counter these problems.

#### **4.1.3. Qualitative Approach.**

An important consideration which informed the choice of qualitative methodology was the need to gain in-depth information about gender inequalities at the workplace. This meant examining the diverse views and experiences of working in the industries as far as men and women were concerned. Since issues about context and experience are important to the different perceptions and experiences, the research required the use of qualitative approaches. As Greene points out:

*When...information needs comprise multiple perspectives, contextualised meanings, or the experience of programme participation,..., then qualitative methods should be employed.*

(Greene, 1994:539).

The influence of context (social, institutional, personal etc.) on perceptions and practices may also be revealed through the use of qualitative methods (Guba and Lincoln, 1985; Greene, 1994). It was recognised that a distant research approach, especially through quantitative survey-type questionnaires, would not be able to delve below the surface of issues, whereas the approach of qualitative inquiry requires the researcher to be part of the investigation through observation and in-depth interviewing. It also helps the researcher to rethink the meanings of the experience from the research situation (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

The decision to adopt a qualitative approach therefore was taken in order to provide in-depth information on existing gender and social relations within the manufacturing industries concerned. The final consideration stemmed from the current lack of research into gender inequality and marginalisation of women in Ghana, which is sensitive to context and reflects 'insider' accounts or participant experience of working in manufacturing industries.

#### **4.2.0. Research Strategy /Procedure.**

A multiple case study, incorporating a general survey, was used as the primary source of data for the research. The study sought to cover two major sub-sectors of the manufacturing industry in Ghana, textiles and garment, and food processing, both of which have a preponderance of female workers. Supplementary information was collected from the metal industry a male dominated industry with considerable occupational segregation. The case study had two main components. The first was a survey questionnaire applied to employees of 21 selected firms (11 from food processing and 10 from the textiles and garment sector). The second comprised in-depth interviews with a selected group of respondents drawn from within the firms.

The case- study method has been applied by many research investigators, such as Lane and Roberts in an industrial dispute at one large firm in Britain ('Strike at Pilkington') (Lane and Roberts, 1971), 'Street Corner Society' by William F. Whyte (1981), and many others. A case study was chosen as a research strategy because the research basically sought to ask questions relating to the 'why' and 'how' of the existence of gender inequalities. According to Yin, questions of 'how' and 'why' are more explanatory and are likely to favour the use of a case study (ibid). The case - study involves an in-depth study dealing with social issues. It helps to unearth processes that underlie the behaviours and activities in question (Spector and Kitsuse, 1977; Kuper and Kuper, 1985).

Gender inequality involves a multiplicity of elements such as segregation, discrimination and subordination that are linked to each other. However, different societies/communities, for example rural and urban communities, may have differences in understanding what constitutes gender inequality. To be able to access a particular phenomenon in different settings calls for the adoption of a multiple (comparative) case- study approach. The unit or units of analysis covered helped the



comparability of the study through the use of multiple sources of evidence, and the establishment of the domain in which the study's findings could be analytically generalised (Kidder and Judd, 1986). Furthermore, the evidence provided under different settings helped in determining whether or not there is a causal relationship between gender inequality and the economic marginalisation of women.

According to Yin, many research investigators have disdain for the case study strategy (Yin, 1994). Some social scientists have criticised the idea of generalising findings of case studies, arguing that they provide little basis for scientific generalisation, and that such findings are not representative since case studies concentrate on a relatively small group or single unit (Francis, 1992). Yin, however, argues that case studies, like experiments, are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to the population or universe. He indicates that the case study, like an experiment, does not represent a "sample", and that the investigator's goal is to expand and generalise theories (analytical generalisation) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation) (Yin, 1994). As three notable social scientists describe in their single case study, the goal is to do a "generalising" and not a "particularising" analysis (Lipset et al., 1956). Therefore, since scientific facts are rarely based on single experiments but rather on a multiple set of experiments, which replicate the same phenomenon under different conditions, the same approach can be used with a multiple -case study but requiring a different concept of the appropriate research design (Yin, 1994).

Another argument that is commonly raised is the issue of biased views or the element of subjectivity. However, supporters of the case- study approach put forward that bias can also enter into the conducting of experiments and the use of other research strategies such as designing questionnaires for surveys or conducting historical research (Rosenthal, 1976; Sudman and Bradbrun, 1983; Yin, 1994).

Even though the case study approach is associated with these weaknesses, Yin argues in its defence that:

*The study provides more and in-depth information, providing explanations to the causal links in real -life interventions that are complex for other forms of research strategy. It also describes an intervention and the real-life context in which it occurs. Furthermore, the case study can illustrate certain topics within an evaluation, and*

*in a descriptive mode - even from a journalistic perspective. Also it can be used to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcome.*

(Yin, 1994:15).

Thus, the comprehensiveness of the case study method is its greatest advantage over other methods, such as survey design. It can be based on any combination of qualitative and quantitative evidence, and may, but need not always, include direct detailed observation as a source of evidence (ibid., 14). In order to eliminate some of the weaknesses of the case study approach, this research had an embedded survey within the case-study. Edwards, in studying the textiles manufacturing sector in Southern Ghana, adopted this method. Although she was conducting an ethnographic study in the Central region in Ghana, she also conducted a general survey, conducted both in the city of Accra (Greater Accra Region) and Cape Coast (Central Region). This strategy helped her to have a generalised picture of the importance of textiles, as well as the nature and degree of problems faced by seamstresses and tailors within the two regions (see Edwards, 1997). Adopting such a strategy was important to this research because this study sought to conduct both inter and intra-sectoral comparisons. The survey seemed to be the most efficient and effective way of covering a wider population and area. For analytical purposes, having a cross-sectoral survey enables comparison of the nature of the phenomena within different sectors. The different effects of development, economic change as well as socio cultural change can be determined.

#### **4.3.0. Approaches to Data Collection.**

This section discusses the approaches to data collection, sampling techniques, administration of the instruments, the reliability and validity of the instrument employed and data analysis that were used to elicit the necessary information in line with the strategy.

##### **4.3.1. Research Instruments.**

The main instruments used for the collection of data for the study were the questionnaire, interviews and observation.

#### **4.3.1.1. The Questionnaire.**

The questionnaire is one of the main instruments for gathering data. From 'the angle of how usable a research tool' the questionnaire might be, Oppenheim advises that questionnaires should be easy to administer. In addition to this he points out that there is the need to make the content of the questionnaire user-friendly. (Oppenheim, 1992). Further support can be built into a questionnaire design by the choice of a consistent method of response across items (for instance by requesting that respondents tick their preferred opinions throughout the instruments employed). Hoinville and Jowell suggest that consistency of responding may also be enhanced by helping the respondent to predict how they should handle a given item. This goal, they point out, can be realised through the use of systematic numbering, by colour coding, and by appropriate juxtaposition of different letter sizes, type-faces, headings, lines, and boxes (Hoinville and Jowell, 1978). Attention to such details in the presentation of a questionnaire has important implications for the quality of responses.

Robson indicates that the best quality of answers is likely to be gained from specific questions about important things (Robson, 1993). Oppenheim adds that questions should be worded simply, because questions, which are phrased in terms that are too sophisticated for the target group of respondents, are likely to be unproductive in applied research (op. cit.). Indeed, these authors suggest that questions should be phrased so that they are tailored specifically for the target group or respondents. In this context, they advise that pejorative terms should be eliminated, as should leading questions, each of which may bias the survey results.

Oppenheim remarks that vague questions should be avoided, (since they are likely to lead to meaningless responses) as should questions that have no direct bearing on the problems being addressed. He likewise suggests that double-barrelled questions should be omitted, because they often produce answers in which the meaning is ambivalent. This same writer adds that questions, which convey that the respondent is, attributed low prestige, or is somehow the subject of social disapproval, is equally undesirable from the point of view of effective questionnaire design (ibid).

#### **4.3.1.2. Interviewing.**

Interviews are direct conversations with a purpose and are extensively used by social scientists (Burgess, 1984; Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992 Robson, 2002). The main

method used in this study was the personal (face-to-face) interview. The interview schedules in this study employed a combination of semi-structured and open-ended styles of questions. The use of these methods depended on the type of informant or conditions at the time of study. The key informants had different occupational backgrounds and therefore their interviews were tailored towards their areas of specialisation. Some interviews were situational, where questions were posed in relation to situations observed while touring factory floors. The semi-structured interviews were used only for the selected group made up of key informants and employers (Oakley, 1981; Finch, 1984; Burgess, 1984; Francis, 2000). The main advantage of such a style of interview is that it encourages the respondents to relate their personal experience to the area, topic, or issue, as well as revealing their opinions and attitudes. This strategy provides the interviewer with a great deal of freedom to probe various areas and raise specific queries on issues that are not clear during the course of interviewing.

The essence of this technique was to draw out additional in-depth information that would be beneficial to the study, given the expert knowledge of employers, and key informants and their experience in the field. These interviews were recorded on tape (cassette and video recorders) with the consent of the respondents. The main purpose of filming events was to keep an audio-visual memory of activities as they occurred within the world of work, partly as field records and partly also to ease cross checking with notes made in order to facilitate making judgements and supporting the interpretation of data. Filming of events, in most cases, was undertaken with the help of a research assistant (under the direction of the researcher), or by the researcher with a recorder set on a tripod stand for most interviews, with employers and key informants.

The interview method was not without its disadvantages as it was time consuming and there was also a tendency for respondents to deviate from the topic being discussed, as indicated by Burgess (1984) and Nachmias and Nachmias (1992). This was balanced against the much higher response rate provided by this technique, as compared to other of survey techniques. Furthermore, the use of the interview was advantageous, since it could readily be combined with other methods such as observation.

#### **4.3.1.3. Observation.**

Observation was another method used during the study. Generally, observation, according to Bernard, is the foundation of (social) cultural anthropology, which

involves getting close to the people and making them feel comfortable enough with your presence so that you can observe and record information about their lives (Bernard, 1995:136). Since the early twentieth century, social anthropologists have claimed the method of observation as a defining feature of their discipline (Mead 1972; Finch, 1984). In this study, observations were both structured and unstructured (see Bryman, 2001). The researcher acted as an overt observer, making a tour of the various areas/ sections within the firm watching men and women at work, and the various stages of production. This was done with the help of a tour guide (general/ production managers or the employer). Some activities were filmed (video recorded) and photographs taken with permission. The researcher, in most cases, spent several days at various workplaces before and after interviews, just watching participants working and their behaviour at work. In some situations, the researcher had to get involved in some activities in order to be able to interview participants without interrupting (stopping) the production process.

This method provided a further insight into the attitudes and behaviours of the workers, their social environment and how these influenced their way of life. Observing people in their working environment provided deeper insight into how certain factors such as cultural perceptions about gender roles were imported into the workplace. The observational data provided background information which enabled the researcher to interpret the questionnaire data in a more meaningful way. In studying social and cultural aspects in relation to behaviour patterns such as attitudes and perceptions, interviews and questionnaires responses have become notorious for the discrepancies between what people say and what they actually do (actions) as “Saying is one thing; doing is another”(Robson, 2002:310).

#### **4. 4.0. Population and Sampling Procedure.**

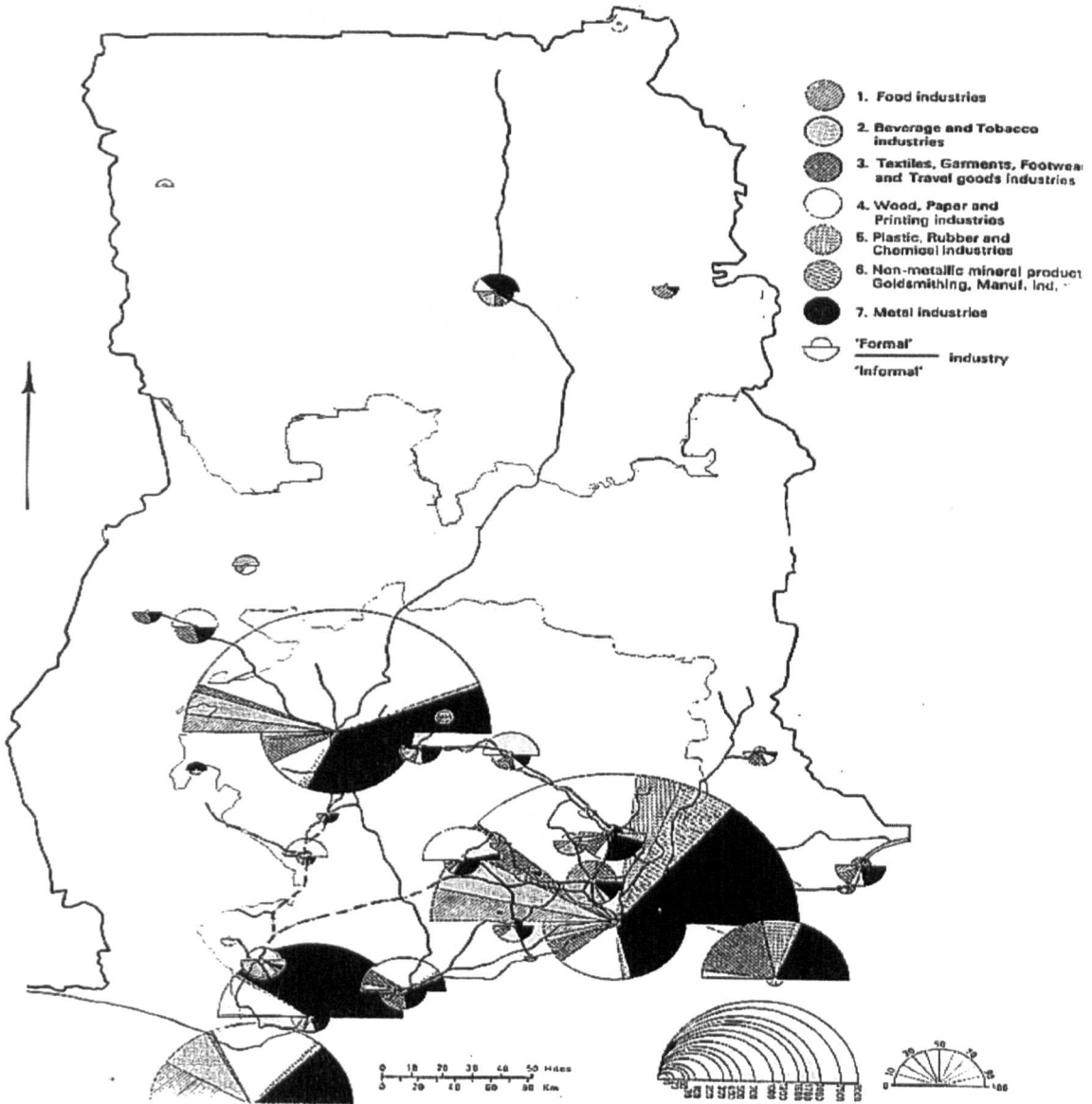
This section provides a description of the study areas and the selection of the population.

##### **4.4.1. The Study Areas.**

Ghana has 10 administrative regions and although this research sought to study manufacturing industry in Ghana, the whole country could not be covered. The three largest industrial cities in Ghana- Accra, Tema and Kumasi- were therefore selected, for two main reasons: their role in Ghana’s move towards industrial development, and

their being the leading areas of manufacturing (Andrae, 1981). This section gives a brief description of the areas of study. The aim is to give a picture that will help the reader understand the geographical, historical as well as the socio-economic context in which industries and workers operate.

**Fig. 4.1. Distribution of manufacturing establishments with more than 50 persons employed, in towns of over 10,000 people, 1962.**



Source: Gunilla, Andréa (1981:67) Industry in Ghana, Production form and Spatial Structure Fig 2.16

Accra, the capital and largest city of Ghana, is situated on the south-eastern part of Ghana, on the Gulf of Guinea (see Fig 3.1). It is the most densely populated area in Ghana and currently holds a population of about 1.6 million (817, 404 males and 841, 533 females) (GSS, 2002). The people in Accra are heterogeneous because majority

of the populace are not natives of Accra, but outsiders migrating into reside in Accra ([www.Encyclopaedia.com](http://www.Encyclopaedia.com)). The natives are the Ga's, with their main occupation being fishing for men and trading for the women.

Economically, Accra is classified principally as an industrial and commercial centre that holds large-scale major manufacturers of processed food, beverages, timber and plywood, textiles, clothing, chemicals, and printed materials (Fig 4.1). It is the site of an international airport and a focus of the country's railroad system, including a link to nearby Tema, which since 1962 has served as the city's deepwater port.

With a total population of 141, 479, (68, 467 males and 73, 012 females) (GSS, 2002), Tema is located on the south east of Ghana, 18 miles (29 km ) east of Accra. Tema is linked to Accra by a motorway and two main roads. As an industrial and harbour city, Tema provides Ghana with its main harbour which serves as the country's gateway for imports and exports. The huge fishing harbour provides a good amount of the fish consumed in the country. Tema is the country's leading industrial centre (township) where most of the nation's industries, which includes most of the country's chief manufactures- of aluminium, steel, refined petroleum, soap, processed fish, chocolate, textiles, cement, and other chemicals, are located (Fig 4.1) (The Columbia Encyclopaedia, Sixth Edition. 2001 ).

Kumasi, dubbed as the 'Garden City of West Africa' is the capital city of Ashanti Region, the Kingdom of Gold and a land known for its ancient royalty with one of the single richest gold mines in the world ([www.Encyclopaedia.com](http://www.Encyclopaedia.com)). With a population of 1, 170, 270 (587, 012 males and 583, 258 females) (GSS, 2002), Kumasi, is the second largest and most densely populated city in the country. Geographically, Kumasi lies in south-central belt of Ghana, curved out of a dense forest belt, 270 km north-west of Accra and about 150 miles inland the Gulf of Guinea (see Fig 3.1). The natives of Kumasi are Ashanti's, with commerce and farming being their main occupation. Kumasi is a commercial and transportation centre in a cocoa-producing region. It is located on the north-south trade routes. Hence, it has become a major commercial centre having the largest central market in West Africa.

Historically, Accra, Tema and Kumasi were among the five pilot areas used in Ghana's move towards industrial development in 1960. These cities thus benefited from the government's £G10million set aside for direct investment in industrial enterprises (see Andrea, 1981; Ansa Asamoah, 1996). The special development as

industrial sites led to the setting up of infrastructural facilities and services needed by industry. The industrial plan formulated by the nation has led to these cities to seeing much of modernisation and development initiative overtime at the expense of other regions. Most of the remnants of these industrialisation projects still stand to this day as clusters of industries build and expand within these industrial sites, making use of the external economies of scale. The resultant effects of the expansion in industrialisation and employment, have caused a spatial form of development in these areas (Fig 4.1) which have become the most densely-populated urban cities in Ghana. Survey reports of Ghana (GLSS 1996, 2000; CWIQ, 1998) have shown that the Greater Accra and Ashanti regions have the highest concentration of manufacturing workers in both the formal and informal sectors of manufacturing. According to the Association of Ghana Industries membership records, of its 1500 members as at June 1999, 67% of those in food processing, and 78% in garment and textiles were located in Greater Accra and Ashanti (see A G I, Report 1999). None of these urban cities can be described as ethnically homogenous, due to the influence of migration and the search for employment by people with different ethnic backgrounds (both foreign and local).

#### **4.4.2. Population.**

Studies on gender issues, women, employment and industry in Ghana and elsewhere have tended to draw their sample from a relatively homogenous population made up mainly of women (Elson and Pearson, 1991; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Kibria, 1998). However, this study sought to diverge from this trend by dealing with a rather mixed population of men and women in manufacturing industry in Ghana. The rationale for including men in the study was to provide a comparative gender analysis of inequality. The sample population was therefore male and female employees in both the food processing and the textiles and garment sectors in the cities of Accra, Tema and Kumasi in the southern part of Ghana.

It was then necessary to select from the target population a smaller and more convenient group that could be studied, given the limited time frame and resources available. The next section discusses the sample and sample techniques adopted in this study



### **4.4.3. Sampling Procedure.**

Various sampling techniques were employed in the selection of the main sample for the study. This section looks at these various techniques, and their relevance for the study.

#### **4.4.3.1. Selection of Firms and Sample Size.**

Firms were selected from combined sources of data derived from the Ministry of Trade, Ghana Association of Industry (GAI), the National Board for Small Scale industry (NBSSI), the Ghana Free Zone Board (GFZB), and Ghana Association of Manufacturers. A list of registered firms under these associations was compiled. Some firms had registered with more than one association. In some instances, firms that had multiple product lines that fell within the specified category under the related areas were selected. In all, over there were 44 textiles and garment firms, and 21 food-processing firms with contact addresses and/ or phone numbers for Accra, Tema and Kumasi. Because of limited finance and time and because of the size of area to be covered, a selection was made from these firms. Cluster sampling was used at this stage<sup>27</sup>. Factories were selected from the three group of business: the large, medium and small scale<sup>28</sup>. Cluster sampling was also used to select firms by industrial area (see Lall et al., 1994; Mcadade et al., 1996). Factories in the same industry and in the same geographical area could then be visited together, thus minimising the time involved and the cost of travel. This method was particularly valuable in identifying and locating food-processing firms. A few textiles and garment firms fell within the same cluster area, but the majority were dispersed as the firms were situated within the homes of the employers.

The study was conducted in 21 firms (large, medium and small scale) drawn from Accra, Tema and Kumasi. This involved 10 textiles and garment firms and 11 food processing firms.

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<sup>27</sup> Cluster sampling is a technique in which a subset of subgroups is chosen at random and others ignored instead of sampling from within each subgroup on a particular stratum. As a result, the subset becomes the sample (Robson, 2001)

<sup>28</sup> The classification was that used by the Ministry of Industry, Ghana. The four size (scale) criteria used are: Large scale, which is defined as a firm with more than 100 employees ; Medium: a firm with more than 30 but less than 100 (30 to 99) employees. Small: employing between 6 to 29 workers and Micro: less than 6 employees (Teal, 1998, also see Lall et al., 1994). This study does not include micro enterprises.

**Table 4.1.****Industry and Firm Size**

<b>Firm Size (scale)</b>	<b>Textiles and garment</b>	<b>Food processing</b>	<b>Total number of firms by size</b>
Large	0	3	3
Medium	2	3	5
Small	8	5	13
Total	10	11	21

It should be noted that large textiles firms were included in the initial sample, but were later excluded due to industrial action, which occurred in Ghana between January and April 2001. As a result, only small and medium scale textiles and garment firms were used for the study (Table 4.1)

The choice of industry and firms in this study was mainly based on the ‘feminisation’ on these industries as a whole. However, the significant role that these industries played in the process of economic development of Ghana (see chapter 3), as well as in the consumption patterns was also taken into consideration. Firms covered under food processing industry included agro-food processing which covered fish canning and processing, maize and cassava flour processing, bakery and pastries (see video). These firms play a vital role in the consumption patterns of Ghanaian society as they are main producers of local made food -forming the basic national stable food in most communities. With the exception of the large scale multinational fish-canning and confectionary firms, which produce mainly for exports, the traditional agro- food processing (cottage) industries such as corn flour processing (*kenkey*), cassava flour processing (*gari*,) and bread are consumed in the average Ghanaian household and even in boarding institutions. For example bread, ‘*kenkey*’ and ‘*gari*’ play a significant role in Ghana, as these are used as gifts “*kwan so adeye*”, representing symbolic gestures of love and usually used as souvenirs of the area<sup>29</sup> visited by travellers within Ghana, to family, neighbours and friends. The reason is not based on the fact that these food items cannot be purchased from where they live, but rather associated with the symbolic connotation which is based on the idea that these are traditionally home-made by women with a particular skill and possesses a natural home-made tastes which the large scale factory made goods lack.

<sup>29</sup> In Ghana, tribes and communities are generally associated with certain occupations or trades. For example the major food speciality for people along the coastal belt especially the Ga’s and Fanti’s is corn flour processing (*kenkey*), while the Ewes in the South-east are known for their cassava-flour processing- (*gari*).

In the textiles and garment industry, firms covered were mainly those engaged in the African/ hand -made textiles; batik and tie-dye, embroidery and cloth-weaving (kente) as in the case of textiles and locally sewn garments (see video). Batik- and tie and -dye making is a trade generally associated with women in Ghana, as this enterprise can be easily set-up in the backyard of the home to allow women the flexibility of combining work and family life (see video). Cloth-weaving (kente) is among the most lucrative trade dominated by men under the textiles industry . The kente industry has been in existence for more than five centuries (see video). Traditionally, the cloth is worn by Ashanti kings and chiefs and is recognised in Ghana as one of the national customs. Similarly, machine embroidery and appliqué designing, although time consuming as cloth-weaving, are regarded as lucrative business in Ghana, as the designs are not only priced according to its size, but the nature and complexities, style and time.

#### **4.4.3.2. Selection of the Population.**

The total population of employees in the 21 firms used for the study based on figures provided was about 1976.<sup>30</sup> Respondents were drawn wholly from the population of permanent workers. In firms with flat structures (especially small scale firms), a simple random sampling procedure was employed. In firms with tall hierarchical structures, stratified sampling was employed.

Stratified random sampling helped to ensure that each sub-group was represented. The disadvantage of this process, as Jankowicz, (ed.) (1995) and Robson, (2001) acknowledge, is the time and cost involved in drawing up a list of large numbers of employees who may be geographically scattered. Nevertheless, the inherent weakness of the combination of locations separated by large distances was complemented by the identification of areas that had a concentration of industrial workers forming different classes by the nature of jobs, occupation or position within the same locality and industry. This was done by the use of the cluster sampling technique.

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<sup>30</sup> This figure represents the total number of full -time/ permanent workers. However firms also employed over 600 casual workers, of whom women formed about 75%. Casual workers were only used intermittently by firms (large and medium ) and employers only draw from this pool a small number at any one time.

#### **4.4.3.3. Selection of Key informants:**

Twenty key informants were purposively<sup>31</sup> selected for this study using a non-probability sampling strategy. Non-probability sampling involves identifying and questioning informants because of the relevance of their individual positions, roles or background experience to the study (Jankowicz (ed.) 1995). One way of applying this is by adopting the key informant technique (Tremblay, 1982) which involves the selection of people based on their specialised knowledge of the issue in question and taking 'slices through the organisation' (Reeves and Harper, 1981a).

In this study, the key informants were drawn from all walks of life. They included employers, policy makers, women industrialists and representatives of organisations working for women that fell within the scope of the topic.

The non-probability sampling method has the advantage of flexibility, and is particularly useful in the first familiarisation cycle through the issues being investigated. The process affords a better opportunity for collaboration with respondents than the probability method, and allows great scope for inference and judgement in interpreting results (Jankowicz (ed.) 1995). It was because of these advantages that this method was applied in the study.

#### **4.5.0. Access.**

Access is an important factor in conducting research. In this study, access was gained by obtaining letters of introduction from my department, and the Ghana Free Trade Zone, which spelt out the purpose and the importance of the research. This letter prepared the initial grounds for the study. Also, being a Ghanaian, I was familiar with the setting and had links with some people within industries which served as a further link to others. These letters of introduction and the leads encouraged co-operation from respondents in the field, as shown in their positive responses in both the interview sessions and the questionnaires.

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<sup>31</sup> Purposive sampling involves choosing people whose views are relevant to an issue, in the judgement of the researcher, and / or where collaborators persuade you that their views are particularly worth obtaining and typify important varieties of view points (Jankowicz (ed.) 1995)

## **4.6. The Fieldwork.**

### **4.6.1. Recruitment and Training of Research Assistants.**

Four research assistants (2 men and 2 women) were employed in conducting the study. They mainly assisted in assembling data from various firms, accompanying me on exploratory visits to the survey sites and also participating in discussions with participants where necessary. The research assistants were mainly university and polytechnic graduates who had some knowledge of social research. Training of the research assistants was deemed very important to equip them with the necessary skills and orientation to face the task in the field. Although one week of intensive training was provided, training became a continuous process throughout the period as different circumstances meant adopting new strategies in solving problems. Training was provided in general survey methods and also in human relations. In addition, the basic rationale and objectives of the study and a detailed discussion of the survey instruments of questionnaires and interview schedules were provided. This was to clarify the various concepts used. This process was deemed necessary since the research assistants, in turn, had to explain these to the respondents and be able to answer questions put to them in such a way as to allay the respondents' fears and suspicions. Members of the team were provided with the opportunity to practise using the survey instruments on a few members of their community, in both the local dialect and English. Their experiences were discussed and problems resolved. They were also given the opportunity to participate in the pilot study in order for them to be able to acquaint themselves with the aims and objectives, the nature of the work and the type of the people to be contacted for the required information in the main survey. It needs emphasising that members of the team were fluent in both English and the local language, as this was deemed necessary to facilitate effective communication.

### **4.6.2. The Pilot Study.**

Two main stages of piloting this study were conducted before the main study: the first phase of the Pre-pilot stage and a Pre-survey stage. The first piloting was undertaken in both Kumasi and Accra in Ghana, in June 2000. 20 questionnaires were distributed in 3 beverage firms. The feedback showed a 90% response rate with comments. The second piloting -Pre-survey- was conducted in Kumasi, in December, of the same year in the field, as a second stage for testing the final draft of the questionnaire and

interview schedules. These instruments were tested on a cross-section of ten workers from a beverages firm in Kumasi. This involved three factories, with one from each category and five key informants. However, in this study, women's associations and trade unions were also asked to comment on how respondents would react to questions and to help restructure them. Working with these groups also facilitated entry into the field for the study itself. It should be noted that all firms and participants used for the piloting stage were excluded from the main research, to avoid biasing the results due to their advance exposure to questions.

The purpose of this was to test the research instrument, and to make any necessary amendments. The objective was to determine the attitudes and behaviour of respondents towards the structuring and wording of questions and also to find out whether the questionnaire items would be able to elicit the required responses. This was due to the fact that issues pertaining to gender equality and empowerment of women were delicate, since in the prevailing political and cultural atmosphere in Ghana they could be viewed as having political connotations<sup>32</sup>. The results of the initial piloting helped in restructuring the questionnaire and making the necessary corrections where needed

#### **4.6.3. Main period of fieldwork.**

The main field work, which was initially planned to start in December 2000, had to be postponed until January 2001. This was largely due to political tensions due to the presidential elections during that period<sup>33</sup>. Furthermore, contacts with employers revealed that the majority of employers had not received their introductory letter which had been sent out a month earlier. Other reasons given by employers for the delay were that they were closing down due to the season, or were very busy with preparation of reports for the Christmas break. In addition, employers had to identify the dates that suited them, which did not always correspond with the different time periods allocated by the researcher for the zones. As a result, the original plan and time-table had to be readjusted by combining two zones, Accra and Tema,<sup>34</sup> due to the differences in dates given by firms within these two zones, as in the table below.

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<sup>32</sup> The research was conducted during a period within Ghana's political history where issues regarding gender and the empowerment of women formed part of the political agenda for the ruling PNDC party which was approaching its term of office, and the political mood of the country at that time was set towards the preparation of its presidential elections.

<sup>33</sup> After the first round of presidential elections, which was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, 2000, a clear winner could not be declared; hence, the electoral commission had called for a second round of presidential elections. This had slowed down economic activities, due to fear and tensions affecting business activities.

<sup>34</sup> Although Accra and Tema are both within the same region, they were treated as separate zones for easy movement and convenience in terms of cost and distance in the original plan.

**Table 4.2. Itinerary December 2000 to June 2001**

Month	Area	Activity
December 2000	Kumasi	Pilot /Training of research assistants, contacts with employers and key informants
January	Accra / Tema “ “	Distribution of questionnaires, conducting of interviews, with employees, employers and key informants.
February		
March		
April	Kumasi	As above
May	Kumasi /Bonwire	
June	Accra/ Tema	Follow Up / Library research

#### **4.6.3.1. Administration of the Questionnaire.**

There are three main procedures through which questionnaires can be administered in a survey. These are the self-completion, face-to-face (interview survey), and telephone - interviews (Robson, 2002: 236). In this study, the administration of the questionnaire involved both the self-completion and interview survey methods. The respondents, who were randomly selected, had different levels of education and ability, which was seen as potentially lowering the response rate if people with literacy problems felt they could not participate in the study. The interview survey was, therefore, used to encourage full participation of all members, irrespective of their level of educational background and abilities (ibid., 238).

The same questionnaires were distributed to all employees (irrespective of their gender and occupation, or the locality and size of the firm in which they worked) within selected firms in the food processing and the textiles and garment sub-sectors of the manufacturing industry in the three cities of Kumasi, Accra and Tema. The distribution was carried out between January and May 2001. First, letters were sent and phone calls made to most employers. This was followed up by an initial personal visit to all firms where requested by employers. This was to establish good personal rapport and familiarity with the employers, the workers and the environment. Dates were then fixed for interviews and questionnaire distribution and collection.

Before the questionnaires were distributed in each firm, the selected participants were briefed about the purpose of the research and the need for the study. This was done in English and later translated into the local language, in order to facilitate communication and understanding. The languages employed in this study therefore,

were English and the local Ghanaian language (Ashanti Twi), in which I was also proficient. Respondents were allowed to use whichever language they chose to express themselves in the questionnaire and the interview.

Respondents were offered two options for completing the questionnaire: either to answer the questionnaire and hand it in at the end of the day, or to take the questionnaire home and return it within four days. The interview surveys (face-to face interviews) provided a further option for respondents who felt they needed assistance in completing questionnaires because of difficulties with reading and writing. The same structured questionnaire was completed by all employees, whether they were completed independently or in face-to-face survey interviews.

The questionnaire contained a combination of closed and open ended questions. Closed questions allow respondents to answer the same questions, making it easy for answers to be compared and computerised for analysis. The open-ended type allows flexibility in the answering of questions, by providing the opportunity for respondents to express themselves in their own words. According to Nachmias et al., this flexibility provided can aid in the interpretation of the responses that are supplied to closed questions (Nachmias et al., 1992).

The questionnaire was distributed to 200 employees drawn from 21 firms. The questionnaires were distributed at the factories personally by me<sup>35</sup> due to concerns about potential delay caused by the unreliability of the postal system in Ghana. This method facilitated a high rate of returns from the respondents, 89% (178) out of 200 questionnaires distributed, but also eliminated the cost of postage charges.

The choice of a questionnaire for collecting data was useful for a number of reasons. It helped in covering a wider area (3 cities) and a larger population (178) within a short time. It was cheaper in terms of cost (finance, energy and time), easier to conduct and faster compared to interviews (see Nachmias et al, 1992). The questionnaire also offered greater anonymity to the respondent, who would not feel as threatened or insecure in sharing their personal sentiments about the subject studied (ibid).

Although the use of the questionnaire survey can have its own disadvantages such as rigidity in terms of time, providing a limited range of options for respondents to

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<sup>35</sup> All questionnaires were delivered by hand and were to be collected within a set time period. Participants were asked to hand over answered questions to named individuals at specified locations to facilitate easy collection



choose from, and a lower response rate (Robson, 2002), its advantages were highly beneficial to this study.

#### **4.6.3.2. The Interview Processes.**

In this study, most of the interviews took the form of the face-to-face interview, either as the structured interview (used for most employees), in completing the survey questionnaires, or the semi-structured interviews, which were used for employers, key informants and a selected group of employees<sup>36</sup> after the completion of the main questionnaire survey. The semi-structured interview was used to explore attitudes and perceptions about behaviour patterns within the workplace in relation to gender imbalances and the occupational and social-economic background of respondents, and to verify most of the issues raised in the questionnaire survey (Robson, 2002:274).

Prior to the interview period, I, personally contacted the respondents to increase rapport. They were briefed on the subject matter and handed an interview schedule. Appointment dates were negotiated. All interviews were conducted face-to-face, and where possible, in company conference rooms, offices, or enclosed areas, in a favourable conducive atmosphere, where respondents felt comfortable and were not distracted. Where these facilities were not available, workers had to sit a reasonable distance away from the other working staff, in order to avoid interruptions and to preserve confidentiality in response. All interviews were carried out in a manner designed to encourage participants to express themselves in their own words (language fluidity). All interviews were recorded using audio tape and some were also videoed<sup>37</sup>. In firms, which for security purposes did not allow the use of any form of audio-visual equipment, written notes were made of the interviews. Generally, field notes were made after each visit. Photographs and video film of participants at work were taken as part of the observation technique,

#### **4.6.4. The Sample.**

In total, 178 people<sup>38</sup> were used for the study, with 103 people from the food-processing sector and 75 people from the textiles industry. This comprised 97 women and 81 men. This figure represented 89% retrieval of the questionnaires sent out. The

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<sup>36</sup> Employees were selected at random from the sample frame.

<sup>37</sup> These audio-visual aids were only used if the consent of respondents was given.

<sup>38</sup> 120 questionnaires were distributed in the food processing sector, and 80 in the textiles and garment sector. The questionnaires were not evenly distributed amongst the two sectors due to the differences in their size.

food processing industry is a predominantly female sector, but in this study there were more men in the sample than women (Table 4.3)

**Table 4.3: Gender Distribution on Respondents in Food-processing and the Textiles and Garment sectors**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Textiles and garment</b>	<b>Food processing</b>	<b>Total by gender</b>
Men	25	56	81
Women	50	47	97
Total within sector	75	103	178

The male dominance within the sample was due to the fact that more men were employed at the factory floor level (production floor), in most large and medium scale firms. One large-scale fish-processing firm which had a higher proportion of female employees declined to participate in the study. In addition, there were very few women employed in the supportive services (clerical and administrative levels). The gender segregation within the firms could be explained by the nature of the work which mainly involved the use of machines operated by men, and the Industrial Laws and Acts which forbid women from working during the night (Night Work Convention, 1919 No.4), and from lifting heavy objects (Minimum Weight Convention, No.127, 1967), (see Ghana Labour Decree (NLCD),1967) (Issues of segregation are discussed in detail in chapter 6). Within the food processing industry, it was observed women employees were in the majority on the factory floor and in the administration in only four large firms in Ghana. Women were mostly found in the small-scale firms, which were largely owned by women. Table 4.3 provides information on the gender distribution in the sub-sectors.

Like the food-processing industry, large and medium scale textiles firms in Ghana were also male-dominated, with women employed largely as clerical and administrative workers. Large-scale textiles firms could not be included in this study due to a prolonged strike action that had led to the closure of firms by the government.

Tables 4.4 a & b show the number of respondents selected from the various firms by city and size of firm in this study. In the food-processing sector, the largest sample came from Tema, whilst Accra had the highest sample from the textiles and garment industries.

The differences in the distribution of sample size were due to the size of the firms (number of employees) found within each locality.

**Table 4.4. Number of Respondents, City and Size of Firms**

**4.4a. Food-processing sector.**

City	Large	Medium	Small	Total
Accra	16	15	5	36
Tema	32	8	0	40
Kumasi	0	0	27	27
Total	48	23	32	103

**4.4b Textiles and Garment sector.**

City	Large	Medium	Small	Total
Accra	0	12	40	52
Kumasi	0	10	13	23
Total	0	22	53	75

**4.7. Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability are very crucial issues in conducting research. Validity can be explained as the degree to which an instrument is able to measure what it is intended to measure, while reliability deals with the dependability or replicability of the study (Bryman, 2001). The next section discusses the steps taken during the research process to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

Miles and Huberman argue that by making qualitative research lean more towards formalisation and structure of methods eg. predetermined conceptual frames, pre-coding, highly structured protocols and analysis procedures etc., it can be conducted like more quantitative designs (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Proponents of this view however, stress that the intended purpose is to provide thoroughness and explicitness of the data collection process and ensure that the evidence gathered is based upon rationality and trustworthiness of methods (Miles and Huberman 1994). Lincoln and Guba (1994) in contrast, argue that there are intrinsic criteria embodied within the qualitative research paradigm and ways of operationalising them to ensure or provide an alternative to reliability and validity in quantitative research. They propose trustworthiness and authenticity as two primary criteria for assessing a qualitative study. Trustworthiness, they claim, is made up of four criteria, each of which has an equivalent criterion in quantitative research. These are credibility, which parallels internal validity; transferability, which parallels external validity, dependability, which also parallels reliability and confirmability, which parallels objectivity (Lincoln and Guba, 1994). Bryman states that the establishment of credibility of findings demands that the research is carried out according to the

canons of good practice and the submission of research findings to the members of the social world who were studied, for confirmation that the researcher correctly understood that social order. This technique is referred to as 'respondent validation or member validation' (Bryman, 2001). Qualitative research usually entails the intensive study of small groups or individuals and is more concerned with the depth of the study, rather than the breadth, which is more a preoccupation of quantitative research. Qualitative researchers are, therefore, encouraged to produce 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973), that is, rich accounts of the details of a culture. Qualitative findings tend to be oriented to the contextual uniqueness and aspects of the social world studied and thus have a problem of transferability. Lincoln and Guba, commenting on this problem of transferability in qualitative research put it thus: "whether findings hold in some other context, or even in the same context at some other time is an empirical issue"(Guba and Lincoln, 1985: 316).

Confirmability is another key aspect of the trustworthiness of qualitative research. Bryman writes:

*Confirmability is concerned with ensuring that while recognising that complete objectivity is impossible in social research, the researcher can be shown to have acted in good faith... that he/she has not overtly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations manifestly to sway the conduct of the research and findings derived from it.*

(Bryman, 2001:274).

Guba and Lincoln propose that establishing confirmability should be one of the objectives used by auditors of social research. In addition to the four trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability they, also suggest the primary criterion of authenticity. Bryman claims the issue of authenticity raises a wider set of issues concerning the wider political impact of research. One of these is fairness, which seeks to find out whether the research fairly represents different view points among members of the social setting. Others are ontological authenticity, which also seeks to find whether the research helps members to arrive at a better understanding of the social milieu, and educative authenticity, which seeks to find whether the research helps members to appreciate better the perspectives of their social class or other setting. He also adds that catalytic authenticity deals with whether the research has acted as an impetus to members to

engage in action to change their circumstances and tactical authenticity is concerned with whether the research has empowered members to take steps necessary to engage in action (Bryman, 2001). All of these, the respective authors claim, will help to ensure that the research is conducted in a proper and credible way.

These suggestions were taken into consideration in employing the qualitative approach to the study during the interviewing process. The next section discusses how validity and reliability were ensured in the study.

#### **4.7.1. Testing of the Instrument – Piloting.**

The questionnaire used in collecting data for the study was piloted on two occasions on a sample with the same characteristics as those respondents used for the main study. The testing of the questionnaire was done in stages: the Draft stage, the First Pre-test on the Field, and the Pre-survey stage (Final pre-test). The piloting helped in refining some of the questionnaire items as discussed earlier in the chapter.

The Draft stage: This was an informal testing of the draft of the questionnaire which was carried out in the United Kingdom, using friends, house-mates, university staff and supervisors. They were asked to read through the questionnaire and provide constructive comments on the wording, structure and picture of what it portrayed. After thorough discussion and comments, the questionnaire was reworded and structured.

#### **4.7.2. Confidentiality.**

The confidentiality of the respondents and firms were maintained and they were represented in the study with anonymous codes such as interviewee 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.

#### **4.7.3. Focus Interviews.**

This was used to cross check controversial issues. Although researchers such as Stake (1995) comment that the group might be ‘captured’ by orators, in this research it was different as members within a group were offered equal opportunity to contribute in discussion as the researcher applied her experience in classroom teaching and learning process in each situation.

#### **4.7.4. Audio Recording of Interviews.**

Interviews on tapes were later played back to the individual respondents on follow up visits and were asked to react to the information to ascertain whether it was in line with what they said.

The next section discusses the methods employed in the analysis of data.

#### **4.8. Data Analysis.**

SPSS 10 was the main statistical instrument employed in analysing the quantitative data. The data was presented in descriptive form using frequencies and cross tabulation, using measures of central tendency (mean) for the analysis. However, excel was used for graphical representation of most descriptive analysis. Due to the nature of most variables (nominal values), this was the main tool used for the interpretation of data. All tables in the subsequent chapters show figures in percentage (%) with its corresponding number of respondent in brackets.

#### **4.9.0. Reflections on the Study.**

Undertaking this research was quite an arduous task, especially at a PhD level. This section discusses both the strengths and the limitations of this study.

#### **4.9.1 Strengths of the Research.**

A major strength of this research was the mixed mode design which involved qualitative and quantitative approaches. The quantitative research approach enabled me to cover a larger scope of area to elicit information from a wider population. This prepared the ground for the qualitative research through the selection of people to be interviewed. The use of the qualitative method helped to provide in-depth information on organisational culture, attitudes and societal perceptions about the relationship between men and women in both the world of work and society as a whole.

Another strength was the use of triangulation. Having utilised the mixed mode, I employed triangulation which entails using more than one method or source of data in

studying a social phenomena (Bryman, 2001:274). Employing this mechanism helped to generate greater richness, and confidence in the data collected and provided a more accurate view of information as it enabled me to cross-check the data about related issues (see Webb et al., 1966; Newby, 1977; Deacon et al., 1998).

Furthermore, the interviews and observation helped to put into proper perspective the views of employees, employers, and other key informants, who provided in-depth information. The use of this approach enabled me to benefit from the 'naturalist approach', since by studying participants in their work environment I was exposed to the different institutional/organisational cultures, behaviour and social attitudes that define the relationship between gender, work and the allocation and distribution of economic resources. It thus gave me a better understanding of the relationship between men and women and work, which enhanced the interpretation of data.

Another strength of this thesis was the broad spectrum of data collected from respondents: managers, floor workers, clerical staff, employers, apprentices, parents, policy makers, officials from both government and non-government organisations, and instructors. This helped in triangulating the data and enhanced the validity of the work and the richness of the data.

The use of the audio-visual component as an observational tool helped to provide background information in understanding the dynamics of the existing gender and social relations, and work culture within different industries, which facilitates the interpretation and validation of the findings.

Yet another strength of this thesis was its research framework, which involved the use of a gender-based analysis. The key to understanding women's status in society is by finding out about the role of gender relations in restricting women's access to socio-economic resources and power. As Miller and Razavi write:

*Gender relations... create differences in the positioning of men and women in social processes. It is through gender relations that men are given a greater capacity than women to mobilise a variety of cultural roles and material resources in pursuit of their own interests.*

(Miller and Razavi, 1995:27).

Adopting this framework helped to unearth critical issues which affect the social and economic relationships that govern the distribution of power and economic resources to men and women within the workplace and the home.

#### **4.9.2 Limitations of the Study.**

Given the above, it should also be acknowledged that there were some limitations to this study, which are discussed under the following headings: methodological limitations, the fieldwork, the problem of reactivity, and literature.

##### **4.9.2. 1. Methodological limitations.**

The area of focus of the case study, Ghana, is a large country with 10 administrative regions. In this study, only two regions were used and the study was further limited to three major industrial cities in these regions. I was compelled to focus on these major cities because:

- a. The time frame for the research work was short. Given the period of study, it would have been an over-ambitious project to attempt to study the whole of Ghana, considering the geographical location of the region and the spatial distribution of industries.
- b. Another issue was the financial implications. Undertaking a project on the whole of Ghana would have been over-ambitious considering the economic resources needed. Hence I had to work within the funds available by adopting an approach that took into consideration the spatial distribution and clustering of industries, together with the historical development of the regions with respect to the process of industrialisation policies of the country.
- c. The sample size: given the framework of the study in terms of the population of employees, and the number of firms, it was absolutely impossible to cover all workers within both the food processing and the textiles and garment sectors within the three cities. Therefore, a multiple sample procedure, for example, clustering firms by location, firm size, number of years of establishment (not less than 5 years), etc. had to be adopted in order to restrict the population to be covered.



#### **4.9.2.2. In the Field.**

There were major time constraints, and I had to work 6-7 days a week, in order to make maximum use of all the opportunities available. A further complication was that within the same time frame there was a prolonged strike action in the large scale textiles firms, which resulted in government intervention and the subsequent closure of these firms within the study area (Tema), where the majority of these firms were located. This affected the sampling as workers in these firms could not be included. There was also a change of government in Ghana, which affected the political and economic climate of the country. Some large and medium sized firms, especially those which were owned by foreign businesses, were afraid of the potential instability and change, and refused to allow their workers to be interviewed.

Respondents also varied in their attitude to the study. Generally, the attitude and response from males in large and medium scale businesses were more encouraging than from females (employers and employees). In some cases, obtaining a response from semi-literate and even literate females proved rather difficult, as some top female managers and supervisors, although they collected the questionnaires, failed to return them. Various reasons for this were given, such as lack of time or having left the questionnaires at home, but after consistent follow-ups, some of them claimed they still were either too busy or did not have the time. Although they were in a minority, such negative attitudes affected the data response on women in leadership.

#### **4.9.2.3. The Problem of Reactivity.**

The research process and findings may be subject to the unintended influence of the researcher:

- a. The interviewer's effects in terms of personality, social background, gender and age are seen as factors that influence the responses in a study (Bryman, 2001: 130; also see Burgess 1985). These factors are strongly evident in the use of qualitative research as a result of personal interaction with participants. In the study, although I had personal interaction with men and women from different age groups, marital status and occupational categories, reactivity was reduced given my background in human relations, level of knowledge and maturity gained from her experience in teaching and education. Furthermore,

I was familiar with the context, behaviour and attitude of the people studied within the study. It is possible that the level of my status and education might have intimidated the poorly educated. However, this influence was reduced by the use of local dialects, which facilitated ease and freedom of expression by the research participants (see video). Hence, these factors were not considered to be a barrier between those researched and me.

- b. Another area where my presence affected the result was where interviews were recorded. In this study, I sought to reduce the level of influence by seeking the consent of participants and the use of a tape recorder (pocket size), which was not displayed but hidden with the knowledge of interviewees<sup>39</sup>. In the case of filming the activities of the workers, where I made use of the video camera, it was impossible to hide the camera, because of its size. As a result of this, it was necessary to employ the use of a self-completion questionnaire in order to reduce the problem of reactivity that would invariably emerge from the presence of the camera.

Ethical principles should guide all social research, with the aim of ensuring that the physical, social and psychological well being of research participants is not adversely affected by the research (see BSA, 1982). Anonymity, privacy and confidentiality are therefore essential in social research (BSA, 1982; Burgess, 1985; Hammersley and Atkinson, (ed.), 1995). In addressing the issues of confidentiality in the study, participants were promised that their identities and the information provided would be used for the purpose of the research only and would be treated and maintained as confidential information. Participants were also promised anonymity. In the use of qualitative research, this is difficult, but this problem was overcome by the use of pseudonyms in identifying the individuals. In addition, the consent of participants was obtained in the use of audio-visual recording where the individual's identity could not be hidden. I also made use of a questionnaire, which made it relatively easy to anonymise findings in a way that does not allow individuals to be identified as they might be by data from interviews.

#### **4.9.2.4. Literature.**

The inadequacy of relevant secondary information on gender related issues both in Ghana, and globally, served as a major constraint to providing background

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<sup>39</sup> The idea of the recorder not displayed was to reduce the unintended effects of reactivity in research.

information. The majority of secondary information, although it discusses inequality, focuses mainly on women in the labour market. It thus fails to provide a comparative perspective of both men and women within the framework of the study, hence the inadequate information on men in the literature provided. It should also be noted that although literature is readily available on other developed and developing countries, access to such information and, for that matter, information in Ghana on the area of study is relatively difficult to obtain. This is due to the fact that such information is not readily available and, where it can be obtained, such documents are mostly outdated.

Another limitation was the lack of access to official records and documents on employment from firms. None of the large firms would allow me access their records on recruitment, manpower training and development, salary structure and staff attendance, for security reasons. However, they did agree to answer questions in relation to some of these areas. These records were generally absent in most small scale firms, as most employers kept no such records. Therefore, the data used is based on oral information obtained through interviews and responses from questionnaires.

The subsequent chapters provide a presentation and analysis of data on the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF WORKERS IN FOOD PROCESSING AND THE TEXTILES AND GARMENT SECTORS IN GHANA.**

## CHAPTER 5

### THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF WORKERS IN FOOD PROCESSING AND THE TEXTILES AND GARMENT SECTORS IN GHANA.

#### 5.0. Introduction.

This chapter discusses the socio-economic profile of workers in the food processing and the textiles and garment sub-sectors within manufacturing industry in Ghana. The basic aim of the chapter is to compare gender and sectoral differences in relation to age, educational background, marital status and family background.

#### 5.1. The Age of Workers.

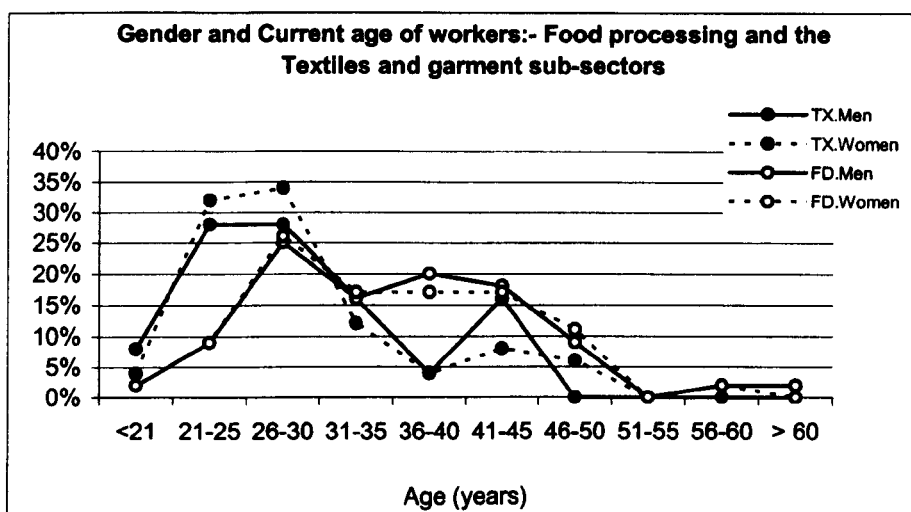
Age is an essential determinant of labour force participation. It also reflects the effects of human capital investment and wages, in relation to the differentials in labour force participation of over the life cycle (Blau and Ferber, 1986; ILO,1999; Wirth, 2001 ). Human capital investment decisions depend on how long the company will benefit from an individual employee's working life. As Blau and Ferber pointed out:

*If an employer believes that women on average are less likely to remain with the firm (given the workforce interruptions) on average than men, he or she may prefer men for jobs that require specific training...*

(Blau and Ferber, 1986:214).

In this study, the modal age-range for the sample overall was 26-30, with 28% falling in this age group. Few were under 21(3.4%) and even fewer over 50 (1.1%). Differences were greater between the sectors than between the sexes. There were more workers under 26 years in the textile and garment than the food-processing sector (36% compared with 10.6%). However, more workers in food-processing were over 30 years (64%(66)), compared with 32%(24) in the textiles sector) (Fig 5.1). It thus seems clear that the age structure of the workforce is younger in textiles than in food-processing.

**Figure 5.1. Age Distribution By Gender: Cross-Sectoral Analysis.**



Key: FD- Food processing sector. TX- textiles and garment sector.

Overall differences between men and women were relatively small, although rather more women were in the 21-30 age group (50.5% compared with 40.7% of men) and fewer women were over 30 (46.3% compared with 55.5% of men). If we compare the sexes within each industry separately, we find that the differences are negligible in food processing. The overall differences between men and women occur almost entirely in the textiles industry, where 56% of men are aged 21-30, compared with 66% of women, and 36% are over 30, compared with 30% of women.

The age participation for both sectors shows some peculiarities. The graph for men in textiles shows a sharp decline after 30 years, which then rises at 41, then falls with an extended 'L' shape after 46 years. However, relatively few women (6% (3) were in wage employment at age 46 years. The reverse was the case for men and women in food processing (Fig 5.1).

The shape of the graph (Fig 5.1) for the ages of men and women in this study is different from that produced on the age distribution of the labour force in Ghana (ref to Fig. 3.7) (GLSS, 2, 4, 1996, 2000; ISSER et al., 1998; Canagarajah et al., 1997). It also runs counter to other global studies showing gender differences in age participatory rate in the labour market (Life work cycle) as an inverted 'U' shape for men and 'M' shape for women. The latter is formed as a result of women retreating from the labour force to give birth and to rear children during their prime age and returning in lower numbers to engage in economically active life as the children grow up. Men's work life cycle, on the other hand, only diminishes with retirement from

economic activity, after attaining a plateau during the prime ages of 25 to 54 years (see Nuss et al., 1992; UNIDO, 1995; ILO, 1999).

The reasons for the differences in the shape of the graph in this study can be attributed to two main factors; inter sectoral variations, and methodological factors. Different industries tend to have different age patterns in employment. This is highly influenced by a multiplicity of factors such as the nature of the job, employers' preference, duration of training for the acquisition of skills, etc (Wong, 1986; Lim, 1990, 1997; NLC, 2002) which will in turn affect the shape of the age graph. In addition, the unit frame under this study, employees within each industry, deals with a specific target group, and therefore does not take into account labour mobility. In the case of textiles and garments, most men and women, after a period, leave to set up their own small business as self-employed (refer to Table 9.4. Intension of leaving Job). A methodological interpretation could be another reason underpinning this difference. National or regional surveys deal with the entire work force. The process takes into account labour mobility, within and across industries, thereby cancelling out the differences arising from inter and intra sectoral or industrial shift. An economic activity or industry may be affected by specific factors which result in a predominantly younger or older workforce. It can be concluded that there are gender and sectoral differences in the pattern of age participation rate in the labour market, and this could possibly have some consequential effects on the level of human capital investment in the labour market based on the economic and cultural judgements of employers for workers.

The next section examines the patterns of gender differences in the educational profile of respondents.

## **5.2. Gender and Education.**

Education is considered as an essential key to human development and the foremost agent of empowerment (Pomary, 1999:112). It is also considered as one of the essential tools to economic growth and development (Checchi, 1999; Kalsen, 1999). This section examines the pattern of gender differences in education and its effects on the socio-economic advancement of men and women within the labour market.

Numerous studies have revealed that the gap between girls and boys in the primary and secondary school enrolment rate has been reduced substantially (if not eliminated) in most countries in the world. However, evidence still shows that globally there is a much wider gender gap at all levels up the educational ladder, especially in secondary and higher education (UNIDO, 1994-1995, 1998; UNFPA, 2000).

In Ghana, female enrolment in education has increased in the last two decades; however, inequality still persists between men and women at higher levels up the educational ladder (UNIDO 1995; Ghana Human Development Report, 1998; CWIQ, 1998; GLSS 4, 2000). Drop-out rates for girls in Ghana are also higher than for boys in both secondary and tertiary levels (MoE, 1997a; Ghana Human Development Report, 1998). The question is whether there are any patterns of gender differences in the educational levels of workers in the food processing and textiles and garment sectors.

In this study, the overall gender aggregates on educational attainment show the following trend: 58%(56) of women and 40%(32) of men had basic education; 43%(35) of men and 37% (36) of women had secondary education, and 17% (14) of men and 5%(5) of women had tertiary education, out of the total number of men and women in both sectors. Analysis of the inter and intra sectoral and gender differences, however, revealed a relatively small gender difference between men and women in the textiles and garment sectors for both basic and secondary education compared with workers in the food-processing sector (Figures 5.2a & b). The sectoral differences showed that there were generally more workers in food-processing (55% (57)) with secondary and higher education, than in textiles (45% (34)). However, this inter-sectoral gender difference was weighted in favour of men in food-processing (Fig 5.2a). The data also showed that more women (14% (7)) than men (8% (2)) attended vocational/commercial schools (see Table A.1 in appendix)<sup>40</sup>. The reason for the low proportion of men with secondary and higher education can be attributed to the fact that men with higher levels of education prefer to enter other male professions or trades rather than entering into the textiles and garment industry.

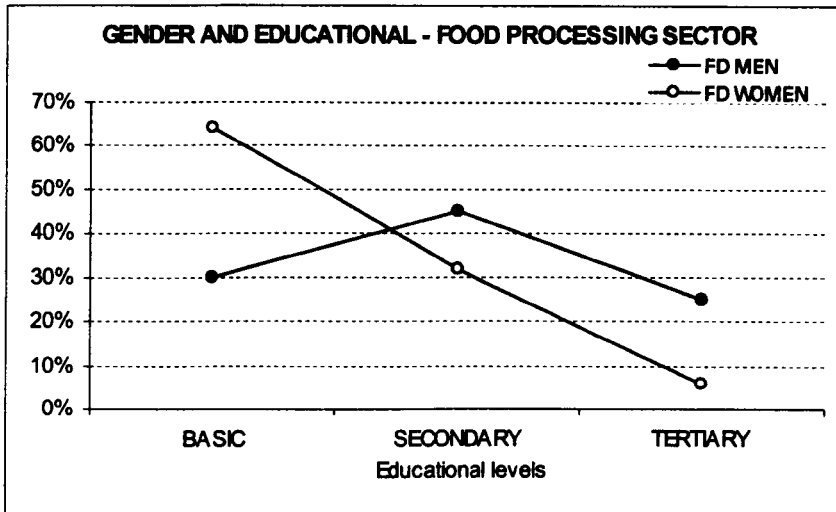
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<sup>40</sup> In Ghana, vocational, technical and commercial schools or institution are counted as second cycle schools and have a similar status to ordinary secondary schools. Even though most girls enter these institutions after primary education, the rates are higher for girls than for boys who enter technical institutions from this level.



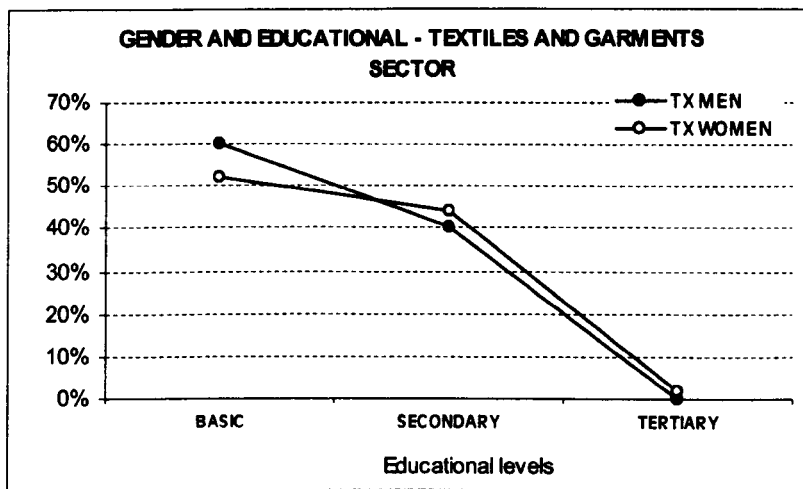
### Gender and Educational Trend.

Fig 5.2a



Keys: FD – food processing sector. TX- textiles and Garment sector

Fig 5.2b



This interpretation is confirmed by studies from the Ghana Living Standard Survey. The report showed that although tailoring in Ghana is very common among females and males, men with secondary education or basic education tend to enter other major trades such as mechanics and electrical, carpentry and other related occupations rather than tailoring (GLSS 4, 2000: 13). The differences in educational attainments between the sectors from the discussions above are therefore obvious. More women (64%) and men (25%) in food processing have basic and higher education than in the textiles and garment sector (52% of women and 0% of men).

Questions on the provision of equal opportunities revealed that about 90% of respondents maintained that they were granted equal access to education, irrespective

of their gender, birth order or family size. Yet, the question as to the gender of the first sibling in their family to attain higher education revealed that 33%(34) and 16%(12) out of the total number of workers in the food processing and the textiles and garment sectors respectively indicated their male siblings. In addition, the highest academic qualification of the majority of male siblings was secondary and tertiary (78% (80) and 69%(52)) compared to female siblings (15%(15) and 25% (19)) (Table A.2 a & b in appendix). This evidence appears to confirm the parental preference for education of males (Greenstreet, 1972, 1986; Akuffo, 1978; Date-Bah, 1980; CWIQ, 1998; Eyango, 2001).

In addition, parental poverty is considered as one of the major factors accounting for the low educational levels of females in Ghana (Oteng, 1971; CWIQ 1998; Ghana Human Development Report, 1998). In this study, 60% of respondents' parents were engaged in farming trading and productive related work (Tables A.3 in appendix). In Ghana, the majority of the population, especially women, engaged in agriculture and trade still live in poverty. They are mainly engaged in subsistence levels of trade, farming and production activities in the informal sector, as self-employed (Ofei-Abboagye 1996; Nikoi, 1998; Ghana Human Development Report, 1998; World Bank, 1999; Canagarajah and Thomas, 1997:2). According to Ghana's Human Development Report, a large majority of the poor are in agriculture and the rest in non-farm activities (GHD Report 1998:48). A household survey conducted in 1992 found that three-quarters of the very poor were self-employed (GSS, 1994). It is therefore possible to suggest that the majority of parents engaged in these activities will have a low income.

Given the low economic background of parents with an average family size of six children, coupled with the prevailing harsh economic conditions in the country, it is clear that such large families are more likely to face financial pressures in catering adequately for the needs of their members than smaller families (2-3 children). Faced with such economic pressures, coupled with other socio-cultural factors, it is possible that most families are left with no option than choosing between the male and the female in terms of education and as stated earlier, preference is given to males over females.

In addition, harsh economic conditions have led to a shift in financial responsibilities in some Ghanaian societies as the burden of the education of children (most especially

those within large families,) has gradually become the responsibility of women rather than men (Robertson, 1987). Mothers, with their 'triple burden', sacrifice by paying for their sons' education at the expense of developing their own human capital and that of their daughters, since the belief is that girls will be taken care of by their husbands (Greenstreet, 1972; Robertson 1987). Some men interviewed acknowledged the fact that their mother, and not father, toiled to pay for their education. This was what a 4<sup>th</sup> born from a family of 9 siblings (6 girls and 3 boys), with a post graduate qualification, MBA, had to say:

*My father had 9 children; we were 6 on my mother's side (2 boys and 4 girls). My father as a civil servant did not take care of us. It was my mother who sent us all to school, though she was a trader and had only primary education. My brother and I have completed university, but my sisters had secondary education. They branched into teaching and trading. This was due to the high financial constraint my mother faced in taking care of us, paying for our education and clothing*

(Participant 4 Male, Food-processing, Accra, 24/01/01).

The next section discusses gender, marital status and the family life of parent workers.

### **5.3.0. Gender, Marital Status and Family Life.**

#### **5.3.1. Marital Status of Respondents.**

Marital status, like age, influences the employment status and entry of women into the labour market. This influence varies across industry, country and time (Safa, 1986:67; Arizpe and Aranda, 1986:182; Wong, 1986:213; Goonatilake et al., 1988:191). This section provides a description of the marital status of respondents.

In this study the data on marital status showed that more women than men were single (51.5% compared to 38.3% ) and more were widowed, separated or divorced (11.4% compared to 3.7%). The proportion of single employees, both men and women, was higher in textiles, which is not unexpected given the younger age of the workforce in this sector. However, the preference of employers for single workers seems much more marked for women than men (Table 5.1). In contrast to textiles, the proportion of married, widowed, divorced and separated women was much higher in food processing. However, the proportions of single and married women here were the same, whereas there were twice as many married men as single men.

**Table 5.1 Gender and Marital Status: A Cross-Sectoral Analysis. (%)**

<b>GENDER AND MARITAL STATUS OF WORKERS</b>							
<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Textiles and Garment</b>			<b>Food-processing</b>			
	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Married	12 (3)	2 (1)	5 (4)	5 (3)	2 (1)	4 (4)	
Married with children	32 (8)	30 (15)	31 (23)	59 (33)	40 (19)	50 (52)	
Single	48 (12)	48 (24)	48 (36)	29 (16)	19 (9)	24 (25)	
Single with children	4 (1)	24 (6)	9 (7)	4 (2)	23 (11)	13 (13)	
Wid/Sep/Div	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (3)	3 (3)	
Wid/Div with children	4 (1)	8 (4)	7 (5)	4 (2)	9 (4)	6 (6)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 (25)</b>	<b>100 (50)</b>	<b>100 (75)</b>	<b>101 (56)</b>	<b>99 (47)</b>	<b>100 (103)</b>	

The gender differences in this sectoral pattern can be explained as stemming from the nature and labour intensity/flexibility in working hours that operate within the two sectors. Married women need the flexibility to be able to combine household activities with work. It was observed that food processing tended to provide more flexible working hours than the textile industry (see Table A.4a & b and Fig A.1 in appendix ). Most textiles and garment firms did not have officially defined times for closing; even where they did, they were not strictly abided by, unlike in most of the food processing firms. Furthermore, the nature and labour intensity of the work in the garment industry was such that employers preferred working with young single women who, they presumed, had fewer family commitments than married women. Married men were less of a problem to employers, due to the cultural expectations concerning the roles of both gender parties. A further consideration is the duration of training, which for most skills in agro-processing is shorter than in the textiles and garment industry. This is discussed in detail under Training period in acquisition of skills' in chapter 6.

From the study, it emerged that employers, especially those in the textiles and garment sector, preferred to employ young single women rather than married women. The reasons underpinning this preference were based on the differences in level of family and work commitment, and the higher propensity of younger women to remain in post much longer than married women. In addition, it was easier to instil the aims of the organisation into the younger generation. This is evidenced from the interviews with some of the employers in the food processing and textiles and garment factories.

*Women give problems. To work with them, I prefer employing those with less family commitment and responsibilities. Working with married*

*women, especially those with children is a really big problem. They are not punctual, always give excuses, today my child is sick, tomorrow my husband...*

(Participant 7 Female employer, Garment, Kumasi, 19/04/2001).

*Looking at the long term economic goals, this company generally prefers employing young people who have less family commitments and responsibilities. As a matter of principle, it is advantageous grooming towards future goals of company development. They comparatively stay on the job much longer, thereby saving the firm other development costs....*

(Participant, 2 Male employer, Confectionery, Accra. 18/01/2001)

The nature of the work pattern in textiles and garment industry, however, meant that the preference for single over married women was much stronger than in food processing. This attitude of employers in Ghana is in tune with the attitude of employers in most developing countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Singapore (Wong, 1986; Goonatilake et al., 1988; Khan 1988; Lim 1990; Elson and Pearson, 1997). In short, the data on marital status suggests that employers in both sectors have a strong preference for men, irrespective of their marital status. In the textiles and garment sector, but less so in food processing, there is a noticeable preference for single over married females. The strong preference for men in Ghana's industries contrasts with the situation in many parts of the world, where employers prefer women, particularly young women, as a source of cheap labour (Bullock, 1994; Lim, 1997; Elson and Pearson, 1997; NLC, 1999, 2002).

The next section discusses gender, family size and occupational background of parent-workers. It discusses particularly the patterns of gender difference that influence the movement of men and women into the labour market, and examines their roles and family background as parent wage earners.

### **5.3.2. Gender and Family of Abode of Respondents.**

The extent of the power that an individual has to choose among alternatives, to make her own decisions, and to implement them has been one of the main bases for empowerment (Schegel, 1972; Karl, 1992). Autonomy as employed by Schlegel (unlike status) defines woman not in relation to man, but as having control over her

own person and the activities and her meaningful contribution to society beyond breeding and feeding (Schlegel, 1972:23).

To determine the level of self independence among men and women in this study, respondents were asked to indicate who they were currently living with. This information was to show the level of autonomy they had and how this could affect the pattern of gender roles and responsibility, not only within the domestic sphere but also in the economic sphere.

**Table 5.2 Gender and Current Family of Abode: A Cross-sectoral Analysis (%).**

**5. 2a. Food-processing Sector.(%).**

Family of Abode	Married		Single		Div/widow/ separate		Family of abode Total	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
On own	8.3 (3)	15 (3)	61 (11)	20 (4)	50 (1)	29 (2)	27 (15)	19 (9)
Family of marriage	86 (31)	85 (17)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	55 (31)	36 (17)
Extended family	2.8 (1)	0 (0)	39 (7)	80 (16)	50 (1)	71 (5)	16 (9)	45 (21)
Friend	2.8 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1)	0 (0)
Total	100 (36)	100 (20)	100 (18)	100 (20)	100 (2)	100 (7)	100 (56)	100 (47)

**5.2b. Textiles and Garment Sector (%).**

Family of Abode	Married		Single		Div/widow/ separate		Family of abode Total	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
On own	27 (3)	25 (4)	62 (8)	37 (11)	100 (1)	50 (2)	48 (12)	34 (17)
Family of marriage	55 (6)	56 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	24 (6)	18 (9)
Extended family	9 (1)	19 (3)	38 (5)	63 (19)	0 (0)	50 (2)	24 (6)	48 (24)
Friend	9 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	0 (0)
Total	100 (11)	100 (16)	100 (13)	100 (30)	100 (1)	100 (4)	100 (25)	100 (50)

There were significant gender differences in living arrangements. More men than women lived in a family of marriage. Of single individuals, men were more likely to live on their own, while women were more likely to live with the extended family. These differences applied to both sectors. There were two noticeable differences between the sectors. First, a higher proportion of both men and women were married in food processing than in textiles and garment (54% compared to 36%). Second, in textiles and garments, only 55% of men and 56% of women lived with their family of marriage compared with 86% of men and 85% of women in food processing (Table 5.2a & b).

The higher proportion of increased single male households confirms studies in Ghana, which attribute this trend to migration and employment (Kumekpor, 1992). The overall differences suggest that single men were better off in terms of social independence, since 61% of them lived on their own, compared with 30% of women. Conversely, single women were more likely than single men to live with the extended family (70%) compared with 39% (12).

Living within the extended family household unit in Ghana<sup>41</sup> provides some advantages such as social assistance and support for its members. Women get the support of older women and other young women who tend to assist with childcare and other domestic tasks (see Oppong, 1974; Robertson, 1986). However, the process can also be detrimental, especially to women's opportunities for attaining social and economic independence and gaining control over the allocation and distribution of resources within the household unit. It also creates over-dependency on kinship, which hinders the ability to attain independent. In addition to this, they still have to battle with the household chores and other responsibilities within the domestic realm as this is culturally expected of the female. The individual's social freedom and independence is further limited, living under the control of the male-household head (see Bukh, 1979). In Ghana, a woman does not necessarily attain absolute social independence (Schlegel, 1972; Pellow, 1977) as her independence from the parents or family is always associated with marriage, which means the movement into the new home. A single woman might live on her own (by choice or out of economic necessity), but this is culturally frowned upon in most Ghanaian societies. The negative socio-cultural attitude and behaviour towards single female households is reminiscent of the social stigmas associated with Muslim girls who leave the control of their parental household, without getting married (Heyzer, 1988:14-15). The reverse is often the case for men, as the traditional structure rather encourages men to establish their own household unit before and after marriage (Schlegel, 1972; Bukh 1979). The lack of autonomy of women is a reflection of their constant subordination to male domination and authority. Women's social status within the domestic setting

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<sup>41</sup> Interviews with ten women in food processing and textiles in Kumasi and Accra revealed that a high proportion of women (single and married) with non-resident husbands and dependants (children) lived with their mothers. However, of the five men interviewed only one man indicated that he lived with his parents and he was looking for accommodation because he was mature enough to be independent. The women rather preferred staying with their parents (especially mothers) or in their extended household than being on their own, because they received help (assistance) and support from their mothers, who took care of their children while they were at work. This agrees with other studies in Ghana which show the benefits that women derive from the extended family (Oppong, 1974; Robertson, 1986).

in the extended household requires the woman to be subject to the male head, whether father or husband.

However, while women who live on their own may experience a sense of autonomy, they are not socially independent (Pellow, 1977). Battling with family pressures, they still carry the burden of extended responsibilities, by sharing in the economic and social cost of taking care of younger siblings or relatives as part of their kinship duties, as well as catering for themselves and their children (Pellow, 1977; Nukunya, 1992:154-156). This issue is further discussed in a later part of the chapter.

It can be inferred from the above discussion that women are likely to have less autonomy than men. Whether they live within their marital homes or with members of the extended family, they are subject to male power and authority. Gaining autonomy by living on their own and becoming economically independent does not earn them complete social freedom. This is because they are bound by social norms and cultural values which make them responsible to their immediate and extended families, as mothers and carers of the family.

The next section discusses gender, family size and occupational background of the parent workers and how these factors influence their movement and role in the labour market.

### **5.3.3. Gender and Household: Parent-workers (Only).**

In order to extend our understanding of how far family responsibilities influence the nature of labour market participation, the family size and extended family commitments were considered. Household size is considered to be an important indicator of women's capacity to enter the labour market (UNIDO-ECE, 1995:31). The size of the family also has a significant impact on the distribution of economic resources with regard to investment decisions concerning human capital (Rimm, 2001; RAND, 2002). In this regard, respondents were asked if they had children, the number of people they fed and any external responsibilities they had, apart from their domestic roles. This section therefore discusses parent-workers only.

To identify the set of parent-workers, respondents were asked whether they had children. The results generally revealed that there were more women, (72% (34) and



50% (25)), than men with children, (66% (37) and 40% (10)), in the food processing and textiles and garment sectors respectively. There was a higher number of workers in the food processing sector, (69% (71)) with children.

Questions on family size and financial obligation revealed that even though the average number of children was three, more than 50% of men and women in food processing indicated that they fed on average 5 people<sup>42</sup>. More women than men fed more than 5 people (Table A. 5 in appendix). This suggests the presence of dependants who were not the children of respondents. It is possible that they were members of the extended family or domestic-helpers. It also suggests an increase in economic pressure on the family, especially for single parents. In addition to these domestic commitments, over 80% of parent-workers maintained that they had extended family responsibilities, as the majority took care of parents, siblings and other members of their family (Table A. 6a & b.). This suggests that parent-workers were saddled with extended family responsibilities, which drained their income.

With the harsh economic situation in Ghana, it is possible that performing extended family obligations places a lot of financial strain on parent-workers. It needs pointing out that this pressure does not only rest on the shoulders of men, who traditionally are perceived to be the breadwinners, but also on women who offer support as secondary income earners. The effect of such conditions can be especially traumatic for mothers who have to care for their children single-handedly, with no other source of financial support, as depicted by one of the interviewees.

*I have two children and my husband travelled to Abidjan for five years ago. I have not heard from him and had to work to take care of the children*

(Participant 4, Female food-processing, 06/04/2001, Kumasi).

Supporting this interpretation, Bleek indicated that the responsibility for the care of children has increasingly become that of women, especially among the matrilineal Kwahu's where financial responsibility is often borne by the mother alone (Bleek, 1975). Further discussion on the financial obligations of respondents will be found in chapters 6 and 8 respectively.

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<sup>42</sup> Family size was determined by the number of people fed. It considered dependants within the household only. This excludes the respondent (and spouse, where applicable).

The next section looks at gender, the concept of the family breadwinner and head of household and how these concepts influence the socio-economic status of men and women within the home and the labour market.

### **5.3.3.1. Gender, the Main Family Breadwinner and the Head of Household.**

The concept of the breadwinner varies historically and across cultures. However, some similarities can be identified in terms of its peculiar characteristics such as dominance, control and subordination, and dependency.

Globally, various studies have revealed an increased trend in female breadwinners and heads of household in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and in most developing as well as developed countries (Elson and Pearson, 1981; UNIDO, 1994; Safa, 1995; Lim, 1997). In Ghana, the growth of female breadwinners is evident by the increasing rate of female-headed households (Bukh, 1979; GLSS 4, 2000).

In this study, the data on the family breadwinner, which was gleaned from parent-workers, as expected revealed more men as breadwinners. Yet, the data also showed that a substantial number of women (53% (31)) were breadwinners for their family.

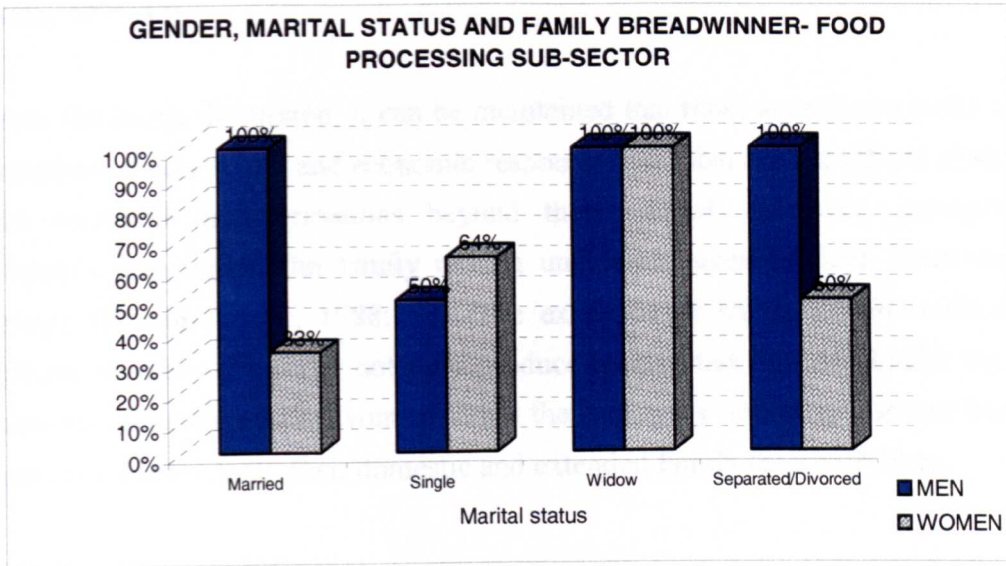
The question is, if men are traditionally perceived as breadwinners, then why was there such a large number the high rate of women breadwinners? What category of women constitute this group of breadwinners and why?

The data revealed that a relatively high proportion of single women (never married) and women who had been in previous relationships were breadwinners (Figs 5.3a & b). Single women, the data suggests, have no other support but have to fend for themselves and children. However, it needs emphasising that although most married women did not indicate that they were breadwinners, a high percentage (90%) indicated that they still contributed towards household and domestic financing, confirming the conception of women's role as supplementary to that of the male breadwinner (Safa, 1995). The increasing incidence of female breadwinners thus challenges the traditional norm of the male breadwinner, as Safa points out that the increasing employment had forced women to redefine their role within the home and challenged the myth of the breadwinner. The inability of men to earn adequate living due to the economic crisis, reconstruction and other changes in the global economy means that men are no longer able to support their families and protection in return

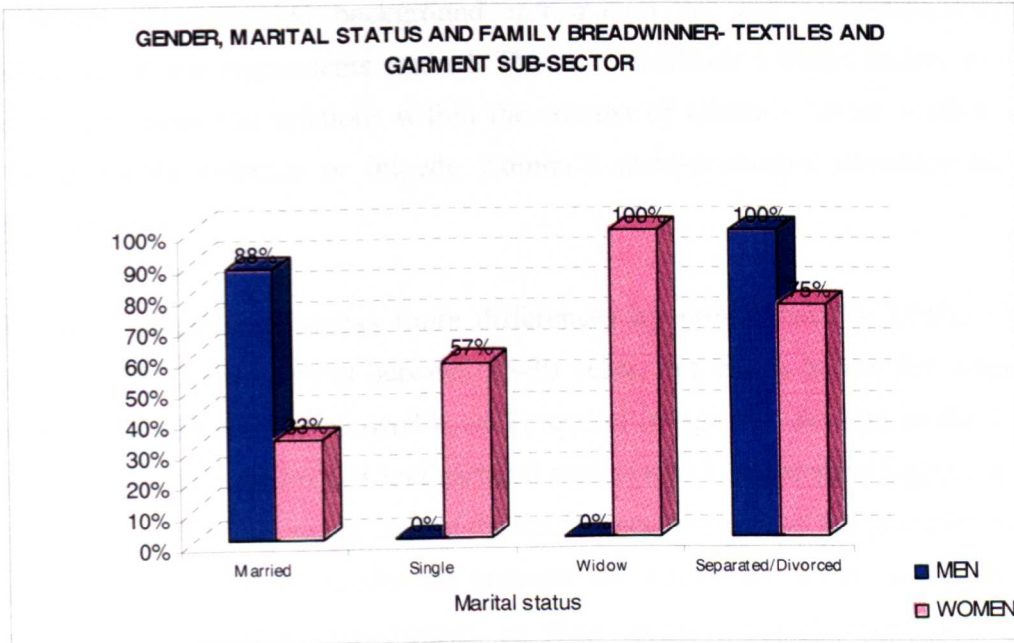
for obedience, as was in the norm of the earlier period of private patriarchy (Safa, 1995).

**Fig 5.3. Gender, Marital Status and Family Breadwinner: A Cross-sectoral Analysis.**

**5.3a Food-processing Sector.**



**5.3b. Textiles and Garment Sector.**



Irrespective of the new economic role of women within the household and society, ‘tradition dies hard’, as the myth of the primary male breadwinner still persists, and the married man within the Ghanaian society is always looked up to as the head of household and main bread winner of the family. This process elevates the status of

men, thereby providing them with control over economic and other resources (Bukh, 1979; Brown, 1996). The status of female breadwinners in Ghanaian society is still regarded as inferior to men (Bukh, 1979:12). This negative social attitude weighs against women's socio-economic advancement, not only within the socio-cultural but also in the economic settings, as it justifies lower wages and occupational segregation (Safa, 1995:43).

From the above discussion, it can be maintained that most women are faced with the pressures of new social and economic responsibilities that are the effects of structural and economic transformations beyond their control. However, perceptions of women's role within the family remain unchanged even as their functional roles change (Hossain et al., 1988:118). The existence of strongly held traditions and cultural attitudes to gender not only produce inequalities but also hinder the socio-economic advancement of women within the society by imposing a severe burden on them, considering both their domestic and extended family responsibilities.

#### **5. 4. Conclusion.**

This chapter has provided background information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents studied. This is to facilitate a better understanding of the gender issues and relations within the context of Ghana's labour market and how these factors enhance or impede women's socio-economic advancement in society as a whole.

The age participation rate shows more differences by sector than by gender. The modal age range for workers is between 26-30 years, but this is higher for women. The sectoral age differences showed a wider spread of age for workers in the food processing sector than the textiles and garment sector, which reflects the higher age of re-entry for women in this sector than in the textiles sector and also the possible move of experienced women from textiles and garment into self-employment. It is possible to attribute the late entry of women to their gender reproductive roles and expectations as mothers and wives, which keep them tied to the domestic sphere. It is also possible that the interruptions of family and work life make women seek alternative jobs that have flexible terms of employment, which facilitates easy labour market entry (ILO, 1999).

The profile on education revealed more men than women with secondary and higher education, which reflects a cultural and economic preference for the education of males rather than females. With most respondents coming from families of low economic background coupled with large family size of more than 6 children on average, it was obviously difficult for parents to be able to provide them with basic needs, hence the preference for male education.

The data on marital status shows that there were more married men than women, and a high percentage of single women in both sectors. However, as regards the level of autonomy and social independence, it emerged that single men were more likely to be living on their own than single women. Most single women still lived with their parents or relatives in their extended family homes. Family commitments also revealed that more women within both sectors had children, although more men tended to have larger families. Notwithstanding this, the data revealed high rates of female breadwinners and heads of household.

The question, therefore, is whether the socio-demographic characteristics such as education, age, marital status or position within the family influence the position of men and women in the labour market. For this reason, the next chapter discusses occupational distribution and segregation in the labour market.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

# **OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND GENDER SEGREGATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET.**

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND GENDER SEGREGATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET.**

#### **6.0. Introduction.**

This chapter provides an analysis of the gender differences that exist as men and women enter into Ghana's labour market. Occupational segregation has been considered as one of the focal points that generate gender inequalities between men and women within the labour market (Reskin et al., 1994; Anker, 1998). This chapter focuses on the ways in which men and women are streamed into different jobs. The chapter is organised as follows: job classification and occupational distribution, gender and entry into the labour market, and the factors responsible for the gender gaps in segregation at the workplace.

#### **6.1. Gender, Job Classification and Occupational Segregation.**

This section examines the patterns of gender differences in the types of job men and women are recruited into in the labour market. The section is presented as follows: gendered jobs, occupational distribution and segregation.

##### **6.1.1. Gendered Jobs- "Men's Work" and "Women's Work".**

The gender division of labour within society has led to the sex stereotyping of many jobs as "men's work" and "women's work"(see Game and Pringle, 1983; Anker, 1998; Wirth 2001). Reskin et al., maintain that, "employers and workers bring gender into the workplace through stereotypes that fabricate or exaggerate actual sex differences and through policies and behaviours that highlight irrelevant sex differences"(Reskin et al., 1994:9-10).

The food-processing and the textiles and garment sectors in this study, are very different in terms of their core production activities. However, the supportive jobs, which are mainly administrative work, clerical and related, and managerial jobs, are virtually the same. The results from the study showed some gender differences in the jobs of respondents. The data from the food-processing sector revealed that more men were employed as managers, machine operators, engineers, accountants or

accounts clerks and technicians, whereas more women than men worked as packers, bakers, and fish processors (Table B.1a in appendix). This suggests that men are more likely to be employed in more technically-based jobs, requiring mechanical based knowledge and specialist expertise, than women.

In the textiles and garment sector, the data showed that men, (60% (15)), were employed mostly as tailors, embroiderers, weavers/ appliqué designers, batik or tie – dye makers, whilst women (88% (44)) were dressmakers, batik makers, finishers and the like (Table B.1b). Men mostly undertook activities such as machine embroidery, weaving and appliqué designing.

The trend of gender discrimination in the textiles sector as observed can be explained culturally for occupations such as cloth weaving. Traditionally, cloth weaving was regarded as a male activity, and in societies in which this occupation originated (Bonwire), it was regarded as taboo for women. However, occupations such as cotton spinning were open to women (see Rattary, 1927; Christine, 1959 ). The spiritual connotation surrounding cloth weaving, especially the traditional ‘Kente’ cloth, persists in contemporary Ghanaian society. One of the major reasons surrounding this attitude is that the wood for carving the loom is considered as ‘sacred’, and women, by menstruation, defile the loom (Rattary, 1927 in Klingshrin, 1971). Besides cloth weaving, there are strong cultural and religious myths surrounding other traditional crafts such woodcarving, goldsmithing, and blacksmithing, which make these activities largely the preserve of men. However, other home occupations such as cotton spinning and pottery were open to women (see Rattary, 1927; Christine, 1959). Unlike cloth-weaving, embroidery traditionally was regarded as women’s work in most parts of Ghana, especially the Northern Ghana. However, modernisation and industrialisation has resulted in the monopolisation of the trade by men. Machine embroidery currently has become largely recognised as a “man’s trade”, though women still engage in traditional hand embroidery. An enquiry into why the activity (machine embroidery) was considered “men’s work” revealed that the activity was time consuming, needed skill and concentration and was more ‘difficult’ to learn as it required hard work and determination. Due to its nature and the necessary time commitment, women were not encouraged to learn the trade. In proudly sharing his perception of the trade, a male embroiderer had this to say:



*A woman cannot do this job. I have not yet heard about any place in Ghana where a woman undertakes this job (referring to machine embroidery). This is because the work is difficult, it needs more concentration and time.*

(Participant 4, male Garment, Accra 02/02/01).

This is gender role stereotyping with regard to “appropriateness of work.” In contrast to the position in Ghana, embroidery making and cloth-weaving have been often regarded as traditionally female occupations in other parts of the world, and still are irrespective of the invasion of the trade by men through industrialisation (Mosse, 1993; Reskin et al., 1994; Anker, 1998). Studies conducted by Anker have identified weaving and embroidery as activities included in the five largest female occupations in the world (Anker, 1998: 283-4, 295).

It needs emphasising that Ghana’s textiles industry (excluding garments) is as a whole dominated by men, unlike most Asian and Latin American countries which employ women. The dominance of men in the industry is because large and medium scale (multinational and local firms) employers mostly recruit men onto the production floor. Women, who are in the minority, are mainly in supportive services (mostly clerical) (Peil, 1972). The next section considers the gender differences in occupational status of respondents. It outlines the factors responsible for gender differences in occupation and provides some theoretical explanations on how these affect their role within the labour market.

### **6.1.2. Gender, Occupational Distribution and Segregation.**

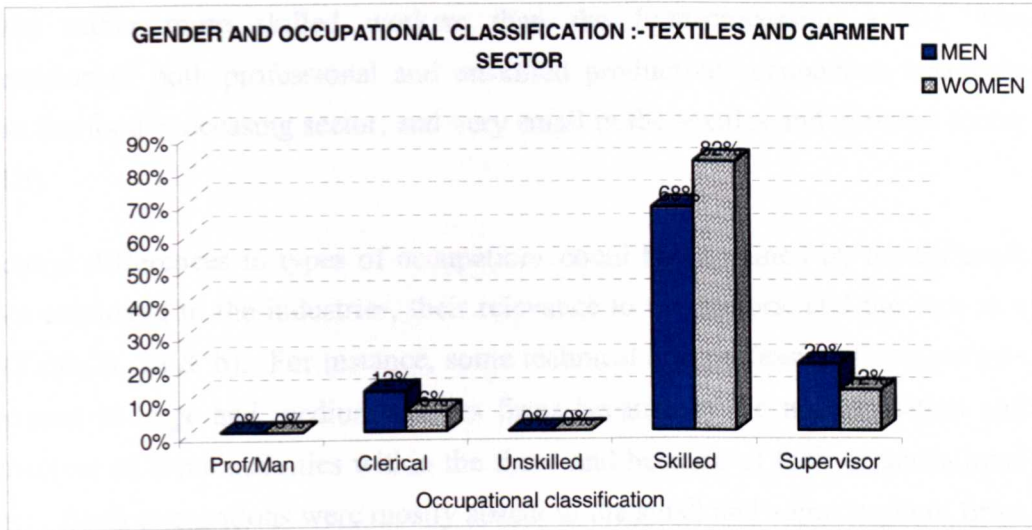
Occupational segregation has become a very important issue in recent times, due to its effects on the economy and on women (Reskin et al., 1994; Anker, 1998; Wirth, 2001). In Ghana, studies on employment and occupational distribution have revealed a higher percentage of men than women in professional technical, administrative /managerial and production jobs (RPED, 1994; GLSS 4, 2000; Verner, 2000). This section examines the occupational distribution of men and women in the labour market and discusses the factors that account for the patterns observed.

To identify existing patterns of gender differences in the occupational distribution and segregation of workers, the data on respondents’ jobs were classified into six main

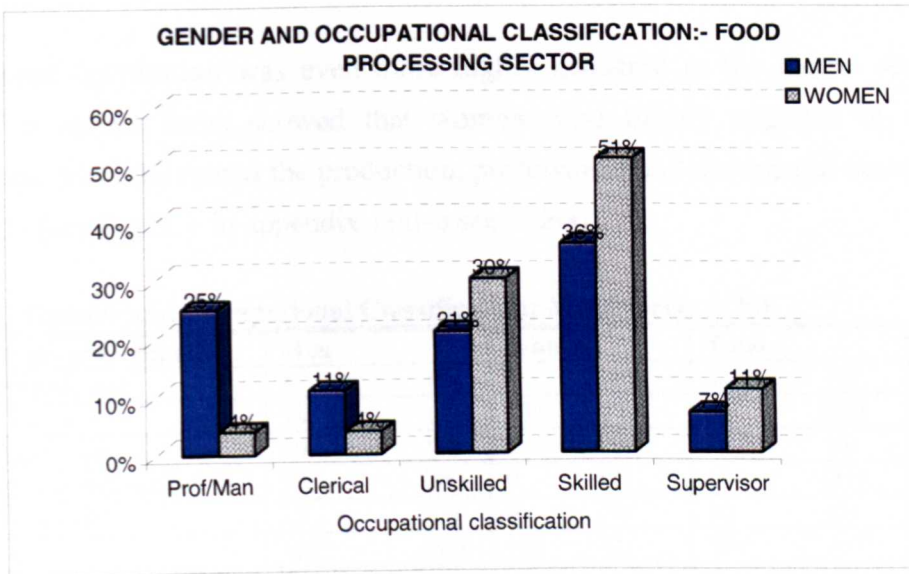
occupational categories. This was based on a combination of definitions put forward by Anker (1998) and Siltanen et al., (1995)<sup>43</sup>. These were professional / managerial, clerical, skilled productive, unskilled productive and related workers and supervisors or foremen.

**Fig 6.1. Gender and Occupational Classification: A Cross -sectoral Analysis.**

**6.1a. Textiles and Garment Sector.**



**Fig. 6. 1b. Food-processing Sector.**



<sup>43</sup> For statistical purposes, some occupational groups were merged due to lack of numbers. In addition, a distinction was made within the productive occupations, differentiating skilled from unskilled /semi-skilled manual workers. Professionals/managerial and administrative occupations include: - engineers, managers, data analysts, researchers, accountants (excludes accounts clerks). Jobs defined as clerical and related work include:-cashiers, clerks, accounts clerk, secretary, typist etc. Skilled productive and related occupation includes:- technicians, machine operators, product inspectors, tailors and dress makers, sewers, embroiderers appliqué designers, weavers, finishers, batik makers, bakers and other food processors. Unskilled or semi skilled productive and related work include:-packing, labelling, sorting, and related activities.

The results showed some gender and sectoral differences. There were more women in skilled and unskilled productive and related occupations than men (Fig 6.1a & b). However, there were more men in clerical occupations in both sectors. More men were employed in professional or managerial occupations within the food-processing sector but not in the textiles and garment sector (Fig 6.1a & b). In supervisory positions, there were more men than women in the textiles and garment sector but not in the food-processing sector. Comparing the sectors, the textiles and garment sector employed rather more skilled workers than the food-processing sector. The representation of both professional and unskilled productive occupations was very strong in the food-processing sector, and very small in the textiles and garment sector (Fig 6.1b).

The sectoral differences in types of occupations could be explained by the different activities employed in the industries, their relevance to the sectors, and the size as a whole (Table B. 2a & b). For instance, some technical and professional occupations were present in large and medium textiles firms because of the modernisation and mechanisation of some activities within the firms and because of their organisational structures. Such occupations were mostly absent in the small and some medium firms visited.

Occupational distribution was even more highly gendered in the metals sector. A study of 6 metals firms showed that women were mostly engaged in clerical occupations. Men dominated the production, professional and managerial occupations (Table 6.1) (see Fig B. 1 in appendix ) (also see video)

**Table 6.1. Gender and Occupational Classification: Metals sector (%).**

Types of Occupation	Men		Women		Total	
Professional	3	(5)	0	(0)	3	(5)
Clerical	18	(11)	100	(7)	27	(18)
Supervisor	10	(6)	0	(0)	9	(6)
Skilled productive	57	(31)	0	(0)	51	(31)
Unskilled	12	(7)	0	(0)	10	(7)
Total	100	(60)	100	(7)	100	(67)

The investigations revealed that not only were men and women streamed into different jobs, but also that there were gender differences in terms of representation in the hierarchy of jobs in many of the firms visited. In all of the large and medium firms, and even some of the small firms, women represented a negligible percentage in the higher positions within the organisational hierarchy. At administrative and

managerial levels, men were heads of units, section and department whilst women served as their deputies or assistants. On the production floor, even in female-dominated sections, women were mostly heads of tables (i.e. table supervisors) or line supervisors, with men above them as floor supervisors or foremen. Further discussion on this will be found in chapter 8.

This trend is in line with studies conducted on Ghana, India and in selected European and OECD countries (Rohini, 1991; Ofei-Abboagye, 1996; ISSER et al., 1998; Verner, 2000; Wirth, 2001). However, the occupational distribution provided by the data has some interesting contrasts to studies elsewhere (Scott, 1994; GLSS 2, 4, 1996, 2000, Ofei- Aboagye, 1996; Anker, 1998; Melkas and Anker, 1998). Though the results on clerical occupations run counter to Anker's study which showed that women were over represented in the clerical occupations in most parts of the world (Anker, 1998:269), they confirmed the GLSS report on Ghana which demonstrated that there were more men than women in clerical occupations (GLSS 4, 2000:31). It is possible to link this to the creation of more job opportunities, such as cashiers, clerks and messengers, for men within this occupational category, which does not necessarily require higher level of education. These opportunities for men as established in most African societies rather serves as an enhancement towards developing a career pattern or usually to obtaining capital for trading or establishing themselves as self employed as discussed earlier in chapter 2 (see Dennis, 1983; Domenico, 1983). Furthermore, the figures for production workers, revealing more women than men, runs counter to both the Ghana Statistical Service Report and Anker's observation on most parts of the world, which showed an under-representation of women in this category of occupation generally (GLSS 4, 2000; Anker, 1998; also see UNIDO, 1995). It is possible to attribute this difference to errors of under-enumeration of female workers in the informal sector in national statistics, where there is disorganisation of work and the work tends to be temporary.

National statistics show that women dominate activities in agro-food processing. This was evident in most small firms and some large agro-based firms. These firms employed more women on the factory floor because the nature of activities was mostly associated with female domestic skills requiring dexterity and 'nimble fingers' (refer to Tables B.1a & b. and Fig B2 in appendix). However, women were absent or had negligible presence in both large and medium confectionery firms, where similar skills were employed (see Fig 6.2b, and Fig. B3 ). In addition, despite variations in

the skills employed within the sectors, women as I observed, dominated production occupations in the garment industry sector. A possible explanation is that more women than men enter into the garment industry as dressmakers (Oduro, 1997; Ghana Human Development Report 1998; GLSS 4, 2000).

Generally, from the above discussion, the results on job and occupational distributions of respondents suggest that men and women have been streamed into different jobs, professions and occupations. Men rather than women dominated occupations such as managerial, professional and technical related activities, as revealed in the food processing sector. More women, on the other hand, were employed in 'female' productive occupations such as packing and labelling (in food processing), dressmaking, sewing and batik-making activities. Men and women are not only streamed into different jobs and occupations but, as the next section examines, the work environment also enforces segregation in the workplace.

### **6.1.3. Gender and the Working Environment.**

The aim of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law, falling under the Discrimination Convention, 1958 (No. 111) that came into effect in 1986, was to create a suitable and healthy environment that promotes the advancement of all workers. The query is whether women effectively benefit from this legislation. The structuring of the work environment and that the workforce plays a significant role in perpetuating segregation at the workplace. This section examines gender and sectoral differences within the working environment. It highlights the issues of gender and work composition at the workplace, the work culture and attitude of workers concerning their job, and the impact of these on the advancement of men and women.

#### **6. 1.3.1. Sex composition at the workplace.**

According to Reskin and Padavic

*The work place is an important arena for sex inequality in our society. First, the workplace maintains sex differentiation by concentrating women and men in different settings and assigning them different duties. Second, sex differentiation in jobs leads to unequal earnings, authority and social status for women and men, because jobs are the*

*main way through which most adults acquire income and social standing.*

(Reskin and Padavic, 1994: 31).

Segregation at the work place does not only take place as a result of men and women undertaking different jobs, but also through the physical separation of the sexes where men and women undertake different tasks, or the same task, in different settings (Reskin, and Padavic, 1994: 45). The physical separation of men and women has strengthened the pillars of gender inequality in the workplace. This section considers inequality in the form of sex segregation by considering the sex composition within the workplace.

In this study, the data revealed a high degree of segregation. Eight-four percent (84%) of men in food processing and 80% in textiles and garment manufacturing worked predominantly or exclusively with other men. The figures for women were 77% and 60% respectively (Table 6.2). More women worked in sections dominated by men. Segregation in these areas could be attributed to the cultural perceptions which correspond with the preconceived beliefs concerning abilities, appropriate gender roles and relations in the distribution of power and authority, which within the Ghanaian context signifies male superiority. Men generally find problems working under the leadership of women. However, most women also seemed to perceive working in a male-dominated environment as a challenge.

**Table 6.2. Sex Composition in Work Environment: A Cross-sectoral Analysis (%)**

Sex Composition in work environment	Food-processing		Textiles and Garment	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Exclusively male	55 (31)	0 (0)	24 (6)	0 (0)
Male dominated	29 (16)	23 (11)	56 (14)	22 (11)
Equal balance	0 (0)	0 (0)	12 (3)	18 (9)
Female dominated	16 (9)	28 (13)	8 (2)	46 (23)
Exclusively Female	0 (0)	49 (3)	0 (0)	14 (7)
Total	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (25)	100 (50)

The physical separation of males and females into sex-segregated sections prevailed in almost all the firms visited. The phenomenon mainly seemed to be a result of job structuring and the layout of activities within the sections. The type and nature of jobs undertaken by men and women led to their dominance in certain areas, consciously or unconsciously. In the fish canning firms, for example, the fish cleaning section, where more women work (Fig 6.2a), was separate from the canning and packing

section, which was mainly machine operated, and male dominated. The same trend was evident in the baking and other agro-food processing firms.

Workplace segregation, as it was observed, could also be attributed to the effects of employers' preference for particular workers and gender perceptions (sexual stereotypes) concerning particular jobs and the skills needed. Most female-owned agro-processing firms employed only one sex of worker. Whilst in most large and medium sized firms, females were employed to undertake particular activities and unskilled tasks, as already indicated, it was further observed that in most firms the engineering, accounting and maintenance sections were either exclusively staffed by men or heavily male dominated. In most confectionery firms, areas such as machine operation, laboratories and some packing and processing units had a heavy concentration of males or were exclusively male (Fig 6. 2b & c).

**Fig 6.2a. Exclusive female section: Women in Fish Canning Firm, Tema.**



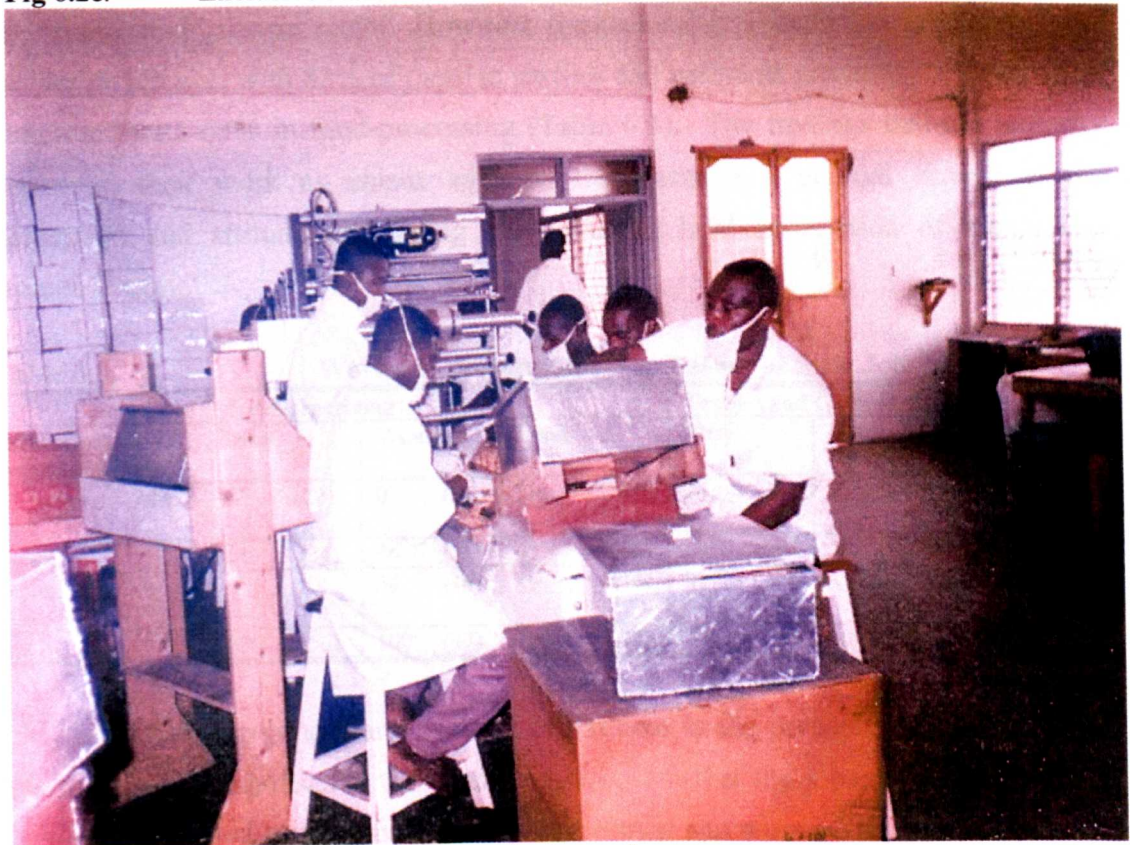
Women in fish cleaning section.

**Fig 6.2b Male-dominated section: Men in Confectionery Firm, Accra.**



Men in the packing section of a confectionery firm

**Fig 6.2c. Exclusive Male section.**



Men in the labelling and packing unit in a confectionery firm.



### 6.1.3.2. Gender and Job Perceptions.

The attitudes and perceptions that men and women hold concerning their jobs may strengthen sex-stereotyping and the segregation of jobs. Concerning this point, Reskin and Padavic maintained that:

*Employers are not solely responsible for sexual division of labour at the work; male workers' actions also influence the amount of sex segregation in the workplace*

(Reskin and Padavic, 1994:72)

This section examines the perceptions that respondents had about the nature of their job, and whether it could be undertaken by the opposite sex.

The data on job perceptions revealed that the majority of workers, both men and women, described their jobs as unisex. More women did so than men, particularly in the textiles and garment sector. However, the sectoral difference was greater than the gender difference, with 88% of these in textiles and garments providing this response, compared with 63% in food-processing (Table 6.3). The findings that the majority perceived their work as unisex suggests that there is a gradual change in the perception and attitude concerning the culturally held assumption of men's and women's work.

**Table 6.3. Workers' Perception of the Nature of their Job (%).**

Perceptions concerning Job	Food-processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Exclusive Men's work	39 (22)	0 (0)	21 (22)	20 (5)	0 (0)	7 (5)
Unisex	61 (34)	66 (31)	63 (65)	80 (20)	92 (46)	88 (66)
Exclusive Women's work	0 (0)	34 (16)	16 (16)	0 (0)	8 (4)	5 (4)
Total	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)

The reasons for the gender and sectoral differences in the perceptions held could be drawn from the responses to the question asking whether the jobs of the respondents could be performed by the opposite sex. More men and women in predominantly or exclusively single sex environments indicated that their job could be performed by the opposite sex; however, this view was expressed by more men in the food processing sector than in the textiles and garment sector (Table 6.3, 6.4a & b). Nevertheless, 36%

of men in food processing indicated that their jobs could not be performed by the opposite sex.

**Table 6.4. Gendered Perceptions Concerning Worker's Jobs being Performed by the Opposite Sex: A Cross-sectoral analysis (%).**

**6.4a. Men's View (%)**

Can Job be performed by the opposite sex?	Gendered Composition of Work environment						
	Exclusively male		Male dominated		Female dominated		Equally mixed
	Food processing	Textiles and garment	Food processing	Textiles and garment	Food processing	Textiles	Textiles
Yes	55 (17)	0 (0)	69 (11)	100 (4)	100 (6)	100 (2)	100 (3)
No	45 (14)	100 (6)	31 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	100 (31)	100 (6)	100 (16)	100 (14)	100 (6)	100 (2)	100 (3)

**6.4b. Women's View (%)**

Can Job be performed by the opposite sex?	Gendered Composition of Work environment						
	Exclusively female		Male dominated		Female dominated		Equally mixed
	Food processing	Textiles and garment	Food processing	Textiles and garment	Food processing	Textiles and garment	Textiles
Yes	65 (15)	57 (4)	100 (11)	100 (11)	100 (13)	100 (23)	89 (8)
No	35 (8)	43 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (1)
Total	100 (23)	100 (7)	100 (11)	100 (11)	100 (13)	100 (23)	100 (9)

The most common reasons provided by these men were related to the perceived masculine nature of the job: it required the use of physical strength (as the activity required heavy lifting and /or physical effort) which it was felt that women do not possess, and entailed exposure to more physical danger. Women within both industries who said men could not perform their jobs indicated that their job required patience and manual dexterity. In addition to this, some females in the food-processing sector stated that it was culturally unacceptable for men to undertake such activities as fish cleaning, corn flour processing, traditional bread making, oil extraction etc. In their view, performing such tasks undermined the workers' status as men in society, as it more often than not caused the individual to be subjected to societal ridicule. Most women suggested that they personally would not let their sons perform such activities, but would encourage their daughters if they wished to do so. The above held reasons are in line with the stereotypical characteristics constituting masculine and feminine jobs (Game and Pringle, 1983; Anker, 1998).

Notwithstanding these reasons, those respondents who indicated that they perceived their jobs as unisex, were generally of the view that undertaking such jobs was a matter of having the interest to learn and acquiring the necessary skill and training.

Most men further added that this depended on the determination of the individual, as “women of today are capable of doing anything that men can do”. Interestingly, none of the respondents indicated that they undertook activities associated with the opposite sex, but rather that they perceived such activities as unisex. This possibly suggests a change in perception concerning the gender stereotyping of jobs. It is also possible that there is demasculisation and / or defeminisation of jobs as a result of technological changes taking place in manufacturing.

The change in attitude was also demonstrated by 91% (68) of men and women in the textiles and garment sector and 79 %(81) in food-processing who expressed willingness to work in sections dominated by the opposite sex. Even so, there were more women who provided this response (Table B.3 in appendix). This contradicts the traditionally held perceptions which perpetuate segregation at the workplace.

The workforce itself plays a significant role in perpetuating gender segregation at the workplace. This is by holding on to and protecting certain culturally held assumptions concerning the sex stereotyping of occupations, abilities, and appropriate gender roles of the past. In addition is the preference for working with members of the same sex. However, the data show a gradual change in the perception, which is coming from two directions. The first is concerning how men see women and their work. The second is workers preference for working in a single sex environment. The changing perceptions of the majority of the workforce in both the food processing and textiles and garment sectors may be attributed to increase in education and gender sensitisation programmes, lack of employment opportunities, and mechanisation of some industrial processes. There has been a gradual trend in both directions for men and women to enter traditionally single sex occupations, even though the process has been slow for women (see Fig 10a & b, also see video clip on bread-making and metals). However, there are still specific occupations which men believe that women cannot undertake, due to their physical make-up. These are occupations requiring of physical strength, especially as observed in the metals and some food processing industries. This assumption may not be wholly true, as some women may be well-built and physically stronger than some men. The food-processing sector generally has more gender specific or stereotyped activities than the textiles and garment industry. In addition, the perceptions held by men and women seem to be influenced by the societal and cultural ideology of what constitutes an “appropriate gender job”.

It is an undisputed fact that a degree of occupational segregation exists in the food processing and textiles and garment sectors in Ghana. The question that arises is: why are men and women segregated into different jobs and occupations? With this question in mind, the next section analyses gender issues, which pertain to labour market entry and how it affects the socio-economic advancement of women.

### **6.2.0. Gender and Entry into the Labour-Market.**

As discussed in chapter 2, there has been a rapid increase in women's participation in manufacturing industry in most third world countries since the late 1960s and mid 1970s. This growth has been concentrated in specific areas of industry, most particularly female labour intensive factories, such as electronics, textiles and garment, and food processing industries (Bullock, 1994; UNIDO, 1995; ILO, 1996; Elson and Pearson, 1997; Lim, 1997; NLC, 2002).

Entry into the labour market is determined by a complex set of processes and interaction of factors that are both external (structural elements) and internal (personal) (Rees 1992; UNIDO 1994-1995). This section examines the factors that underpin the movement of men and women into the manufacturing industry in Ghana and their role in segregation at the workplace. It considers the reasons for working, the choices of occupation, recruitment and selection procedures and how these influence the streaming of men and women into different jobs and occupations.

#### **6.2.1.1. Gender and the Reasons for Working.**

In this study, men and women gave two main motives for working. These were to support their families and for future economic security. There were contrasting patterns between the sectors, as more men and women in the food-processing sector than in the textiles and garment sector mentioned supporting family as their purpose for working. Contrary to this, more men and women in the textiles and garment sector revealed that their primary purpose for working was for future economic security (Tables 6.5a & b). A better understanding of the contrasting patterns of results, between the sectors and genders was provided when the results were related to respondents' marital status (Table 6.5a).

More married men and women in the food processing sector than in the textiles and garment sector worked to support their families. Interestingly, over 50% of married women stated family support as their motive for working. Generally the results showed that more single than married people worked for future economic security. Nonetheless, more single men than women supplied this reason as indicated in the table below. The majority of single women stated that they worked to support their families, but none of the single men in food processing sector cited this as a purpose for working.

The gender and sectoral differences in motive suggest the differences in roles and expectations (economic responsibility) that accompany each type of marital status. The motive for married men reflected their role as breadwinners, whilst that of married women displayed their role of contributing toward household income either as supplementary wage earners or as breadwinners.

**Table 6.5. Gender, Marital Status and Motives for Working: A Cross-sectoral Analysis (%).**

**6.5a. Food-processing Sector**

Reasons for working	Marital status							Total
	Married		Singles		Widowed/Divorced, /Separated			
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women		
Support family	69 (25)	70 (14)	0 (0)	35 (7)	100 (2)	57 (4)	50 (52)	
Enjoy life	2 (1)	5 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	14 (1)	3 (3)	
Buy Basic things	2 (1)	0 (0)	29 (5)	15 (3)	0 (0)	14 (1)	10 (10)	
Economic (future) Security	28 (9)	25 (5)	72 (13)	50 (10)	0 (0)	14 (1)	37 (38)	
Total	100 (36)	100 (20)	100 (18)	100 (20)	100 (2)	100 (7)	100 (103)	

**6.5 b. Textiles and Garment**

Reasons for working	Marital status							Total
	Married		Singles		Widowed/Divorced/ Separated			
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women		
Support family	64 (7)	56 (9)	23 (3)	20 (6)	100 (1)	75 (3)	39 (29)	
Enjoy life	0 (0)	0 (0)	8 (1)	3 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (2)	
Buy Basic things	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	27 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (8)	
Economic (future) Security	18 (2)	38 (6)	62 (8)	50 (15)	0 (0)	25 (1)	43 (32)	
Other	18 (2)	6 (1)	8 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (4)	
Total	100 (11)	100 (16)	100 (13)	100 (30)	100 (1)	100 (4)	100 (75)	

The results, which revealed the high rate of men and women in the food-processing sector working to support their families, denote that comparatively there are more married people or single parents within the sector with dependants, hence the economic pressure to work to sustain the family. Like the married category, single men and women had an economic motive for working, but the purpose was channelled towards the fulfilment of future roles and expectations, perhaps as fathers and mothers. The difference of priorities between single women and men suggests that either these women constituted a category of single parents who had to shoulder financial obligations alone as breadwinners (heads of households), or had extended family obligations (supporting the family by remittance).

In Ghana, both situations are common for single women (Pellow, 1977; Okantey, 1986; Boateng, 1996; Brown, 1996.) The important gender differences here suggest that single men work for their own economic security and gains, whereas single women tend to support families. This reflects gendered expectations for males and females, which then contribute to differential life expectations, constraints and opportunities. For instance, single men have more opportunity to save money to invest in their own businesses or property, career, etc., whereas women are constrained and have fewer opportunities to save for their future and professional development.

The data suggest the majority of men and women in food-processing and the textiles and garment sectors seek employment either to support their families in the present, or for economic security in the future. The results confirm other studies conducted in Ghana, Bangladesh, Greece and Latin America which reveal that the majority of women were compelled by economic reasons to find jobs to support their families and themselves (Okantey, 1986; Hadjicostandi, 1990; Tiano, 1990; Lim, 1997; Kibria, 1998). In corroboration with this finding, Okantey's study on 'Modern Industrial establishment' in Ghana revealed that 43% of married women worked to supplement the insufficient incomes of their husbands. He further revealed that 48% of women entered wage employment for financial independence and future security (Okantey, 1986).

Although the above data explains 'why' men and women moved into wage employment, it does not provide a sufficient explanation for the influx of women into these 'feminised' sectors. The question is why women and men choose to work in these sectors and not any other? As such, the next section discusses the choice of sector, which reflects the choice of economic activity.

### 6.2.1.2. Gender and Choice of Sector.

A person's choice of economic activity is determined by an interplay of systems. There is much evidence from developing countries that women dominate the food processing and textiles and garment sectors of manufacturing industry (Safa, 1986; UNIDO, 1994-1995, ILO, 1996; Elson and Pearson, 1981, 1997; Lim, 1997; NLC, 2002). In Ghana, although women dominate these sectors as a whole, their principal dominance lies in the informal sector (UNIDO, 1995; Nikoi 1998; CWIQ, 1998; GLSS 4, 2000). The question is, why do more women than men choose to engage in these sectors? In order to determine the factors that influence the choice of economic activity, respondents were asked why they chose the job in the sector.

More women than men in both sectors stated that they had to learn a trade because their parents were not able to afford their education. Contrary to this, more men indicated that their choice of work was related to their field of study. However, there were more men and women in the food-processing sector than in the textiles and garment sector who provided this response (Table 6.6).

**Table 6.6. Reasons for Choice of Economic Activity in Sector (%)**

Reasons for choice of economic activity	Food-processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Parent could not afford education-Learn trade	23 (13)	38 (18)	30 (31)	32 (8)	40 (20)	37 (28)
Get a Job-(survival)	25 (14)	23 (11)	25 (25)	24 (6)	36 (18)	32 (24)
Related to field of study	36 (20)	28 (13)	32 (33)	16 (4)	10 (5)	12 (9)
Based on Interest	9 (5)	0 (0)	5 (5)	20 (5)	4 (2)	9 (7)
Acquire skill and experience	5 (3)	9 (4)	7 (7)	8 (2)	8 (4)	8 (6)
Help in family business	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (2)	0 (0)	2 (1)	1 (1)
Total	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)

Interestingly, more men in the textiles and garment sector than in the food-processing sector indicated that their choice was based on interest in the field. The need for survival had driven over a quarter of respondents in both sub-sectors to find a means of earning a living (Table 6.6). This motive was most evident among the textiles and garment workers.

It could be suggested that the largest group of workers, especially women (approximately 40%) lacked the educational background that could provide them access to other areas and entered their sector of employment in order to acquire a vocation. Overall, it could be inferred that the choice of sector for women was more influenced by the lack of education due to financial constraint of parents, and the need for economic survival, while more men had a qualification in the relevant field, or a personal interest in the work. There is, thus, an issue here concerning choice as a gendered issue, with men being more likely to possess greater choice in their careers.

The study therefore confirms the statement that, “literacy (education) is considered as a basic requirement to employment whilst limited education is a barrier into several occupations”(Ghana Human Development Report, 1998). The previous chapter showed that women were handicapped in relation to secondary education and that parental poverty served as a constraint upon the education of girls (Akuffo, 1978; Ofei –Aboagye, 1996:31; Ghana Human Development Report, 1998; Eyango, 2001;). Although parental poverty might be a factor for discontinuing educating a girl-child, some parents did send their wards to learn a vocation as an alternative to formal education, usually when they felt their wards were uninterested in education, not brilliant academically or had become school dropouts (Ghana Human Development Report, 1998). Interviews with some respondents confirmed the above findings. This is what they had to say:

*I left school when I was in class five. This was because my parents were facing some financial difficulties and could not take care of all of us (nine children). As the oldest daughter (3<sup>rd</sup> born), my mother suggested I had to leave school and help her in trading to earn enough for the family. At the age of 19, my mother decided that I should learn a vocation - dressmaking, to enable me to support myself and my younger sisters who are still now in school. So they (parents-mother) sent me to learn dress making with a family friend in Suame.*

(Participant 3, female Garment, Kumasi, 19/3/ 2001).

*Academically, I was not too good, so I was not able to enter senior secondary .... My parents wanted me to go to technical school to learn mechanics (fitting), but, I preferred to learn dressmaking to*



*explore my talents so they sent me to learn the trade. And its good, I love it...*

(Participant 1, male Garment, Kumasi, 11/4/2001).

Unlike the above respondents, the following participant, a single mother with two children, from a family of five (siblings), indicated that she was given the opportunity to go to school but refused. After having a baby, she then ended up having no option but to get a job. This was what she had to say:

*I was just not interested in school although my parents persistently forced me to attend school. I sometimes played truant, or runaway to my grandmother's house. I left school at class three and stayed at home when my parents had finally given up on me. It was after I had given birth at the age of 16 that my parents said they could no longer take care of me and my baby, so I needed to learn a trade or find a job. I did not like dressmaking because there was no one to take care of my baby when I went to work, but I had to find work to do. I came to see madam (her employer), told her my problem and she allowed me to work in her bakery where I could bring my child and take care of her (baby) whilst at work. So I ended up here to working (making bread).*

(Participant 2, female food-processing, Kumasi 30/04/2001).

Learning a trade in Ghana is considered as a good option for school dropouts. Studies conducted on 'the Apprenticeship system in Ghana' reveal that many basic school graduates who failed to move up the secondary ladder acquired skills through informal apprenticeship, more frequently in the textiles and garment sector than in the food processing sector (Ghana Human Development Report, 1998). Women dominate the apprenticeship system in the textiles and food processing sectors in Ghana (Oduro, 1997; GLSS4, 2000:13). According to Oduro, female apprentices in the food-processing and garment sectors constituted 92% and 100% respectively of the total number of apprentices in the sectors (Oduro,1997). The reasons for the high rate of women in entering this area, in Ofei-Aboagye's opinion are, that:

*... Women enter with easy transferable or learnt skills, hence their preponderance in domestic enterprise - food-processing, garment-*

*making. They also lack the time, the resources (particularly financial) or capacity or support to acquire newer, more complicated skills through apprenticeship or other forms of training.*

(Ofei-Aboagye, 1998:31).

This point was highlighted by a female key informant<sup>44</sup>, when she was asked the reasons for the gender gaps between departments (Metals and Textiles section)<sup>45</sup>. She said:

*...Actually women most often do not apply for metals. The duration for the course in metals is four years whilst it takes only six months in the case of textiles (batik-making). Although the course (metal fabrication) here is averagely cheaper, it is more intensive (basics in physics, and maths which involves classroom work, then practical work). In addition, it requires high capital to set up business after training. These and other practical issues such as lack of science interest deter the women from opting for training in this area.*

(Key informant 1, Female Grattis, Tema 21/03/001).

These statements imply that the acquisition of skills in textiles and food-processing are comparatively less time consuming and cheaper for women, who may lack financial support, and have little interest (possibly due to gender socialisation) in learning jobs with more technical skill and a longer period of training.

In line with the above discussions on the factors that influence men's and women's movement into feminised industries in the labour market, the data generally suggest that men and women enter the labour market out of economic need, that is, the need for survival or sustenance. However, these motives are shaped also by the socio-economic backgrounds of individuals, particularly by expectations regarding marital status and family responsibilities. Married men and women were driven by social expectations to support their families, as breadwinner, supplementary earners and/or heads of households. This motive was absent amongst the category of single men but present amongst some single women.

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<sup>44</sup> This informant is responsible for women's development in a manufacturing institution (GRATTIS -ITTU) in Tema, Ghana.

<sup>45</sup> The institution had less than 10 women in the metal department, but over 120 in the textiles and garment department

Regardless of the fact that pressure from the economic environment, coupled with the social expectations of men and women, took precedence in job choice, decisions were also affected by respondents' socio-economic background. Men's economic choice in the food -processing sector was highly influenced by their advantage gained through education. The economic choices for women in both sectors, on the other hand, were influenced by their relatively low levels of education, which provided them with an option of a trade where it was less costly in terms of financing and duration of training. This suggests that men, through their education, were provided wider options than women, again confirming that choice is a gendered issue.

It was detected from the interviews that women were conscious about the inequality that they faced within the labour market. Although there were mixed feelings in attitude and response to their plight, they claimed it would be better for them to earn an income than to be unemployed. This point is confirmed by Ofei-Aboagye who stated that:

*...the massive informal participation of women is considered a matter of necessity rather than choice with the increasing need for women to earn additional incomes to enhance family earning.*

(Ofei-Aboagye 1996:9)

The data therefore implies that with the prevailing economic conditions, survival and sustenance was what most women think of. To most of these women, attaining education may be less significant as indicated by a woman who had discontinued her education to help in her mother's business.

*I thought when I completed school, I wouldn't get any job to do, so I decided to help my mother in her trade (bakery) (see video)*

(Participant 1 female Bakery, Kumasi, 27/04/01).

Confirming this negative attitude to the significance of education in relation to attaining financial status, a government official pointed out:

*...once you earn your livelihood, you earn respect of the society; it does not matter what it is you are doing...*

(National Statistician, cited in Eyango, 2001:109).

The next section considers the recruitment and selection procedures and how these affect the segregation of men and women as they enter the labour market.

### **6.2.2. Recruitment and Selection Procedures in the Ghanaian Labour Market.**

Recruitment and selection procedures are entry point mechanisms that can facilitate or hinder job mobility, into or within the labour market. According to Daft, recruitment involves activities or practices that define the desired characteristics of applicants for specific jobs. The selection procedures are therefore used as a process of determining the skills, abilities and other attributes the applicant needs to perform a particular job (Daft 2000:403,405). These procedures are adopted by firms, in order to get the 'right people' to fit the 'right jobs'.

This section examines the gender and sectoral differences in recruitment and selection procedures as men and women enter the labour market. It also analyses the channels of recruitment, how job information is derived and the impact of these factors on the occupational structuring of men and women. This will indicate whether these procedures are a further influence on occupational segregation.

#### **6.2.2.1. Access to Job Related Information.**

Recruitment and selection procedures are entry mechanisms through which overt or subtle forms of discrimination may be manifested (Roger, 2002). Burchell and Rubery stress that:

*Differences in recruitment both create a structured labour supply by limiting access, and reflect differences in the labour supply structure. For example, method of recruitment will vary according to expectation of the job-search activity pattern of the target group.*

(Burchell, Elliot and Rubery, 1994:300).

Rees, in discussing the determinants of choice of women, highlighted that a "...particular blend of ascriptive characteristics, such as age, class, race, all ... shape and constrain channels of recruitment and promotion, and thereby influences choice"(Rees, 1990:46).

To draw out the patterns of gender and sectoral differences, two questions pertaining to the recruitment of respondents into their current job were asked. The first was: how did you first come to hear about your current job? This question identified recruitment methods adopted by the firms, that is, information channels that attract employees' attention. The second question was related to the type of recruitment criteria used by the firm in selecting people for their job.

The data on job information revealed that over 60% of the respondents heard about their current job from their friends and relatives (table 6.3). However, rather more workers in the textiles and garment sector (80%) than in the food-processing sector (73 %) provided this response. On the whole more women than men acquired job information through their friends and relatives. More men than women heard about their jobs through direct enquiry (by application) and advertisements (Table 6.7).

**Table 6.7. How respondents first came to hear about their current job by gender (%).**

Means of Job information	Textiles and Garment			Food-processing		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Advertisement	4 (1)	4 (2)	4 (3)	9 (5)	6 (3)	8 (8)
A Friend	52 (13)	60 (30)	57 (43)	54 (30)	60 (28)	57 (58)
A Relative	20 (5)	24 (12)	23 (17)	16 (9)	17 (8)	17 (17)
By Direct Enquiry (Application)/adverts	24 (6)	12 (6)	12 (12)	21 (12)	17 (8)	19 (20)
Total	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)

The results suggest that although men and women both used social network systems to acquire job related information, women were more likely than men to adopt this mechanism<sup>46</sup>.

The data further suggest that the occupational status of individuals influences the means of obtaining job related information. Unskilled and skilled workers generally tend to receive job information through friends and relatives. This was particularly high among female skilled workers 83%, (compared with 73% men) (Table B. 4a & b.). It could further be inferred from the results that employers advertised job opportunities by word of mouth and rarely advertised jobs using the media. Confirming this, most employers interviewed indicated that, although they advertised jobs, it was cheaper and more reliable to advertise internally. This was because they had more trust and confidence in references from people they knew or had worked

<sup>46</sup> Interestingly, in Ghana, the social networks were built around old school mates, friends and relatives, and gaining access not only into employment but any place of importance, depended on such networks;- 'the whom you know' syndrome.

with. They also adopted more formal methods, but these depended on the position to be occupied. This suggests that few jobs can be obtained by impersonal means.

In line with the above views, Burchell et al. maintained that not having personal contacts within firms might make it difficult to get a particular type of job, thereby reinforcing their findings that “access to ...(part time) jobs is not necessarily open but bound by informal social contacts and networks” (Burchell et al., 1994: 306). Confirming this view, Scott, in a survey in Lima, revealed that due to the limited employment opportunities for manual workers in Lima, “success depended as much “on who you knew as to what you knew” (Scott 1994:169). Scott’s study revealed that few jobs were obtained by impersonal means such as employment agencies and newspapers. Over half the men, 52 %(817), and women, 51%(399), indicated that they got their jobs through their relatives or friends (ibid., 169). Rees, in outlining the effects of recruitment networks on job gendering, stressed that “the use of internal market to attract applicants to jobs in effect restricts opportunities to people associated with existing employees”. She argued that “although networks of existing employees are crucial, such networks tend to reproduce job gendering. For example women’s network ensures that the kind of jobs to which they have access, through for example, being ‘spoken for,’ by a friend or relative, will be exclusively in typically female, low -paid, low skilled work” (Rees, 1990:81).

From the above, it could be observed that although the most common means of obtaining job information by both men and women was through friends and relatives, women were somewhat more likely than men to employ this method.

#### **6.2.2.2. Selection Criteria-Job Requirements.**

This section examines the patterns of gender and sectoral differences in recruitment requirements. It also considers how these procedures facilitate the streaming of men and women into different jobs and occupations.

Some writers have suggested that the possession of a secondary school leaving certificate improves a woman’s chances in wage employment in general, and in manufacturing industry in particular (Siew-Ean 1987; World Bank, 1991; UNIDO, 1998). In spite of the lower educational backgrounds of women, numerous studies have revealed cross regional, country, and industrial variations in the educational

requirements adopted for recruitment into wage employment over time (see Rohini, 1991; Arregui and Baez 1991:34; Lim, 1990, 1997 UNIDO, 1994-5). UNIDO is of the opinion that in most Newly Industrialised Countries (NIC's), secondary education had become a norm for recruitment into the industrial sector (UNIDO, 1994). Confirming this point, Lim observed that secondary education served as the basic requirement for workers in multinational electronics factories in Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and Mexico, whilst workers within the same country's local textiles and garment factories tended to have average or lower levels of education (Lim, 1990:107). In Ghana, although literacy serves as a means of entry into the labour market, secondary and higher educational qualifications facilitate easy access into formal sector employment (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Ghana Human Development Report, 1998;).

In spite of the fact that education and literacy provide access to formal employment, these are not sufficient conditions for guaranteeing employment. Access is also determined by an interplay of factors, such as employers' preferences, the nature of skill requirements relating to the job, experience, social contacts and networks. Confirming this view, Burchell and others argued that "...structuring of access to employment may thus take many forms and is by no means limited to the use of formal qualifications and experience criteria " (Burchell et al., 1994: 306).

The results on the requirement of recruitment procedures for men and women revealed that more men than women were recruited on the basis of educational qualification (Table 6.8 ). In contrast, more women were recruited in spite of having no experience. This was particularly true in the food-processing sector.

**Table 6.8. Gender and Job Requirements- Criteria for selection: Cross Sectoral Analysis (%)**

Job Requirement	Textiles and Garment			Food-processing		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Job Aptitude	8 (2)	18 (9)	14.7 (11)	5.4 (3)	19 (9)	11.7 (12)
Education	36 (9)	16 (8)	22.7 (17)	35.7 (20)	12.6 (6)	25.2 (26)
Prior experience (<3yrs in related field)	44 (11)	38 (19)	40 (30)	10.7 (6)	19.1 (9)	14.6 (16)
No experience	4 (1)	22 (11)	16 (12)	35.7 (20)	48.9 (23)	41.7 (43)
Education and High level Experience (>3 years)	8 (2)	6 (3)	6.7 (5)	12.5 (7)	0 (0)	6.8 (7)
Total	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)

The question asked is, what accounts for the high rate of gender and sectoral differences in job requirements? Does the same job for men and women require different criteria?

Gender and sectoral differences in selection criteria were best explained when the information supplied was related to the occupation<sup>47</sup> of respondents. The requirement for professional jobs was educational qualification and (or) high level of experience in a related field. A similar requirement was used for selecting men and women within clerical occupations (Table B. 5a & b). In contrast, for most unskilled productive jobs, no experience was required, especially for men, as more men (83 %), than women (43 %) within this category in the food-processing sector gave this response. For 36% (5), and 21 %(3) of women within the same category, the requirement for their jobs was based on aptitude and experience respectively. The sectoral differences were pronounced amongst skilled productive workers as over 80% of textiles and garment workers indicated that their job required prior experience (refer to Table B. 5b).

An explanation of this pattern could be that, while most skills are acquired on- the-job in the food processing sector, formal apprenticeship training has become a necessary condition for engagement in most activities in the textiles and garment sector, even where employers have provided on-the-job training (Ghana Human Development Report, 1998; GLSS 4, 2000). Notwithstanding this, it was observed that some employers in the textiles and garment sector preferred to train and recruit most of their workers (especially females) from the pool of their own apprentices. Further discussion of training is provided in the subsequent section. Running parallel to this, the data suggests that for more jobs in the food-processing sector either academic qualifications or no experience is required than in the textiles and garment sectors. This confirms the differences in education attainment levels between the sectors (ref chapter 5). The high rate of women within the food-processing sector with only basic education, therefore, explains their inability to acquire better jobs and experience. The fact is that even if men and women in the textiles and garment sector lacked higher education, their background experience through vocational or informal apprenticeship training provided them with skilled vocations that facilitated easy access into the market. Confirming this, the Ghana Human Development Report revealed that the informal apprenticeship system provides about 65% of skilled workers to the manufacturing sector in Ghana (Ghana Human Development Report,

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<sup>47</sup> For statistical purposes and easy comparison between the sectors the data has been analysed based on the occupational classification rather than job categories.



1998). This explains the differences in the higher background experience of skilled workers in the textiles and garment sector than in the food-processing sector.

The above analysis suggests that access into the labour market is based on an interplay of socio-economic factors, which includes social networks, educational qualification, experience, job aptitude, and many others. However, the interplay of these variables is also influenced by other variables such as the nature of the industry and occupation, the level of competition, employers' preferences, ascriptive factors and access to job information, which have differential impacts on men and women.

For both women and men the most common means of access to job related information was through social networks and women relied slightly more heavily upon this method. The gender differences to accessing job information also reflected the nature of jobs that they acquired. In the case of professional, clerical and some skilled jobs, information was acquired through impersonal means (adverts or direct enquiry) and since there were more men than women in these areas, more men adopted this means. Furthermore the recruitment criteria of workers revealed that more men than women were recruited on the basis of educational qualifications and experience, whilst for most women experience was often not required. Nonetheless, the sectoral differences showed that the recruitment pattern for men and women in the textiles and garment sector was predominantly based on experience, whilst in the food processing sector, for about 40% of respondents, 'no experience' was the most common response. The data therefore suggests that recruitment patterns reflect the nature of jobs men and women are employed in as more skilled and professional jobs required higher levels of both education and experience.

### **6.2.3. Employers' Perspectives on Gender Segregation in Manufacturing Industry.**

The results from previous sections have shown patterns of gender inequality in motives for working and choice of sector, recruitment procedures influence job streaming. The question is whether employers' perceptions concerning gender and work, play a role in occupational segregation in industry.

A neoclassical theory explaining labour market discrimination is employers' taste and preference (see Becker, 1971). According to Reskin et al., "employers play a central

role in concentrating women and men into different jobs. They or their agents may intentionally separate the sexes or do simply by adhering to past recruitment practices, requiring unnecessary qualification, or indulging the preference of some male workers”(Reskin et al., 1994:64). In addition, Brydon and Chant point out that:

*as far as 'demand' is concerned, cultural stereotypes of gender roles are incorporated into the production process itself, influencing employers attitude towards the kind of jobs which are practically, morally and ideologically 'appropriate' for female workers, and frequently results in a marked hierarchy of employment along gender lines. Supply and demand factors are undoubtedly interrelated to a very large degree*

(Brydon and Chant, 1989:180).

Other cost factors that come into play influencing employers' preference are indirect costs, which are linked to laws and regulations that govern the labour market (see Anker, 1998:18)

To provide an understanding of the causes of occupational segregation in this study, employers<sup>48</sup> were asked questions that pertained to gender preference in relation to their firms. 80% (8) of employers questioned had a preference for working with a particular gender group. Interestingly, within the food processing industry, employers in agro-processing rather than in most confectionery firms preferred women. Their reasons generally reflected the fact that the core production activities required manual dexterity and also were mostly associated with women's domestic work. Nonetheless, it was observed that in the large agro-processing firms men were engaged in masculine related jobs that dealt with machine operation and lifting of heavy items in the packing unit. However, in the majority of confectionery firms where most activities were largely mechanised, men rather than women were employed to carry out both skilled and unskilled jobs such as baking, roasting, packing, labelling, sorting and cleaning, which are normally considered as 'women's work'.

As indicated earlier in the section, employers cited apparently good reasons such as the nature of the job, industrial laws and regulations and market competition in

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<sup>48</sup> Ten employers (5 men and 5 women) were selected from the 21 firms visited. The selection of respondents was based on willingness of employers to be interviewed. They comprised 4 employers from textiles and garment sector and 6 from the food processing sector.

backing their preferences. However, more in-depth information, which betrayed their hidden stereotyped perceptions about gender and work, was gleaned from their responses when asked if they would allow the opposite sex to undertake the same activity. The following were some of the comments of respondents (employers):

*Oh! You know very well that women are not that strong, and the job (referring to production floor activities) here requires the use of physical strength. Men will not complain even when they are tired, because they need the money and will even work overtime, unless you stop them. As for women, they will complain that my here (he holds his waist), today I'm sick, tomorrow that ... and will even not come to work. But remember this is business...*

(Participant 2. Male, MD Confectionery, Accra. 18/01/2001).

Interestingly, a male employer who claimed that he had no preference for gender, on answering the second question passed this comment:

*..., everybody is talking about women's empowerment. The company, showing that it is gender sensitive, has now increased its intake of women, and also put in place other mechanisms to help women, but the point is all the managers agree with me that you cannot plan with women...*

(Participant 3. Male MD, Confectionery, Accra. 19/1/2001).

Contrary to the perceptions and view of those male employers, some women entrepreneurs had this to say:

*... this work is dirty, needs the carefulness and dexterity of the hands and women don't mind, but for the men they will not do it, even though majority of are out there are unemployed. They (referring to men) have an attitude problem...they see it as women's work.*

(Participant 1. Female employer, Food-processing, Accra, 17/01/2001).

*Ah! As for this job (corn processing-kenkey), it's a woman's job. How can you allow a man to sit beside the fire: mixing corn dough and wrapping kenkey? It is impossible, he cannot do it, and I would*

*not allow even my son to do this job. A man will even not do it. The girls will even laugh at him and his friends. It is not done; I would allow my daughter to do this job, but not my son.*

(Participant 9 female employer, Food-processing, Kumasi, 21/04/2001).

The reasons for gender preference seem to vary between textiles and garment and food processing. Though the textiles and garment industry in Ghana is generally female dominated, female as well as male employers within this sector had a high preference for men rather than women. The reasons for this were that men displayed a higher level of loyalty and commitment to their work than women, and were more reliable.<sup>49</sup> Particularly for specific activities such as weaving, machine embroidery and appliqué designing employers considered men rather than women to be the experts in the trade. The following are a few of the comments offered by some of the employers:

*This is a labour intensive industry, and we always have to work extra hours to meet the demand on time. To depend on women for this job, means going out of market. Women have their mood swings, with complaints today, excuse tomorrow. You cannot depend on them to run this business when you have orders to meet. For the men, you can go all out [work longer hours], they don't have problems like women*

(Participant, 7 Female employer. Garment sector, Kumasi.19/04/2001).

*...I don't think women can produce a 'perfect' piece of work (talking about embroidery and appliqué designing) as the men. Personally, I prefer the men to work on embroidery and appliqué. They produce neat and good work, and have time for the work. One of my girls had learnt machine embroidery, when I employed her. I tried to encourage her initially but I found that her work was not as neat and perfect compared with that of the men. I made her stop and trained her in designing. She is now responsible for quality control of the products...*

(Participant 4 Female Employer, garment, Accra 02/02/2001).

*...you have to be extra careful, if you are working with women. They are too sensitive, and you have to mind your language when dealing*

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<sup>49</sup> These reasons were mainly attributed to market competition, employers' revealed they needed a committed and dedicated workforce (hard work) in order to maintain or capture new market shares.

*with them. For the guys, no problem they easily understand, the language, when you are under pressure, they are ever ready to help, no excuses...*

*(Participant 5 Male Employer, Textiles, Accra 5/02/2001)*

Though this employer (participant 5) was the National President of the Batik Association in Ghana, which was mainly dominated by women, it was observed that he had employed more males, with only one female, even though he organised workshops to train women in the area (see video for more comments).

From the above statements, it can be deduced that the preferences of employers were highly governed by their cultural perceptions of the behaviour of men and women in the workplace. For example, men are considered able to endure pressure at work, undertake hard tasks because they are stronger, to be more responsible and assertive, and to be more committed to work because they have fewer domestic commitments than women. Such stereotyped attitudes produce discrimination in employment, as employers with an already prejudiced mind set determine 'who fits what job', hence forming barriers that affect the recruitment of men and women.

The streaming of men and women is based not only on employers' preferences but also on complex factors such as the level of human capital and the labour force participation rate, which are influenced by other socio-cultural variables. The human capital argument relates women's position to their low levels of education, skill and experience. This theory assumes that workers are paid according to their productivity, which accrues to them as a result of education, training, experience and skill; therefore the worker with the least human capital gets paid least (Momsen, 1991; Bradley, 1992:69). It also assumes that women tend to choose or be offered work in particular occupations because they do not have the education or experience to qualify for better jobs (Anker, 1998:15). It has been argued, however, that this theory does not account for occupational segregation. Beller, for example, has shown that segregation existed irrespective of women's qualifications (Beller, 1982).

The question is, do women in the occupations under study lack the appropriate qualifications, training, experience and skill? Do they choose a job on the basis of their educational qualification? Are they offered jobs on the basis of their educational background? To examine the human-capital explanation of segregation, the

educational qualifications of respondents were related to the data on occupational distribution.

The results from the study revealed that within skilled production occupations, there were more men, especially in food processing, with secondary and middle (MLSC) or junior secondary school education qualification (JSS). Again, in food-processing, more men, (58%(8) in unskilled jobs (compared with 14%(2) women), had secondary education . However, men in the skilled production workforce are slightly less educated than women in the textiles and garment sector (Table 6.9a &b).

**Table 6.9. Gender, Occupational Classification and Educational Level of Workers (%).**

**6.9a Food-processing Sector.**

Educational Attainment	Occupational Classification									
	Professional/managerial		Clerical and related		Un/semi-skilled Productive		Skilled Productive		Supervisor	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Primary	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (1)	0 (0)	29 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)
MSLC/ JS S	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	42 (5)	79 (11)	50 (10)	38 (10)	50 (2)	20 (1)
Vocational/tech	14 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	25 (3)	7 (1)	10 (2)	4 (1)	0 (0)	40 (2)
Secondary	0 (0)	0 (0)	83 (5)	100 (2)	33 (4)	7 (1)	40 (8)	29 (7)	25 (1)	20 (1)
Polytechnic	29 (4)	0 (0)	17 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	20 (1)
University	57 (8)	100 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	25 (1)	0 (0)
Total	100 (14)	100 (2)	100 (6)	100 (2)	100 (12)	100 (14)	100 (20)	100 (24)	100 (4)	100 (5)

**6.9b. Textiles and Garment Sector.**

Educational Attainment	Occupational classification					
	Clerical and related		Skilled Productive		Supervisors	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Primary	0 (0)	0 (0)	12 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
MSLC/ JS S	0 (0)	0 (0)	59 (10)	54 (22)	60 (3)	16.7 (1)
Vocational/tech	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	12 (5)	0 (0)	50 (3)
Secondary	100 (3)	67 (2)	30 (5)	29 (12)	40 (2)	16.7 (1)
Polytechnic	0 (0)	33 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	16.7 (1)
Total	100 (3)	100 (3)	100 (17)	100 (41)	100 (5)	100 (6)

The pattern depicted in the food-processing sector shows that a skilled productive force is valued and therefore there is more competition for such jobs. This supports the human capital argument that men tend to be better qualified than women, which can also be attributed equally to the broader structure of the educational advantage of men over women in Ghana (see Reskin et al., 1994; Anker, 1998; GLSS 4, 2000; Enyago, 2001). This theory, however, states the obvious surface facts and fails to

explore the underlying structural and cultural issues, thereby making the theory superficial.

Figures on female clerical, and professional occupation are very few in this study, therefore, only tentative statements can be made regarding this. Unlike the results on productive occupations, the investigation further showed that most clerical workers had secondary education, although one man and one woman had also completed a polytechnic course. All women in professional or administrative occupation had a university degree, but some men in the same category had lower educational qualifications. A similar trend was detected amongst supervisors, where men in both sectors often had lower educational qualifications than the women. This suggests that men find it easier to enter into clerical, administrative and professional occupations, even when they are less educated than women. The question is, how do men with lower educational qualifications manage to enter higher level jobs, especially in production, and occupy better positions, if education is a basis for occupational structuring?

Human capital theorists associate women's relatively low status in the labour market with their lack of education, skill and experience. The data on occupational requirement suggested that more men, (38 %(21) and 36%(9)) than women (13% (6) and 22% (11)) within the food processing and the textiles and garment sectors respectively, had an academic background related to their occupation. However, the data also suggests that the majority of respondents 73% (55) and 74 % (76), in both the textiles and garment and food-processing sectors, did not have job related qualifications.

Notwithstanding the general lack of educational relevance within the sectors, the data on recruitment requirements in the previous section suggested that more men were recruited on the basis of experience than women, yet more female than male supervisors were selected in this way. Furthermore, the data suggested that workers in productive occupation in the textiles and garment sector rather than in the food-processing sector were recruited on the basis of experience in skill (refer to Tables B. 5a & b, appendix). The differences between the sectors could be attributed to employees' background experience gained through their years of apprenticeship training (Oduro, 1997; GLSS 4, 2000). Similarly, the data on professionals showed that 36% (5) of men were recruited on the basis of a high level of experience (education and >3 years experience) in a related field.

The results in this study, which show some patterns of the gender gap in educational attainment and occupation, especially in food processing, confirm other studies conducted in Ghana (RPED, 1994; GLSS 4, 2000; Verner 2000). Generally, it is evident that women in production occupations in food processing had lower educational qualifications, experience and skill relevance than men, though this was not the case in the textiles and garment sector. This result therefore confirms the human capital argument. Nonetheless, it does not fully explain the differences in gender-job streaming and differences in position, as there were still more men within professional occupations and supervisory positions, with relatively lower academic background than women.

It can be argued that although the human capital stance that women “invest” less in education and training, and this explains segregation, nevertheless, the empirical evidence suggests that this is not a sufficient condition, as there are relatively more men with lower human capital and relevant skills. Furthermore, it can be argued that women’s lower investment in education in Ghana, as indicated in the earlier chapter, is mostly influenced by an interplay of socio-economic and cultural factors that are generally beyond women’s control. These include the socio-cultural attitude towards the education of girls, parental preference, parental poverty and the structure of education (Greenstreet, 1972, 1986; Akuffo, 1978; Abbam, 1988; Ghana Human Development Report, 1998; Enyago, 2001). Discriminatory practices based on traditional attitudes towards the education of girls still persist (Greenstreet, 1972; see Akuffo 1978; Robertson 1987; Baden et al., 1994; Dolphyne, 2000). This situation hinders not only women’s educational development but also their socio-economic advancement in society as a whole.

These findings support explanations based on feminist theory. As Anker argues:

*Women’s disadvantaged position in the labour market is caused by, and is a reflection of, patriarchy and women’s subordinate position in society and the family. In all societies, household work and child care are seen as the main responsibility of women, while men are seen as mainly responsible for being the breadwinner. That these societal norms and perceptions differ from reality for many women, men and families does not detract from their influence on*



*people's behaviour and their effects in causing discrimination against women.*

*(Anker, 1998:22).*

Gender socialisation and cultural appropriateness of roles also plays a significant role in job structuring. Generally, Ghana has no laws that debar men and women from entering into any occupation or job, yet like most cultures, society defines what jobs and occupations are “appropriate” for men and women. Within most communities most traditional handicrafts and artisanal activities such as cloth-weaving (Kente), woodcarving and blacksmithing are gendered and guarded by strong religious norms, traditional beliefs and superstitions (Rattray, 1927; Christine, 1959). It was observed during the study that entry into some occupations by members of the opposite sex was considered taboo, as observed in Bonwire and its environs (see video).

Societal attitudes stigmatising or ridiculing its male members for entering stereotyped female jobs were experienced by two male employers in this study who inherited their mother’s bakery business. In sharing their experiences, they revealed friends and members of their community, tried to discourage them, by calling them ‘*the male bread baker*’ translated in the local language ‘*oberima papano tuo fo,*’ and not by their business or real names. One of the employers<sup>50</sup> had this to say:

*... It was not easy for me, when I started. People used to mock and laugh at me. They gave me all sorts of names such as obaa berima, [‘translated man-woman] ‘oberima papano tuo fo’ [The male bread baker]. My mother encouraged me as I fought to break through the market, I never gave up. I had to work hard around the clock with these guys [all male workers, most of whom were relatives]. I never rest [you could tell from his face, as he kept yawning while talking] because I had to get my product out to the market much earlier before everyone did [his distribution starts at latest 5 am every morning]. Interestingly, the same people who laughed at me some years back now accord me respect and never stop congratulating me, for the achievement and effort...*

*(Participant 10, Male employer, food-processing, Kumasi.03/05/2001).*

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<sup>50</sup> This employer had employed only males, who were largely members of his extended family and their friends, whom he had encouraged into the trade. His workers earned far better wages than all other workers in bread baking firms visited.

Notwithstanding the difficulties faced by the older generation, this trend is changing with time as more young men enter into the bakery industry due to lack of employment opportunities in the system (see video clip).

Segregation and the sex-stereotyping of jobs also exists in the textiles and garment sector as indicated earlier, but this was less fundamental in garments than in textiles as most respondents in this sector viewed the industry and its work as unisex<sup>51</sup>. Segregation and sex-stereotyping of jobs were observed even more strongly in the male dominated metals industry, where the attitude of both workers and employers perpetuated segregation, irrespective of women's abilities (see video).

From the above data and observations from the study, it could be argued that the causes of segregation of men and women into different jobs and occupations emanate from an interplay of culture and gender socialisation processes that penetrate through and become strengthened by the other structures in society. It could be inferred that irrespective of the role of modernisation and development in Ghana, most communities still hold on to strong cultural and religious norms and perceptions that govern gender and work. These are reflected in the process of gender-role socialisation in most communities visited which directly or indirectly influences the educational and career paths of men and women.

As discussed earlier, in Chapter 3, there is the general argument that Ghana's educational curriculum does not provide employable skills (Eynago, 2001). In addition to this, the system reproduces graduates based on these stereotypes, strengthening gendered occupational segregation. Girls become routed towards arts and home management subjects, boys towards more scientific and technical subjects, perpetuating gender inequalities in the labour market (Gage and Njogu, 1994:42; GSS, 1992:100). It was also observed from firms visited, that even within the informal setting, apprenticeship training was gendered, as participation was mostly influenced by the sex of the employer or trainer (see Oduro, 1997).

Notwithstanding the role that culture, the gender-role and socialisation processes, as well as the educational system play in streaming men and women, it is arguable that "no one would dream of choosing the poorly paid jobs or that poorly educated people

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<sup>51</sup> In the garment sector, it was observed that it was easier for men to cross over into sewing women's garments than vice versa. A very small percentage of women do actually learn to sew men's wear. The reasons men gave for switching to sewing women's wear or combining the sewing of both were mainly economic-financial. Men stated that it was much easier to learn and a faster means of generating more income, as there was a higher demand and market for sewn garments by women than for men.

chose unskilled, dead-end jobs”(Reskin et al., 1994). Nevertheless, there is much evidence which shows how culture and socialisation directly or indirectly influence the routing of occupational choice building a base upon which the other structural systems, such as education, the labour market, and legislation take their roots. The cultural and educational orientations of women into such stereotyped jobs therefore suggest that women rather than men consequently have a more limited range of occupational options. Corroborating this point, Vaiou argued that “women’s concentration in the informal and atypical jobs, ..., is due to a great extent, to lack of alternatives...”(Vaiou 1996 in Anker and Melkas, 1998: 23). In addition to these, women are forced under economic pressures and constraints to make use of the best options available to them, taking into consideration their background, lack of employment opportunities and the need to survive. It needs emphasising that in this study there were more single mothers than fathers, and the economic pressure on these women tended to be higher as single income earners for their homes, than for men, who received support from their wives. As expected, the options that women follow in the face of these difficult situations become subjected to an interplay between their personal circumstances and external systems that build upon prejudiced beliefs concerning “appropriate” gender roles and work, reinforcing the streaming of men and women in the labour market.

### **6.3 Conclusion.**

Sex segregation as a form of gender inequality has gained much attention in recent years due to the negative impact of the phenomena, on not only women but also the labour market and the economic growth of society as a whole (see Reskin et al., 1994; Anker, 1998). The aim of this chapter was to examine the existing patterns of gender segregation in two significant sectors of the labour market and the procedures that generated segregation.

It is evident that sex-typing of jobs and occupational segregation exists within the feminised food processing and textiles and garment sectors in Ghana. Men in the food processing sector were more likely to be employed in more professional and technically related jobs as managers, engineers, technicians, machine operators and accounts officers. Women in this sector, on the contrary, formed the majority of skilled and unskilled productive workers engaged in packing and food-processing related activities such as fish, cassava and gari processors, bakers etc. Workers in the

textiles and garment sector were predominantly engaged in skilled productive work, however, sex segregation continues to exist. With the exception of tailoring and dressmaking activities, men and women undertook different activities. Men were engaged in weaving, embroidery and appliqué designing, whilst more women were in batik making, sewing and finishing activities.

The gender differentials in occupational structuring, especially in food processing, partially confirms human capital arguments which attributes job placement to the levels of academic qualification, skill and experience. However, a variable such as educational qualification per se may be not very relevant for entry into the textiles and garment industry, or even into some areas in agro food processing sectors. This is because in Ghana, many such vocational and artisanal trades are normally considered for school dropouts (see Apprenticeship system in Ghana Human Development Report, 1998; also see GLSS 4, 2000). It could therefore be argued that these factors may serve as a necessary but not sufficient condition for occupational streaming in the labour market. Job placement and segregation by sex, it can be argued, is largely influenced by an interaction of labour demand factors such as the nature of the job, employers' preference, and recruitment practices with the socio-demographic characteristics of workers, and with an individual's access to job related information. For example, it was revealed in this study that social networks (family and friends) were the most common means through which job information was relayed. However, women gained greater access through this means in both sectors than men. Although social networking is the cheapest and more convenient form of relaying job information, from an employer's point of view, this mechanism nevertheless reproduces job gendering, as men and women are more likely to aim for typically stereotyped jobs (Rees, 1992; Reskin et al., 1994).

The socio-demographic aspects of the supply of labour are influenced by a variety of cultural factors of which the most important are gendered expectation in relation to education. These have created sex inequalities by prioritising the education of men above women, and by routing men and women into different subject and job areas. These gender differences, therefore, provided a limited range of occupational options for women, which have consequently hindered their job opportunities.

The labour market therefore perpetuates and strengthens the already existing inequalities by erecting barriers that have streamed men and women into culturally

defined sex-stereotyped occupations. Employers and workers establish both visible and invisible barriers. Employers' preference for workers is a preconceived combination of gender stereotyping and realities, sometimes superficially justified. Their attitudes, perceptions and prejudices, also tend to be influenced by labour laws and regulations, and as such, they make choices that favour them in terms of comparative cost advantage, bearing in mind the differences in the commitment levels and work attitudes of men and women in the labour market<sup>52</sup>. The reality is that, women are constrained by both internal and external factors over which they have no control, and these structural constraints placed on women by society need to be addressed.

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<sup>52</sup> The data on duration spent on current job revealed that more men than women had spent more than 5 years with their current employment (see table in appendix).

**CHAPTER SEVEN**

**GENDER, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND THE WORKING  
ENVIRONMENT.**

## Chapter 7

### GENDER, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT.

#### 7.0. Introduction.

The changing role of women in economic development and the persistence of inequality led to international bodies, governments and organisations drawing up various legislation, regulations, policies and programmes to eradicate gender inequality. In this way attempts have been made to promote equitable treatment and the empowerment of women not only at the workplace, but in all spheres of life. For example, the primary aim for the introduction of ILO Conventions and Recommendations, such as the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) and the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No.100), was to promote gender equity for men and women at the workplace. Ghana as a member state of the ILO and UN has ratified and enacted most of these conventions such as Convention No.100, No. 111, the UN's Convention on the Elimination of All Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in its constitution, laws and regulations that govern its labour market and the society as a whole (GoG, 1992; UNIDO, 1995; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996). The ratification of these conventions in Ghana's Constitution and Labour Law is intended to provide men and women with *de jure* equal rights and treatment, irrespective of the economic situation or social circumstances, and thereby makes firms bound by such enactments. Concerning this point, a key informant responsible for drafting and interpreting of Ghana's Labour Laws, maintained that:

*...the Labour Law of Ghana provides for equal treatment for men and women workers. This is a result of Ghana's ratification of the appropriate convention of the ILO, Convention No. 111, which is the Discrimination in Employment and Occupation. Therefore, there is no discrimination in employment and occupation as far as Ghana's Labour Laws are concerned...*

He, however, noted that:

*... Ghana has ratified as many as 48 of the ILO Conventions and there are many instances where some conventions have not been*

*ratified, but luckily for us, the recommendations for the conventions have served as a catalyst for the promulgation of law to incorporate these standards as a result of Ghana's inability to ratify the conventions..*<sup>53</sup>

(Key informant 2, Legal Practitioner, Accra, Ghana, 20/02/01)<sup>54</sup>

In spite of the efforts made by international bodies and governments, to what extent do women do really benefit from Equal Opportunity legislation within the labour market? If the equality of women and men is accepted as a fundamental principle of human rights, do companies abide by this principle, thereby providing men and women equal access to training and development, promotion and remuneration at the workplace?

I argue that various mechanisms within the workplace impede the attainability of gender equity. As such, the following chapter examines whether women and men alike benefit from the Equal Opportunity legislation by providing a gender and cross-sectoral analyses on equal opportunities and the working environment within the food-processing and the textiles and garment sectors of the manufacturing industry in Ghana. The chapter is therefore presented in the following sequence: gender, human capital development and career advancement; income differentials; and overtime work.

### **7.1. Gender, Human Capital Development and Career Advancement.**

Human capital theorists assume generally that, “people with more human capital would be expected to be more productive and therefore to earn more per unit of time than people with less human capital, all else equal” (Jacobsen, 2001). The question is whether there are any patterns of gender differences in the development of human capital at the workplace. As such, this section examines the patterns of gender and sectoral differences in relation to the acquisition of skills, and the training and development procedures offered in the firms. It also looks at career advancement opportunities.

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<sup>53</sup> Ghana has not ratified ILO convention 27 (Maximum Weight Act), Convention 136- Protection against Benzene used by Pharmaceuticals and Textiles industries, Convention 156, Family Responsibility Act and many others.

<sup>54</sup> Key informant 2, is a Legal Practitioner, responsible for International and Labour Relations, Ghana. He is in charge of the International Labour and Domestic Labour Standards, the ILO conventions and the interpretation of the Labour Laws.



### 7.1.1. Gender and Acquisition of Skills.

In the previous chapter, it was revealed that men and women were distributed differently across a range of jobs and occupations. With these different activities in mind, the question is, how were these skills obtained? Are there any patterns of gender differences in the means used for the acquisition of skills and the duration of training? Do the means through which skills are acquired have any impact on the job and status at the workplace? Bearing these questions in mind, this section considers the existing patterns of gender differences in the acquisition of skills and the time spent on acquiring these skills. It needs emphasising that the analysis on the duration of training focuses only on the results of skills acquired through on the job training or an apprenticeship system.

Skill and the means through which it is acquired are necessary indicators used in determining the value of labour and job placement in the labour market (Rees, 1992). Some studies in Latin America and the Caribbean, South East Asia and the Pacific, Sub Saharan Africa, and most developing and OECD countries, generally revealed low human capital investment in formal education for women (Robbins and Cornell, 1999; Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Checchi, 1999; Kalsen, 1999; Jacobson, 2001). Similarly, numerous studies conducted in Ghana, revealed gender gaps in human capital investment and this was also confirmed by results on education as revealed in chapter 5 in this study (UNIDO, 1995; GLSS 4, 2000).

The data on acquisition of skills in this study revealed that more men than women within both sectors acquired their skills through formal education. The results further showed that more women than men obtained their skills through apprenticeship training and/or on-the-job training. However, more respondents in the food processing sector than in the textiles and garment sector provided this response (Table 7.1).

**Table 7.1. Gender and Means of Acquisition of Skills: A Cross-sectoral analysis (%).**

Means of skill acquisition	Textiles and Garment			Food-processing		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Formal education	36 (9)	22 (11)	26.7 (20)	37.5 (21)	12.8 (6)	26.2 (27)
Learnt on own	0 (0)	12 (6)	8 (6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Learnt from parents	8 (2)	6 (3)	6.7 (5)	0 (0)	14.9 (7)	6.8 (7)
Learnt on-the-job, (and /or) Apprenticeship	56 (14)	60 (30)	58.7 (44)	63 (35)	72.3 (34)	67 (69)
Total	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)

It should be noted that acquisition of skill for textile and garment workers, in contrast to food processing workers, was mostly through apprenticeship training, rather than training-on-the-job. The evidence to support this point is drawn from the differences in recruitment criteria, as more workers in the textiles and garment sector were employed because of their experience, whilst the majority of workers in the food-processing sector, most especially in production, had no experience (see Tables B 5a & b in appendix). Again, from the results, more women than men acquired their skill from their parents or built upon talents through self tuition.

Generally, it can be stated that women were more likely than men to acquire their skills through informal training as part of the gender role and socialisation process<sup>55</sup> rather than through formal education. It was observed in all localities visited, where agro food-processing was the major activity, that children helped their mothers in their occupation, as unpaid family workers (Fig 7.1) and that this was more prevalent with girls than boys.

**Fig 7.1. Women in Agro-food processing.** A young girl helping her mother in Gari-processing in Kumasi.



Gender socialisation: Girls learn through observation and practice by helping parents in their occupation.

<sup>55</sup> Many of the skills employed in most food processing firms are domestic skills that were acquired as part of the gender socialisation process.

Confirming this observation, a survey conducted by Ghana Statistical Service revealed that “more than four-fifths of women (representing 61% of all households in Ghana) in all localities are involved in food-processing, as the processing of agricultural produce is considered as the prime responsibility for women in Ghana”(GLSS 4, 2000:66).

Notwithstanding this, however, most of these skills could also be acquired through formal education or an informal apprenticeship system.

The data suggests that the acquisition of skill for the majority of both women and men, especially within the food-processing sector, was basically practical through imitation, observation and internalisation (training on the job). However, more men acquired their skills through formal education than women. The duration of acquisition of skill was generally much shorter for women than for men, and was dependent on the type of skill acquired (Tables C. 1a & b.). Nonetheless, both men and women in the textiles and garment sector spent more years in apprenticeship training than those in the food-processing sector. It is possible that, the training period for skills related to unskilled productive work was shorter than the period spent in skilled productive activities..

Overall, women have less formal education and lower levels of skills than men, and spend less time acquiring their skills. This relegates them, in general to less desirable jobs and makes them more vulnerable than men within the labour market<sup>56</sup>. This vulnerability may be more prominent within the food-processing sector than the textiles and garment sector because of the differences in time spent in the acquisition of skill. Moreover, workers in the textiles and garment sector have an added advantage of more easily escaping the plight of unemployment, because their specialised skills can provide them with an income as self employed.

Daft maintained that “human resource development does not only benefit the individual in terms of increasing the scope of knowledge and marketability, but also helps in increasing productivity and efficiency of the firm” (Daft, 2000:410). The question is, whether firms really do develop the skills of their workers through organised training programmes for employees. Do firms offer equal opportunities for men and women for training and development at the workplace? With these

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<sup>56</sup> The low job status of women makes them more likely than men to be laid off, in time of market instability as retrenchment more often affects low class workers than middle and high level staff (Manuh, 1997:279) In support of this the ILO argued that women are the ‘first to be fired’ (ILO, 1996: 6).

questions in mind, the next section looks at the investment of firms in the training and development of their workers. It also examines criteria for selection of trainees.

### **7.1.2. Firms and Human Capital Investment in Workers: A Gender Perspective.**

From a neoclassical model, investment in human capital is an important determinant of productivity and growth (Birdsall, Ross and Sabot, 1995). The accumulation of human capital also positively affects the level of income per worker, and the transition to the steady state of economic growth (Lorgelly, 2000). However, for firms seeking to maximise profit, the decision as to whether or not to invest in human capital will be made by taking into consideration the monetary return that the investment may generate. It should be noted that the training investment decision in the workplace generally takes one of two forms: either 'general' or 'firm-specific' training. Article 11 of the United Nations Convention, CEDAW, calls for men and women to have equal rights in employment, which includes access to training and development. However, human capital theorists suggest that training and investment decisions are less likely to favour women than men, because women have a shorter work life than men. Again, the traditional sex roles lower the incentive to invest in women (Blau et al., 1986). Studies in Ghana show that men are more likely to gain access to training and development programmes in the workplace than women (RPED, 1994; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Verner, 2000).

In my study, three questions that pertained to the development of human capital, were asked. The first was whether employers provided any training programmes for the upgrading of skills. The second was related to whether equal opportunities were provided for all in training and the criteria for selection. The third asked if respondents had been offered the opportunity for training.

The responses to the first question revealed that 70% (72) and 75% (56) of the number of respondents in the food processing and the textiles and garment sectors respectively, indicated that their firms did not organise training programmes or courses for its workers. Of the remaining group of workers, the responses to the question as to whether equal opportunities were provided by the employer for training and development revealed that in food processing a large majority of both women and men said that there were not equal opportunities for training. Responses in textiles and garment were more varied, with 71% of women saying that there were equal opportunities, while three quarters of the men in contrast to the women, denied this

(Table 7.2). The variations in response can be attributed to the differences in task assignment. It was observed that women mostly carried out similar activities; hence, they received training on-the-job as a group. Men, on the other hand, carried out different assignments, and their versatility in the different areas offered them the opportunity to get individual instruction or training on-the-job accompanying specific tasks assignments. The implication is that men gain greater advantage, in skill and experience, in relation to the individual based task-specific training.

**Table 7.2. Equal opportunity provided for training by Employers:  
A Cross-sectoral analysis (%).**

Training held for all (response)	Food-processing			Textiles and garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Yes	35 (6)	21 (3)	29. (9)	20 (1)	71 (10)	58 (11)
No	65 (11)	79 (11)	71. (22)	80 (4)	29 (4)	42 (8)
Total	100 (17)	100 (14)	100 (31)	100 (5)	100 (14)	100 (19)

The results suggest that firms did not provide equal access to the training and development of their workers. To find how the selection was made, information on selection criteria was gleaned from those workers who stated that training was not made available to all workers within the firm. These workers represent 60% (30) of those that stated that firms had training programmes.

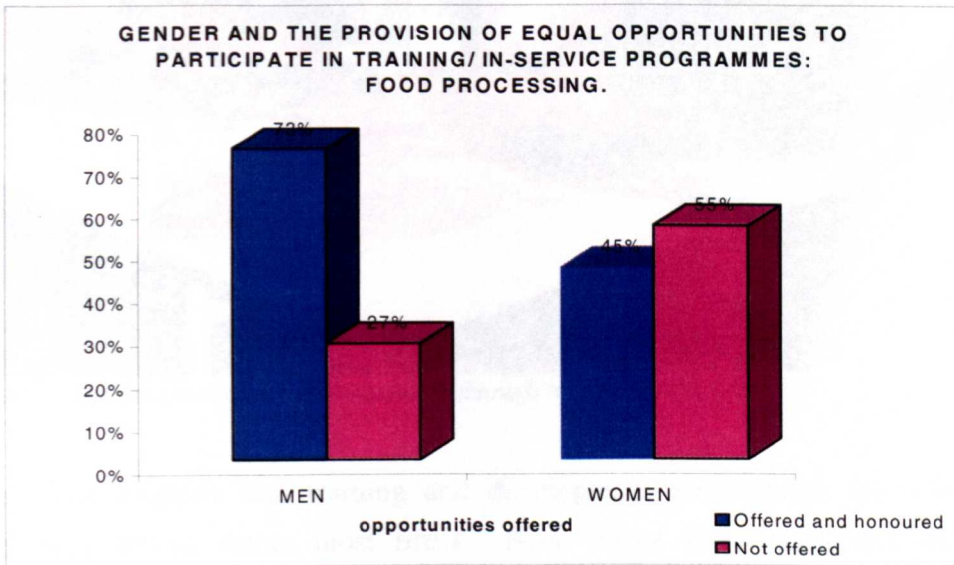
#### **7.1.2.1. The Criteria for Selection of Workers for Training and Development by Firms: The Worker's perspective.**

The results on the criteria for selection of workers revealed that the majority of workers, especially women, (72% (8) and 50% (2)) in food processing and the textiles and garment sectors respectively, stated that the recruitment for training was based on leadership. Comparatively, however, more workers in the food processing sector provided this response, while more men (75% (3)) and women, (50 % (2)) in the textiles and garment sector stated that training depended on the nature of the job. Furthermore, the result showed that more men and women working in the food-processing sector stated the length of service as a criterion for selection (Tables C.2 in appendix).

From the results, it could be inferred that although there were some variations in the criteria used by firms, the most common criteria for selection were leadership (supervisor/manager), the nature of the job, work performance and the length of service.

Respondents were also asked whether they themselves were offered the opportunity for training. The results showed that more men and women in the textiles and garment sector, (100%, (8)) than in the food processing sector (59%, (13)) were offered the opportunity for training. Nonetheless, more men than women in the food processing sector provided this response (Figure 7.2). The selection criteria for these sets of workers were generally based on leadership and work performance.

**Fig 7.2. Gender and the provision of Equal opportunities to participate in Training.**



**Fig 7.3a**

**On-the Job-Training in Fish Canning Industry.-Tema.**



Learning through observation: Workers learn on-the-job, as they observe the leader and follow instructions on the fish slitting process.

**Fig7.3b**



Workers put into practice the skills acquired through training on-the-job.

The data suggests that training and development programmes for workers were generally absent within most firms. Even where firms organised such training programmes, access was not provided for all workers by the employers, as the selection of workers was based mostly on leadership, work performance, the length of service or the nature of the job, in which women were generally disadvantaged.

For the majority of firms visited, training was built into the process of specialisation as learning was generally through observation, following instructions and practising. New information and methods were disseminated through these means (Fig, 7.3a & b). Hence, there was no formal organised training for all workers.

In the textiles and garment sector, it was observed that the on-the-job training took place in two forms; the first was on a group basis, where employers assembled workers and introduced them to special skills of sewing or designs with workers observing and then practising the skills. The second was on an individual basis: the employer dealt with the individual worker depending on a specific assignment or the nature of the job undertaken.

It was further observed that in most large and medium scale food processing firms visited, a few leaders in managerial positions<sup>57</sup> or employees were hand-picked and exposed to new ideas as a form of firm-specific training. Surprisingly, these managers or individuals did not organise formal training after they had acquired their skill, but rather passed on their knowledge by giving orders. Discrimination existed in such job-specific training, as the selection of managers was highly influenced by the employer's perception concerning the loyalty and the commitment<sup>58</sup> of these workers to the firm, perceptions which are invariably influenced by gendered norms and stereotypes.

The data suggests that leadership, work performance and the nature of the work are the common criteria for selection for training. The argument is, that if leadership is used as a basis for selection, most women will not gain access to training, because they are in the minority in leadership positions (as revealed in chapter 8). Furthermore, in most firms visited, many leaders (supervisors, heads of department/sections) were appointed rather than elected. This was based mostly on the discretion of the employers who have their own gendered preferences and perceptions about the individuals or group. Such attitudes limit the probability of women gaining access to opportunities to upgrade their skills.

In line with the above findings, a management training programme organised by GIMPA in Ghana revealed that women constituted less than half the proportion of male participants in 1990/1991 (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996). Corroborating this, Ofei-Aboagye maintained that Ghanaian women formed a minority of participants sponsored on company training programmes (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996:39-40). In explaining the gaps of inequality, she noted that, "it was assumed that women will not go to management positions so there was no need to train them... and they are also not encouraged to explore training opportunities" (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996:87). One of the factors affecting employers' perceptions and behaviours concerning gender differences in human capital investment decisions at the workplace is the perceived difference in the work life expectancy of men and women in the labour market (Blau and Ferber, 1986; Jacobsen, 2001).

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<sup>57</sup> The selection based on leadership, according to the perception of employers interviewed, showed that it cut costs due to the number of workers to be considered, teaching became much easier, information about what should be done was more easily handed down, and the leader was more reliable and dedicated. Where small groups were involved, they were easier to train than large numbers.

<sup>58</sup> According to Daft, commitment means that workers will share the leader's view point and enthusiastically carry out instruction. Needless to say, commitment is preferred to compliance or resistance (Daft, 2000:505)



Given the above analysis the question arises is, do women have any opportunities for advancing their career, if training is a tool for development and advancement at the workplace?

The following section thus examines the pattern of gender and sectoral differences in promotion.

### **7.2.0. Promotion.**

Numerous studies have shown that even where men and women enter into the same occupation, progression along the career ladder is comparatively slower for women than for men. In a process commonly termed vertical segregation, women in the labour market frequently find their access to promotion up the organisation hierarchy blocked. This results in women being disproportionately clustered within the lower echelons of career structures, hindering their opportunities for advancement (Rohini, 1991; Davidson and Cooper, 1992; Reskin et al., 1994; Harlen and Berheide, 1994; Reskin and Ross 1995; Hakim, 1996; Wirth, 2001). In the Ghanaian context, access to promotion is similarly biased towards men (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; ISSER et al., 1998).

The results on promotion in this study revealed that over 70% of men and women within both sectors had never received promotion (Fig 7.4a & b).

More workers in the food processing sector provided this response. The results in relation to their various occupations revealed that more women than men were promoted within the productive workforce (skilled and unskilled). This could be attributed to the creation of vertical, but dead-end promotional structures or incentive packages that are non-career oriented, or geared towards upward mobility by the firm, but serve as a form of motivation to boost the moral of workers, especially the productive workforce, to enhance productivity. Unlike genuine career-oriented promotion accompanied by higher responsibilities and authority, task definitions rather remains unchanged. The data, on the other hand, revealed that none of the women within the professional and clerical class within the food processing sector were promoted (Table C.4). However, men and women in supervisory positions indicated that they had been promoted to hold these positions.

Fig 7.4

**Gender and Promotion:- A Cross-sectoral analysis**

7.4a

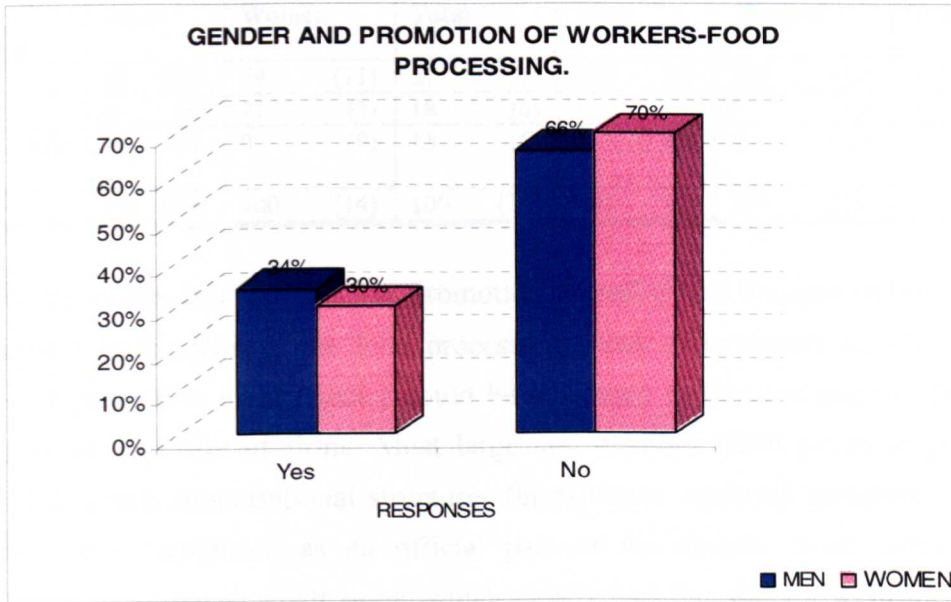
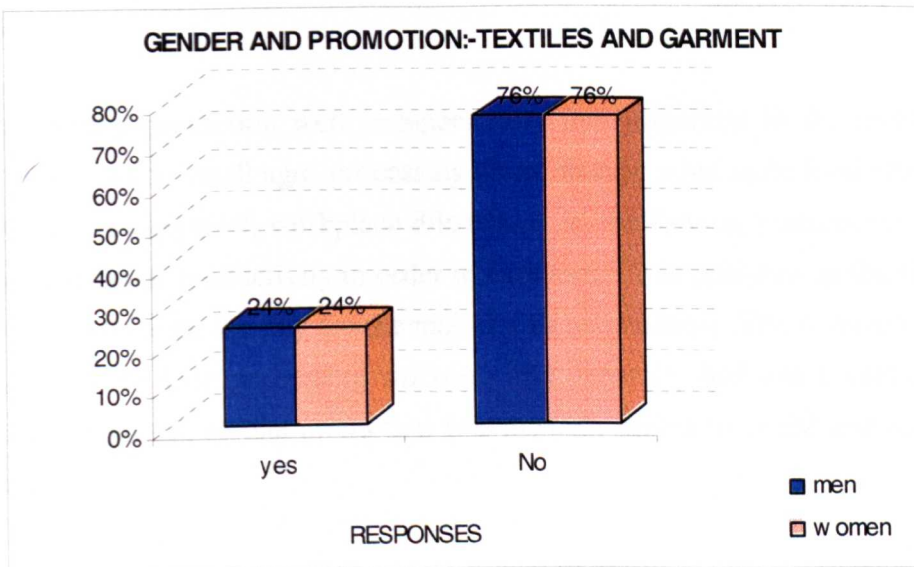


Fig 7.4b



To unearth the patterns of gender differences in promotion, the data on the 34% of men and 30% of women in the food-processing sector together with 24% men and 24% women in the textiles and garment sector who were promoted was further analysed.

The results on the number of times respondents were promoted revealed that more women than men within the food processing sector were promoted once only and more men than women were promoted on more than two occasions (Table 7.3). In textiles and garment, none of the respondents had been promoted more than once.

**Table 7.3. Gender and Number of Times Promoted: A Cross-sectoral analysis (%).**

Number of times promoted	Food-processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Once	58 (11)	79 (11)	67 (22)	100 (6)	100 (12)	100 (18)
Twice	16 (3)	21 (3)	18 (6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
More than twice	26 (5)	0 (0)	15 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	100 (19)	100 (14)	100 (33)	100 (6)	100 (12)	100 (18)

From the table, the data suggests that promotion overall is less frequent in the textiles and garment sector than in the food processing sector. The reason for the virtual absence of promotion in this sector could be attributed to the size and the form of organisational structure of firms. Most large and medium (food processing) firms visited had formal organisational structures (hierarchical /pyramid structure), where promotion was recognised as an official part of the system. Such hierarchical structures were absent in small firms, which mostly had flat structures. In these, the only form of motivation for increasing productivity was directly related to income (piece rate).

Issues concerning promotion were comparatively less important in the textiles and garment sector and in small agro-processing firms, than in large scale food processing firms visited (see chapter 9, workplace dilemmas). In the former, workers considered how to increase their productivity in order to earn more<sup>59</sup>, as positions in the firm had little or no influence on the pay for the majority of respondents. The reverse was the case amongst most food processing workers, who generally had low levels of skill, and few qualifications, so that promotion was the only means to social and economic advancement.

The differences in attitude stemmed also from the fact that workers in the textiles and garment sector had higher expectations and aspirations<sup>60</sup>. Most women only saw their workplace as a vehicle<sup>61</sup> to enable them to accumulate enough capital to set up their own small enterprise, to get more acquainted with the world of fashion and design and to form market networks. More women and men in this sector than in the food processing sector indicated their intention to leave their respective firms and start their own business. Further discussion on this ambition comes in chapter 9.

<sup>59</sup> Most workers in the textiles and garment sector and agro-processing firms were mainly paid by piece rate, where the more items the worker produces within a given period of time, the higher earnings they receive..

<sup>60</sup> Most aimed to become self-employed entrepreneurs rather than working for life as employees.

<sup>61</sup> The data on length of service with the firm, revealed that the majority of textiles and garment workers had served in their respective firms for less than three years, whereas it was the opposite in the food processing sector (see table in appendix)

The data in this study shows gender differentials in access to promotion. The question is, what factors account for the gender differentials? In the next section, the criteria for promotion are examined.

### **7.2.1. Criteria for Promotion.**

Women, like men, have the right to enjoy equal opportunities for promotion and career advancement. Yet, there is still evidence of discrimination regarding access to promotion for women in the workplace (Rohini 1991; Burchell, Rubery et al., 1994; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; ISSER et al., 1998).

It was discovered that although there was little or no difference between the initial rates of promotion between men and women within the food processing and textiles sectors, more men than women had been promoted more than once. It is thus important to analyse critically the arguments used to justify men's greater workplace mobility. The following section thus examines the criteria for selection for the promotion, from both the respondents' perspective and the employers' perspective.

In contrast to the sectoral differences in promotion occurrences, the results have revealed more similarities than differences between the sectors. The common criteria in both sectors were work performance, length of service, experience and educational and skill-upgrade, in that order. The last two criteria were applied mainly in the food processing sector. There were some differences by gender. More women (83% (10)) and (64% (9)), in textiles and the food processing sectors, than men (67% (4)) and (37% (7)), were given promotion on the basis of their work performance. Contrary to this, more men (33% (3)) and (37% (7)) than women were promoted on the basis of long service and work experience. Furthermore, men rather than women, especially in the food processing sector, indicated that promotion to their current position was based on educational and skill upgrade (Table C.4 in appendix).

Women were more likely than men to be promoted on the grounds of work performance. Thus, performance appraisal was one of the most significant instruments that firms adopted as grounds for promotion for workers, and most especially, for women. Contrary to this, men were more likely than women to be promoted on the basis of long service and work experience, work performance, education and /or skill

upgrading. However, there were sectoral variations: for workers in textiles and garment sectors, work performance was one of the key bases for promotion, whereas in the food-processing sector, education and skill–upgrade (training), served as a basis for the promotion of workers. Given the procedures for career advancement, it is obvious that women, especially in food-processing, are less likely to gain access to such opportunities, considering their low level of education, and limited access to training and development at the workplace. Decisions about promotions were made by employers and managers, and to a lesser extent, supervisors (Table C.5.see appendix). It should be noted that although supervisors played a role in promotional decisions, their role was limited in the sense that any recommendations they made were then subject to scrutiny by the head and management board or employers in that order (in more formal organisations).

Notwithstanding these variations, the data generally suggests that employers consider aspects that tend to apply more to male than to female workers, and this therefore provides the men with more chances to demonstrate their worth than are available to women. On the whole, the data suggests that women have more limited options as regards promotional paths in the workplace. As one employer stressed:

*Promotion is not automatic, the position must be available or created, and we must have confidence in the individual, who is promoted into that position. How loyal is the person? We must count the cost; can he be able to deliver what we want? That is the most important thing to us...*

(Male employer, food-processing, Tema, 14/02/2001).

This statement suggests that the opinion of the employer or board of management is the most important factor, irrespective of the formalised criteria. Most employers emphasised particular criteria, with many highlighting the loyalty and commitment of the worker as a key qualification for promotion, taking the other factors into account. The employment of such subjective criteria suggested that employers are influenced by their perceptions and preferences in deciding ‘who’ gets promoted. This, therefore, results in favouritism at the workplace as promotion will not be based solely on merit and, as such, hinders the progress of eligible candidates, particularly women, who may have less opportunity to prove their worth. It needs to be emphasised here that this also links back to preferring ‘people like us’ (see Karsten, 1994), as it is usually

men who do the selecting. This also raises the issue of gendered perception of 'loyalty', where women can be perceived as being less committed due to their common roles as primary caregivers in addition to their paid employment (Anker, 1998).

The issue of gender inequality in promotion as a result of an employer's preference was raised during the study by a female respondent who felt she had been unfairly treated by her employer, after working for fifteen years with the firm without being promoted, despite her educational background (secondary school qualification in home science). Narrating her ordeal, the respondent revealed that it was not until she became more assertive, fighting for her right to promotion, that it was granted to her in her sixteenth year of employment. Her reason for her new-found assertiveness was based on the fact that a male colleague, who had entered the job with only primary education, and who had started as a cleaner, had obtained a series of promotions within a period of less than twelve years. He had risen to the rank of floor supervisor, and was currently second in command to the factory floor manager/ production manager. At present he supervises her. She commented:

*I just could not understand why I had worked for so long, trained some of the workers [both male and female], but when the men come, they quickly get promoted. This man was a cleaner, worked with me, and then was promoted to the factory floor as a worker and now the floor supervisor. This was because of the friends that he had in management [they used to send him on errands], they have managed to get him this post. I had to talk to some of the workers union leaders to help me pursue my promotion. Management first just gave me an increment in salary as promotion, but upon persistent pressure, I was been made the table head. I am twenty –two years in this firm and I have now made a supervisor for this unit. I had this position only last year. I still work under him ...*

(Participant 2, female supervisor, food-processing, Tema, 14/02/01).

This statement shows how men can rise faster in firms than women, irrespective of their background. This is because of the strong male networking system that exists and the role this plays in lobbying for positions with men at the top. Women within the workplace have less influence because of the insignificant representation of

women in top management. It was observed that in most food processing firms, promotion for men was geared towards positions that facilitated upward mobility within the organisational structure, but that this was not the case for women, who worked mostly on the factory floor and in clerical jobs. The promotional ladders there led to dead-end positions that lacked further promotional opportunities. For example, most women on the factory floor moved onto grades within the same unit, such as heads of tables, where the job remained virtually the same but had a slight increase in salary.

From the above discussions, the data suggests the existence of gender differences in promotion. Furthermore, it was revealed that men were likely to be promoted faster than women as they tended to be promoted more than once, especially in the food processing sector. Again, the criteria for promotion suggested that although high numbers of men and women were promoted on the grounds of work performance, women on the whole had a more limited range of options towards assessment paths, while men seemed to have much easier access towards promotional attainments. Information drawn from most employers on this issue of promotion, revealed that promotion in the hierarchy was only possible where vacancies occurred, as noted earlier. The creation of such vacancies was often rare, and so firms had to employ other means to motivate workers, such as by increasing their salaries where vacancies do not exist. Promotion which took the form of an increase in salary rather a change in jobs or position characterised most firms visited<sup>62</sup>.

Promotion and wages have been important issues that have gained much global attention in relation to the persistency of the inequalities that women face in the labour market. The next question is, why do women face these inequalities in terms of wages? With this question in mind, the next section considers wage differentials.

### **7.3.0. Gender Wage Differentials and Discrimination in the Labour Market.**

It is indisputably the case that wage employment is beneficial to women's socio-economic empowerment. However, women are still considered to be the poorest group of people in the world (UNIDO, 1995; ILO, 1996; UNFPA, 2000). This section examines the existing patterns of gender and sectoral differences in wages. It also considers the factors causing the differentials in income by examining the determinants of workers earnings. Overtime work is considered as a means by which extra income is earned.

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<sup>62</sup> In small firms where there were no career ladders (formalised structures), employer's increased workers' pay as a form of promotion. This method was also prevalent even with firms with formal structures.

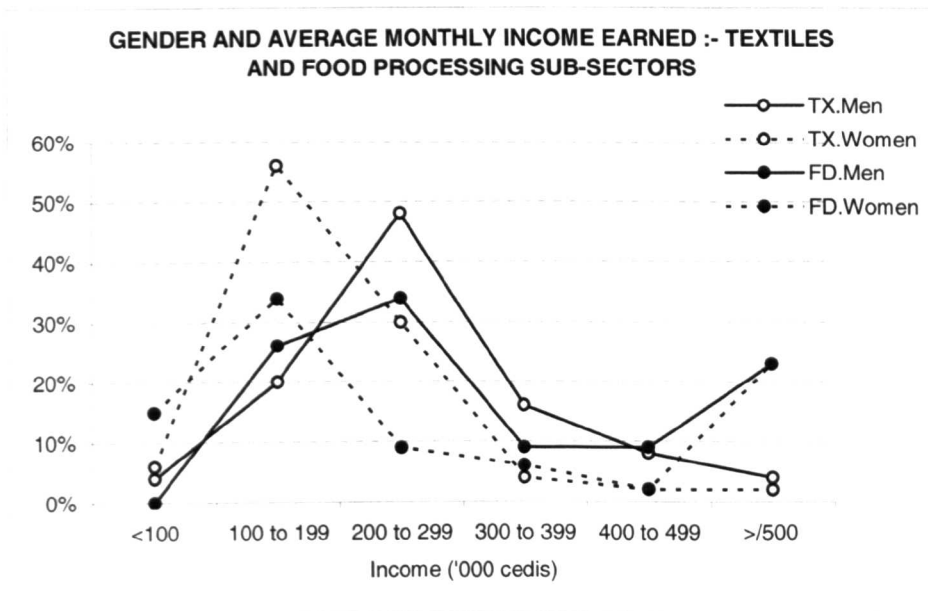
### 7.3.1. Gender and Wage Earnings.

In spite of the fact that the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value has been incorporated into the labour market legislations of many countries, pay differentials continue to be one of the most persistent forms of gender inequality (Wirth, 2001).

In this study, the gender and sectoral differences in the monthly earnings of workers<sup>63</sup> varied in relation to the occupational category and the structural distribution of firms. Over 40% (79) of the total number of respondents earned below the average income (between ₵200,000 (£20) and ₵300,000 (£30)) but more women fell within this category. The majority of these worked in the food-processing sector. More men earned average and above the average incomes (Fig. 7.5).

The sectoral differences revealed that there were more workers in the textiles and garment sectors whose wages fell below ₵400,000 (Fig 7.5). On the other hand, more workers in the food processing sector earned above ₵400,000 but, more men 32% (18) than women 25% (12) earned an income within this range.

**Fig. 7.5. Gender and Average Monthly Income Earned by Respondents.**



Key: FD- Food processing sector. TX.- Textiles and garment sector.

<sup>63</sup> The wage earnings of respondents were calculated based on Ghanaian cedis (₵). The cedi equivalent to the pound at the time of this study was ₵10 000 to £1 (bank rate, Jan 2001)



The gender gap in wage earnings can be explained in part by considering the occupational distribution and the size of the firm. Professionals earned more than productive and clerical workers. The majority of supervisors generally earned higher income than clerical workers in both sectors as indicated in the tables below. Nevertheless, it was revealed that within that category of supervisors, men earned more than women did, although comparatively those within the food-processing sector were better paid (Tables 7.4a & b).

**Table 7.4. Gender, Occupation and Monthly Basic Income.**

**7.4 a. Food-processing sector (%).**

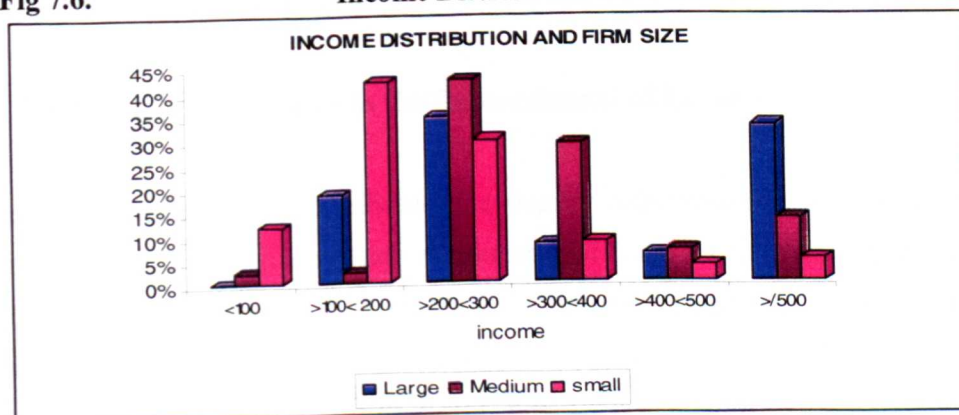
Income in '000' cedis (€)	Occupational Classification											
	Professional		Clerical		Unskilled Prod		Skilled Prod		Supervisor		Total by gender	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
< 100	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	29 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	15 (7)
100-199	0 (0)	0 (0)	14 (1)	0 (0)	55 (6)	57 (8)	35 (7)	29 (7)	0 (0)	20 (1)	25 (14)	34 (16)
200-299	0 (0)	0 (0)	86 (6)	50 (1)	45 (5)	43 (6)	40 (8)	8 (2)	25 (1)	0 (0)	34 (19)	19 (9)
300-399	7 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	50 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	15 (3)	8 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9 (5)	6 (3)
400-499	29 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (1)	4 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9 (5)	2 (1)
500 +	64 (9)	100 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (1)	21 (5)	75 (3)	80 (4)	23 (13)	23 (11)
Total	100 (14)	100 (2)	100 (7)	100 (2)	100 (11)	100 (14)	100 (20)	100 (24)	100 (4)	100 (5)	100(56)	100 (47)

**7.4b**

**Textiles and Garment Sector**

Income in '000' cedis (€)	Occupational Classification							
	Clerical		Skilled Prod		Supervisor		Total by gender	
	Men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
</100	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (1)	7 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	6 (3)
100-199	0 (0)	0 (0)	29 (5)	68 (28)	0 (0)	0 (0)	20 (5)	56 (28)
200-299	100 (3)	67 (2)	53 (9)	22 (9)	0 (0)	67 (4)	48 (12)	30 (15)
300-399	0 (0)	33 (1)	12 (2)	2 (1)	40 (2)	0 (0)	16 (4)	4 (2)
400-499	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	40 (2)	17 (1)	8 (2)	2 (1)
500+	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	20 (1)	17 (1)	4 (1)	2 (1)
Total	100 (3)	100 (3)	100 (17)	100 (41)	100 (5)	100 (6)	100 (25)	100 (50)

**Fig 7.6. Income Distribution and Firm Size**



In most textiles and garment firms visited, workers were paid according to piece rate, even if they held positions of office. However, some employers, being rational, compensated such leaders by adding a reasonable amount (this varied for each worker) for hours lost to extra activities, which hindered the output of the supervisors.

The differences in wages could also be attributed to the size of the firms (Fig.7.2). The majority of workers within small firms earned below ₺200,000 a month on average, whereas workers in medium scale firms generally earned between ₺200 000 and ₺400 000. However, the income distribution for workers in large-scale firms spread from ₺200 000 to above ₺500,000. This provided the possibility for men to earn higher wages than women, since more men were employed in large and medium firms (Table C.6 in appendix).

Most respondents within small firms earned below the national minimum wage, while most workers within large and medium firms earned above the stipulated rate. It was observed that, comparatively, women in large scale multinational fish canning industries earned far more than their counterparts in other agro-processing firms visited. The reasons could be attributed to the economies of scale of firms and pressures by trade unions and by government. Even so, there were still men and women within small firms who generally earned above the mean rate. The data on wages being influenced by the size of firm is in line with other studies, such as, Doeringer's study in the United States (see Doeringer, 1991)

Overall, the data suggests that more women than men earn below the average income. Furthermore although there were wage differences in the occupational distribution of workers, men within the same occupational category earn higher wages than women. What then are the reasons for such wage differential and in what ways are incomes within the sectors determined?

### **7. 3.2. Gender Differences in the Determinants of Income.**

Numerous studies have attributed the gender differences in wages to the existing trends of occupational segregation, educational differences (human capital) and other structural and ascriptive factors, such as age, race, ethnicity (Reskin, et al., 1994; Anker, 1998; Eurostats, 1999; Checchi, 1999; Teal, 2000, 2001; Jacobsen, 2001; Blunch and Verne, 2001; Wirth 2001). This section examines the existing patterns of gender differences in the factors that determine the wages of workers. It also

considers ways in which these wage determinants are responsible for the persistent gender inequalities in wages in manufacturing industry.

From the previous section, it was observed that more men than women earned above the mean income within both food processing and the textiles and garment sectors. For example it was revealed that about 50% (23) of women in food processing earned approximately less than half the income earned by 41% (23) of men within the same industry (Fig. 7.5.).

To find the causes for the gender pay gaps in manufacturing industry, two questions were asked. First, respondents were to select a number of possible factors that they felt determined their income. Second they were asked to rank the selected factors in order of importance from 1 (the most important) to 6 (no significance). The possible variables that were considered to influence the determination of income in this context were as follows: the nature of the job (occupation), number of hours worked, education, position of the worker, the level of productivity and the level of demand for the position by the employer. To facilitate making a meaningful analysis due to small numbers, the results produced by the majority were then generalised for the group.

The data in this study revealed significant sectoral variations, as there were more similarities than differences by gender within the sectors, with regards to the order ranking of factors considered to determine wages(see Figs 7.7.a, b, c & d)..

Out of the 6 factors outlined, three major factors were ranked high amongst most workers in the textiles and garment sectors. These were: productivity (49% (37)), the nature of the job, (39% (29)) and number of hours worked (43% (32)). The lowest ranked factor in this industry was academic qualification. In contrast, workers in the food-processing sector ranked position held (39% (40)), academic qualification (32% (23)), and the nature of the job (31% (32)), as the most important elements affecting the determination of their income. The number of hours worked and employer's preference were the factors ranked lowest by the majority of workers in this sector.

The sectoral differences could be attributed mainly to the structure of the organisation (size and set-up of firms) and the mode of payment. It was observed that in most small scale enterprises visited, especially the textiles and garment firms, workers were mainly paid by 'piece rate', therefore, time and productivity were the most essential

elements for workers, as they could only earn more by working longer hours (see Fig A.1. in appendix ).

Fig7.7a

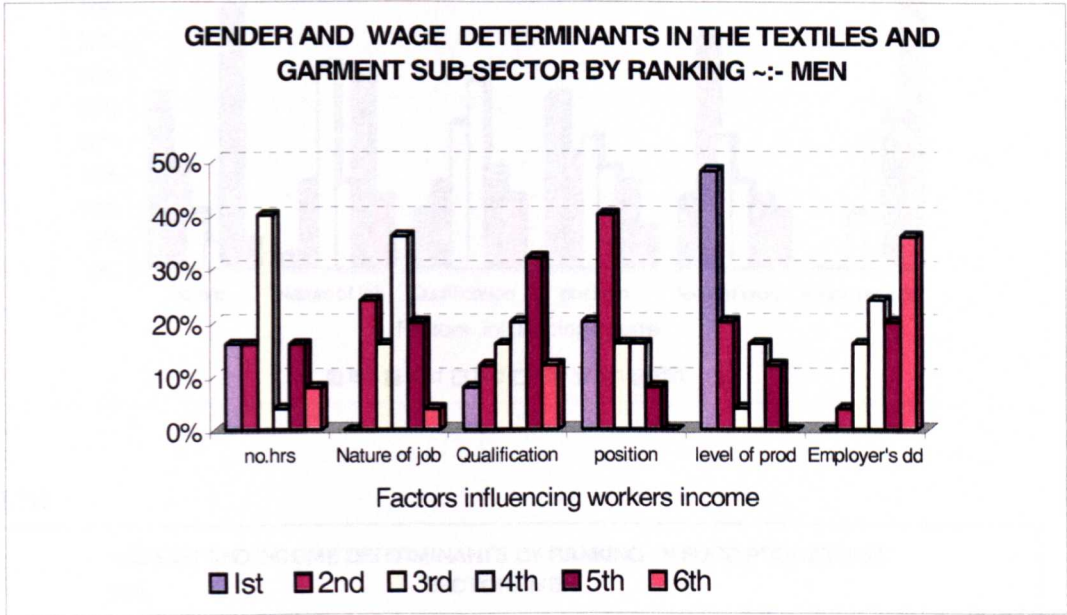


Fig 7.7b

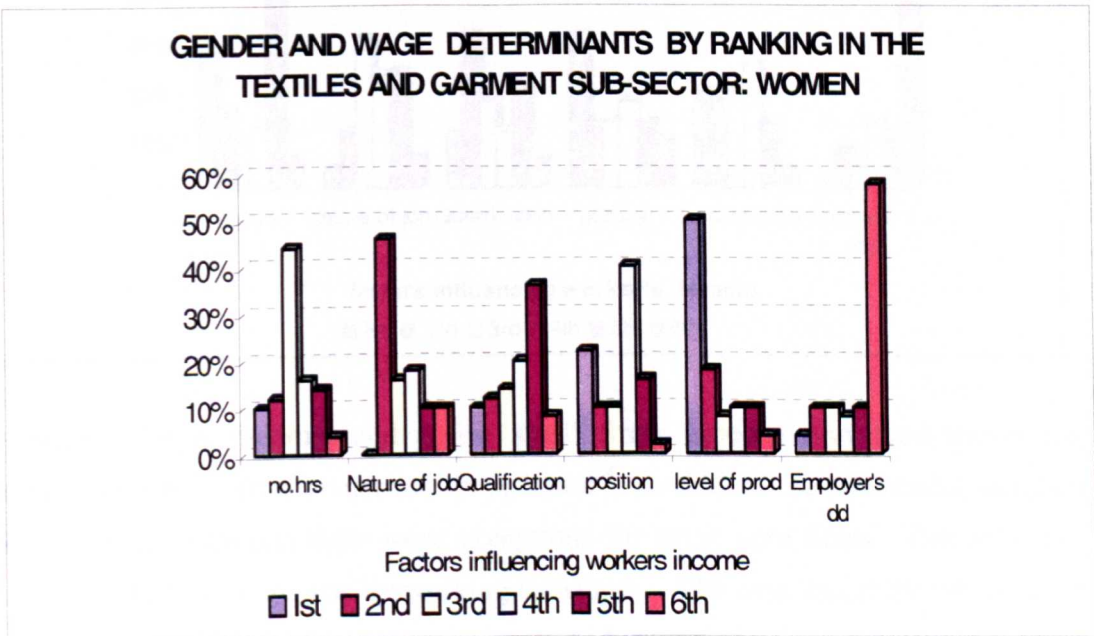


Fig. 7.7c

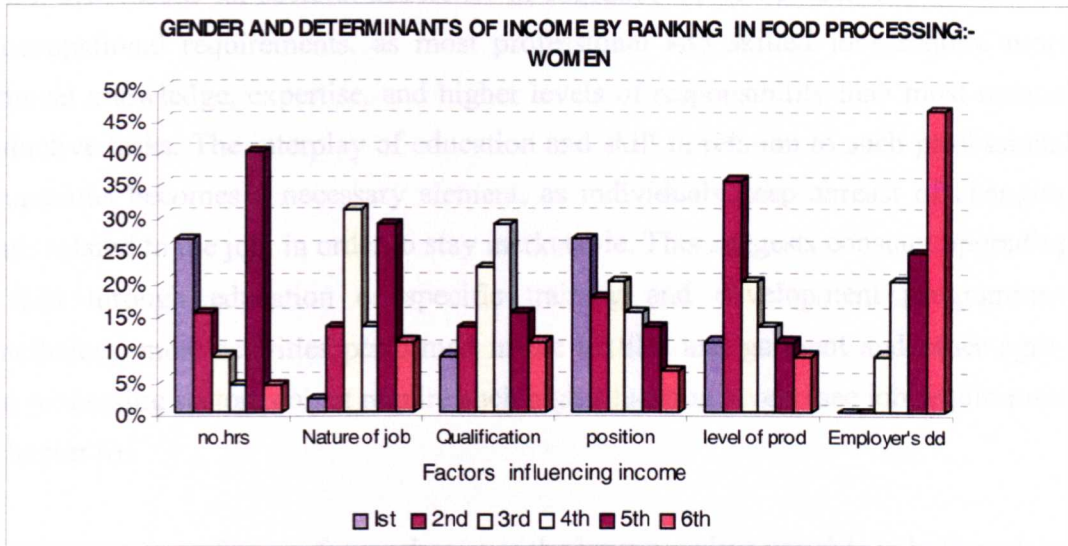
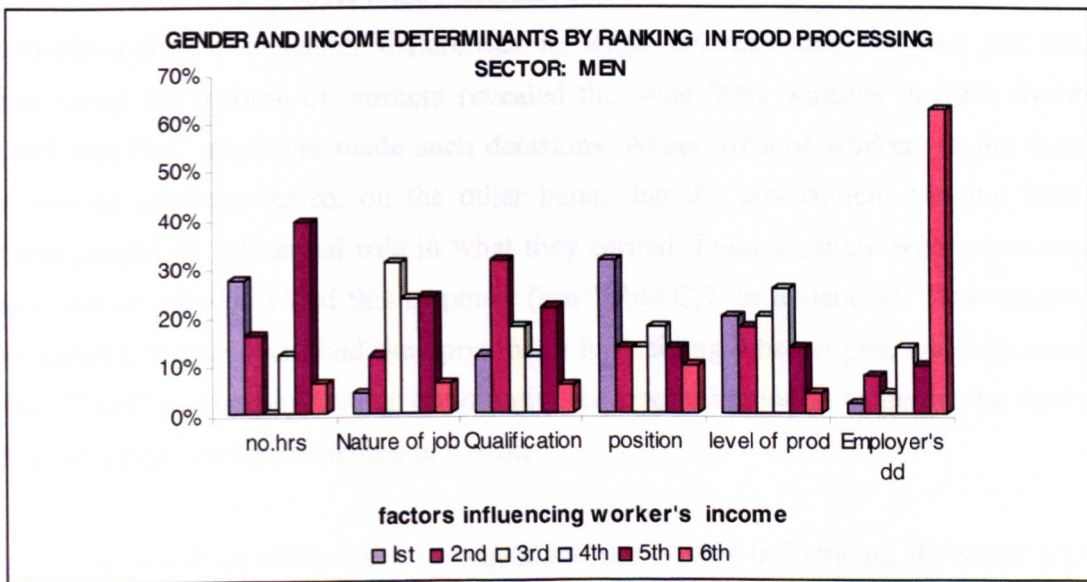


Fig 7.7d



In contrast, large, medium and a few small firms especially in food processing operated an 8 hour shift or normal work hours<sup>64</sup> so that workers earned a standard rate of income, although there were exceptions for small agro firms. The only way workers could earn more was by working overtime. The case was different for most textiles and garment firms, for while they had a definite time for starting work, closing times was undefined<sup>65</sup>.

<sup>64</sup> Most firms started work between 8.30 and 9 am and closed between 4.30 and 5 pm. Shift workers worked the same number of hours but started work earlier and closed earlier than the normal work times.

<sup>65</sup> In principle, most employers estimated an average working time of 9 hours. However, in their view this was not practicable, because of factors such as meeting customers' demand, high peak seasons etc.

Again, the reasons for sectoral difference in education could be related to differences in occupational requirements, as most professional and skilled jobs require more technical knowledge, expertise, and higher levels of responsibility than most manual productive tasks. The interplay of education and skill in relation to such professional occupations becomes a necessary element, as individuals keep abreast of changing trends related to the job, in order to stay marketable. This suggests constant upgrading of skill through education or specific training and development programmes. Nonetheless, most activities performed in the textiles and garment and other agro-food processing sectors do not require such high education levels (see job requirement in chapter 6).

The employer's preference for workers was the lowest ranked variable in both sectors. The reason could be attributed mostly to the nature of the job and low level of skills required, which made people highly dispensable<sup>66</sup>.

Notwithstanding the gender differences in wage determinants, the data on who determined the income of workers revealed that over 90% workers in both sectors stated that their employer made such decisions. About 10% of workers in the food-processing sector revealed, on the other hand, that the government and the Trade Union played an influential role in what they earned. Even so, there were more men than women who provided this response (see Table C.7. in appendix). This suggests that generally employers had the upper hand in deciding what to pay, and who earns what. This therefore provides an opportunity for discrimination in wages as the choice of criteria may vary from person to person.

Again, the result on differences in wages and the factors influencing the wage gaps confirms studies conducted elsewhere (Goonatilake et al., 1988; Pearson 1992; Anker 1998; ILO, 1999; Wirth 2001). Blunch and Verner, in their study in Ghana, revealed that although educational variables are important as a wage determinant in general, in the non-unionised sector education (apart from professional and university education) they seem to be generally less important as a wage promoting factor, whereas formal education is a very important wage generating factor in the unionised sector. Unions manage to force management to acknowledge formal education. Thus, education has virtually no role to play in the non-unionised sector (Blunch and Verner, 2001:22).

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<sup>66</sup> Most skills could be learnt on-the-job, and the duration for acquiring such skill was short. Such positions could be easily filled (see acquisition of skill); therefore, employers' demand for such skills would be relatively low.

From the general discussion on wages and wage determinants, it can be shown that women were more likely than men to be paid less as more men earned higher wages in both sectors. This was mainly due to the gender differences in occupation, as professional jobs earned higher wages than the unskilled and skilled productive sectors in which women predominated. Although there were many similarities between men and women, the data revealed some variations in the factors that determined the income of workers. Generally, for more men, especially in food processing, factors such as position and education were very important determinants what they earned, but the level of productivity and nature of the job were considered to play a highly significant role in the determination of the incomes earned by women. Education had less influence on wages in the textiles and garment sector than in the food processing sector, where the level of productivity and the hours worked were very essential to their wages. Furthermore, differences in firm size played a significant role in influencing wages. Workers in larger firms, even women, earned a better income than the men in smaller firms, as a result of the advantages accruing to these firms (economies of scale), the presence of and pressure from trade unions and government legislation. However, these opportunities serve as an added advantage to men who are overrepresented in large and medium scale enterprise in Ghana.

#### **7.4. Gender and Overtime Work.**

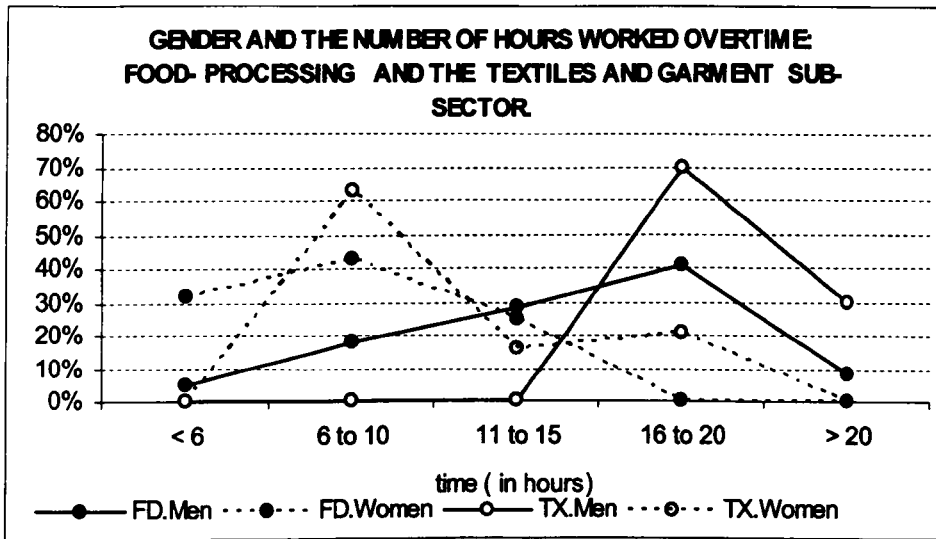
Gender and overtime work has become a current global issue, not only because of the inequality women face, but also because of its impact on family life (Venable, 2001; EPF, 2002; Keene and Reynolds, 2002). Overtime work has some benefits for both employers and employees, in that it increases the productivity of the firm and, all things being equal, serves as a welcome boost in earnings (Dabindu Collective, 2001; EPF, 2002). The question is, whether there are any gender differences in access to working overtime, the number of overtime hours worked and the motivation to do overtime. With these questions in mind, this section examines the patterns of gender differences in overtime work.

In spite of the increasing rate of women's participation in the labour market and in overtime work, it is established that gender disparities in overtime work continue to exist and that overtime work affects the schedules of men to a much higher extent than women (EPF, 2002; Tarrent, 2002).

The data on overtime hours revealed that more men worked much longer extra hours per week (over 10 hours) than women (Fig 7.8).

There were sectoral differences as more workers in the food processing (64.5%) than in textiles and garment (39%) worked overtime. Comparatively there were more male overtime workers (68%,(38)) in the food-processing sector than the average recorded for both sectors, and with a relatively higher difference from women (38% (18)) within the same sector. However, there was not much differences between the proportion of men, (40% (10)) and women, (38% (19)) working overtime in the textiles and garment sector.

**Fig. 7.8. Gender and Overtime Hours per week.**



One reason for the sectoral differences is that most food processing firms work within the legal stipulated number of working hours. In the textile industry, like most small agro-processing firms, it was observed that the jobs were mostly characterised by the piece rate system, which demanded working for longer hours (45-50 hours per week). Overtime therefore became indirectly integrated into the system of work, because the majority of workers had to work longer hours in order to earn a meaningful income. Again, the nature of certain jobs, especially clerical and related work, was such that the level of demand required no overtime. Furthermore, positions held within the industry influenced whether extra hours worked were classified as overtime, as senior staff members were not considered as working overtime. As a result, the nature of the job and seniority of position were the main reasons provided by workers for not undertaking overtime (Table 7.5)



**Table 7.5. Gender and Reasons for not Working Overtime (%).**

	Textiles and Garment		Food-processing	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Nature of job	87 (13)	68 (21)	61 (11)	89 (17)
Family Reasons	0 (0)	13 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Senior staff	0 (0)	0 (0)	30 (7)	11 (2)
Personal	13 (2)	19 (6)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	100 (15)	100 (31)	100 (18)	100 (19)

The reasons for the gender differences in overtime can also be attributed to the organisation of production. In most large and medium sized firms in food processing, most production lines operated for 24 hours, 7 days week, continuously and machines were not supposed to be left unattended. In some firms visited, male workers on machines indicated that they were sometimes forced by circumstance to do overtime, especially when a shift worker did not turn up. They could not just stop production, but had to continue working until they were released, the next day, by another shift worker. This meant working 16 hours continuously (see also video, on Metals).

Another reason that served as a hindrance to female overtime is the legislation that prohibits women from night work (Night Work Act). This is a particular barrier to women working extra hours in large and medium firms in Ghana (see video).

In addition to the organisational mechanisms that served to limit women working overtime, there were also socio-cultural factors. The domestic and family responsibilities of parent workers, especially, weighed heavily against their work commitments and these often limited the number of hours which they could work. Men, generally, were seen as freer from such domestic and household chores and therefore able to work overnight and were prepared to sacrifice their sleep as long as they were paid. Indeed in the study, no man gave 'family reasons' as a reason for not doing overtime work. Furthermore, men's perceived increased capacity to work for long hours was one of the main reasons provided by employers for their preference for male workers.

Patriarchal control of women also restricts women's freedom to work late hours, as to do so results more often in marital and role conflicts. This issue was highlighted during the study when a male employer, in the bakery industry, disclosed that he had to seek official permission from an employee's husband to let her undertake overtime, as the firm often closed late, generally after midnight. The employer revealed that his action was due to the constant confrontations and harassment<sup>67</sup> that he had received

<sup>67</sup> The employer and his workers received threats and insults from the husband who kept visiting their work site because the employer allowed the wife to close late after normal working hours because she decided to stay on and do overtime for financial reasons.

from the employee's husband because his spouse had decided, for financial reasons, to work overtime, like the male employees. This was what he had to say:

*The reason why I personally prefer to work with men is that they do not have any problems like women especially when it comes to working for long hours. The nature of this business [bakery] is such that we have to get the product out early into the market, therefore we have to stay on and work overnight or come in very early in the morning at 3am. Sometimes the situation is such that the guys have to stay on site. I had a situation where this man, who came begging with his friend for me to employ his wife, later came and insulted us and even threatened to beat me, because I was keeping his wife here [he suspected that the employer was having an affair with the wife]. My first decision was to lay the lady off because of the husband's behaviour, but she is hard working, even more than some of the guys. I asked her to stop the overtime but she refused because she needed the money. I told the husband that he could come and spend the time here with us, while the wife is working and then accompany her home after work. He agreed, because I think he could not persuade the wife to stop work, and came here for two weeks and then stopped coming. Once, in a while he pops in, but we just get on with our work. In fact, I have not had any such problems with the men.*

(Participant 10, Male Employer food-processing, Kumasi, 03/05/2001).

The negative attitude of men towards their spouse working late hours was evident even among workers that worked overtime, who expressed their dissatisfaction about the idea. As this employee who spent more than 14 hours a day at the workplace said:

*It will be difficult, if my wife does this job and comes home after 8pm. It will be a problem. May be I might need her for a discussion ...and she might be at work. Or be resting whilst I'm going to work (see video).*

(Participant 3 Male employee, food-processing Kumasi, 03/05/2001).

The above statement clearly shows how patriarchal restrictions can hinder women's participation in overtime and even affect the type of job they undertake. Generally, it was observed that most men found their wives working extra hours and arriving home

late a problem. While their overt reason was the gendered expectations of women, underneath was an element of sexual suspicion.

The gender differences in the number of hours worked overtime therefore suggested that women are more likely than men to earn less, if earnings are calculated on the number of hours worked<sup>68</sup>. However, the results gleaned from the respondents also revealed sectoral variation in the calculation of overtime wages, as in most food processing firms the calculation was in accordance with the wage rate, whereas in the textiles and garment sector, the piece rate system was used. In the garment sector, both employers and respondents stated that the cost of unit product made was higher during the weekends and public holiday than the weekday cost. It was discovered from the responses of some employers within most large, and medium and a few smaller sized firms that the hourly overtime rate varied from worker to worker, as it was calculated on their normal wages. In the textiles and garment industry, the rates were calculated on the type of product sewn or based on the employer's own discretion where activities involved several small processes, and the workers worked in groups. In batik-making, for example, the only information provided to employees by their employers was that the calculation of overtime wages was based on their monthly earnings or on a 'piece rate'. How much they earned an hour was not theirs to know.

## **7.5. Conclusion.**

Employment equity is one of the pillars of social policies dealing with gender inequality and workplace equity. These labour regulations have developed in response to labour market dynamics, including the massive entry of women into the labour market and the need to address workers' rights and the barriers facing women in obtaining employment opportunities. In this chapter it was revealed that opportunities for advancement varied across industry and by gender as these were influenced by a complex array of factors which include the structure of the firms. Opportunities for career mobility and advancement within the workplace were largely determined by management and/or employer's preference irrespective of the generalised procedures. Employers tended to use more subjective criteria such as loyalty and commitment, which favoured men. It is obvious that although such criteria may be driven by employer's orientation towards productivity and profit

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<sup>68</sup> Workers received double their normal daily wage for working overtime, with other benefits such as two big loaves of bread (with a market value of £5 000) which they could sell themselves.

maximisation, such mechanisms were also gendered, based on the cultural orientation towards the role and position of men and women in the world of work.

The job status of workers and their opportunity for advancement has consequential effects creating income differentials, which is one of the major issues at the heart of labour equity policies. In this study, the majority of women earned less than half the wages of men. However, women in large firms earned better wages than men in small enterprises within the same occupational category. The wage of workers as the study revealed is influenced by a complex set of factors, which are both internal and external. The internal factors vary across the sectors and these include the nature and mode of payment, and the type of occupation. The external factors accrue from the structure of firms in term of its economies of scale, the presence of trade union and government legislation. Men benefit from these advantages, as they dominate large firms where these external factors exist. To workers, overtime work is a means of earning extra income. Opportunities for working overtime varied by sector, size of firm and nature of job but were also gendered. Men worked longer hours of overtime and this could be attributed largely to differences in gendered orientation, as they were perceived as breadwinners and had less involvement in domestic responsibilities.

It can be concluded that gender inequalities exist, and these vary across and within sectors. Most women are in jobs that do not offer opportunities for advancement. Their opportunities in the workplace are also restricted by their domestic responsibilities. The next chapter examines the status of men and women in relation the allocation and distribution of responsibilities and decision-making power in the workplace and the home.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **GENDER ROLES AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES WITHIN THE WORKPLACE AND THE HOME**

## Chapter 8

### GENDER ROLES AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES WITHIN THE WORKPLACE AND HOME.

#### 8.0. Introduction.

In spite of their tremendous role in society, various studies show that women's position in decision-making and power lags far behind that of men in most societies (United Nations, 1991; Karl, 1995; Wirth, 2001). The United Nations Decade of Women (1976-1985), which had as its aim Equality, Peace and Development, recommended that "specific efforts should be made to increase the number of women in management and policy-making in commerce, industry and trade"(United Nations, 1975: para 98). In addition, it recommended that actions should be taken, "to promote the access of women at all levels of management and decision-making positions..." (United Nations, 1980: para 140). Although some progress has been achieved over the past three decades, much remains to be done, the "sticky floor" still exists, the "glass ceilings"<sup>69</sup> and walls" seem to be cracked, but not broken, as women still experience considerable barriers to leadership and decision making positions, both within the workplace and the home.

This chapter examines the patterns of gender inequality that pertain to leadership, responsibility and decision-making processes within the Ghanaian manufacturing industry and its impact on the socio-economic advancement of women. It looks at the dynamics of gender roles and decision making processes not only at the workplace, but also within the home, as the role of women within the home is seen to affect their position in the labour market (Karl, 1995:21). This chapter is therefore presented in the following sequence: Gender, Leadership and Workplace Responsibilities, Parent-Workers and Domestic Responsibilities, and Decision-Making Processes in the Home.

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<sup>69</sup> "The glass ceiling" is a phrase used to describe the phenomena that occur when invisible and artificial (obvious and subtle) barriers prevent women from advancing within an organisation despite their qualifications (Smith 2000:11). In management, the term is used to describe invisible barriers (prevailing attitudes which become invisible obstacles) that separate women and minorities from top management positions (Daft 2000:438)

## **8.1. Gender: Leadership Responsibilities and Decision-making Authority in the Workplace.**

This section examines the gender differences that exist in relation to leadership and workplace responsibilities, and also looks at the gender issues that pertain to supervision and job autonomy at the workplace. Under consideration will be the extent to which women have advanced in their leadership roles and also the extent to which women are in decision-making positions.

### **8.1.1. Gender and Leadership.**

In spite of the increased participation of women in leadership positions since the late 1980s, numerous studies show that their numbers remain far below that of men world wide (UNDP Report, 1993; Anker, 1998; ILO, 1998; Wirth, 2001). In the largest and most powerful global companies (worldwide), women's share in top positions is only between 2 to 3% (Wirth, 2001:25). In Ghana, the percentage of women in top executive and managerial positions has been relatively lower than men. (Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; ISSER et al., 1998:xiii; GLSS 4, 2000: 31). A study conducted by the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) revealed that women in Ghana constitute only 9% of those in the highest levels of decision-and-policy making in the country (ISSER et al., 1998:25). In addition to this, the Statistical Service Survey Report showed that women formed 0.1% of those in management and administrative positions (GLSS 4, 2000). The question is what accounts for the gender differences in leadership position? Why do men tend to hold higher level positions than women within the organisational hierarchy?

In this study, the pattern of gender inequality in leadership and leadership roles in the work place was determined by identifying two issues: firstly, by identifying the status of the respondents as leaders and their level of leadership within the organisational hierarchy. This question was asked to determine the gender differences in position and power and how this affected their roles within the workplace. The second question was related to their responsibilities as leaders. This was aimed at finding the significant gender differences in authority and responsibility concerning their status as leaders.

The data on leadership at the workplace revealed that there were more men (30 % (17) and 20% (5)) than women (15% (7) and 12% (6)) in the food-processing and the textiles and garment sectors respectively, in a leadership position. Indicating their position within the organisational hierarchy, the results showed generally that none of the respondents held top level<sup>70</sup> or executive positions. However, there were more men in the intermediate or middle level, whereas more women were found in the lower level position (Table 8.1).

**Table 8.1. Gender and Position / Rank within the Organisational structure  
A Cross-sectoral analysis (%).**

Grade/levels	Food-processing		Textiles and Garment	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Middle level:- Managers / Deputy Heads	65 (11)	29 (2)	40 (2)	0 (0)
Lower level / First Line -Supervisors	35 (6)	71 (5)	60 (3)	100 (6)
Total	100 (17)	100 (7)	100 (5)	100 (6)

The results, which show a gender gap in leadership, confirm various studies elsewhere (Hossain et al., 1988; Davidson and Cooper, 1992; Anker, 1998; ILO, 1999). The ILO for example, revealed that in 16 out of 41 countries in the world, women held between 31%-39% of managerial positions (ILO, 1999:187-240, Table 2c).

Explaining the gender differences in the levels of leadership, Wirth argued that the nature of women's career paths is a major factor blocking women from top positions. At junior management levels, women are usually placed in functions which are regarded as "non-strategic, for example, in human resources and administration rather than in line and management jobs that lead to the top" (Wirth, 2001: 25). Solomon attributed that gender gap to the monoculture at top levels. He maintained that: "top-level corporate culture evolves around ... males, who tend to hire and promote people who look, act and think like them, compatibility in thought and behaviour plays an important role at the higher level of organisation" (Solomon, 1990:96). The gender gap in leadership is also a result of inequalities in promotion. Although human capital theorists argue that educational differences account for the promotion gap (Harlan and

<sup>70</sup> To define the position, role and responsibilities of a leader within the organisational hierarchy, this study tried to locate the posts within three managerial levels in the hierarchy, that is top, middle and lower levels, as defined by Daft (ed.) (2000). The top managers are at the top of the organisational hierarchy and are responsible for the entire organisation. They include executive directors, chief executive officers (CEOs) and executive vice presidents. Top managers are responsible for setting organisational goals, defining strategies for achieving them, monitoring and interpreting the external environment, and making decisions that affect the entire organisation.(ibid p15) Middle level managers are managers, who work at the middle levels of the organisation, and are responsible for business units and major departments. These include department heads, divisional heads, managers of quality control and directors of research laboratories. They are responsible for the implementing of the overall strategies and policies, as defined by top managers. They are expected to establish good relationships, encourage teamwork and resolve conflict. Lower level or first line managers are directly responsible for the production of goods and services. They include supervisors, line managers, section chiefs, and office managers. Their primary concern is the application of rules and procedures in order to achieve efficient production, supply technical assistance and motivate subordinates (ibid pp15-17).



Berheide, 1994:2), Reskin and Padavic maintain that women, with the same educational credentials as men, are not attaining top-management jobs at the same rate (Reskin and Padavic, 1994:86). Wirth argued that this is due to inherent discrimination in the structures and processes of both organisation and society in general. Qualified and competent women look up through the glass ceiling and can see what they are capable of achieving, but invisible barriers prevent them from breaking through (Wirth, 2001:25). Wirth adds that this is compounded by women being cut off from both the formal and informal networks that are necessary for advancement within the organisation. For women with family responsibilities, upward movement may be further hampered as they struggle to satisfy the demands of both career and family (Wirth, 2001:25). Daft maintained that “stereotyping by male middle managers may lead to the assumption that a woman’s family life will interfere with her work life or that minorities lack the competence for important assignments”(Daft, 2000:439).

Leadership roles are always associated with responsibility, and with authority that accompanies the defined responsibility. If the authority that accompanies responsibility is invested in position, do women and men in the same position have similar responsibilities, or are there patterns of gender differences in the responsibilities held in the various positions?

#### **8.1.1.2. Leadership Responsibilities and Authority.**

Authority that accompanies responsibility is said to be “invested in positions and not in the person” (Daft, 2000). The question is whether this is always the case, or is there a trend of gender relation associated with responsibilities. This section considers some possible responsibilities associated with the various levels of leadership at the work place and whether any pattern of gender differences exists considering the leadership responsibilities in order of importance.

The role of a manager within an organised structure, according to Mintzberg, can be divided into three conceptual categories: information (managing by information), interpersonal (managing through people) and decisional (managing through action) (Mintzberg, 1973). Each role represents activities that managers undertake to accomplish the functions of planning, organising, leading (directing), controlling and co-ordinating (ibid). However, since this section deals with leadership, comprising

both middle level and lower level positions, the activities or responsibilities of both managers and supervisors have been simplified, based on some selected activities (Table 8.2)

Table 8.2 shows some possible responsibilities assigned to various positions of leadership, within the organisational hierarchy. It must be noted, however, that in the firms visited, these responsibilities were not in watertight compartments based on position but overlapped, depending on the type and structure, as well as the leadership styles adopted by the firm. Nonetheless, most firms showed some similarities in the duties and positions as outlined in the table below.

**Table: 8.2 Management Levels and Responsibilities**

Management Level	Responsibility
Top level	Estimation of training needs (d), Settling disputes (between management and workers) Planning (g), Organising
Middle/intermediate level:- (general/product/service managers, administrators, Heads of department/ section)	Hiring and firing of workers (b), Settling disputes on-the-job (between workers) estimating training needs (d), Substituting for the manager (e), Dissemination of job related information, Planning, Organising, Scheduling
Lower level:- supervisors, line managers, foreman)	Prevention of time loss, Settling on-the- job disputes (between workers), substituting for the manager, Scheduling.

Respondents were asked to show their levels of involvement in the outlined group of responsibilities. The majority of women within both the textiles and food processing sub-sectors held low-level positions as supervisors. It should be noted that due to the small numbers of women in the intermediate level, for ease of analysis, results were based on the overall summary of the ranking based on the highest frequency<sup>71</sup>. The summary provides the highest number of respondents recorded within the ranked<sup>72</sup> set that showed their level of responsibility (Fig 8.1a, b-d).

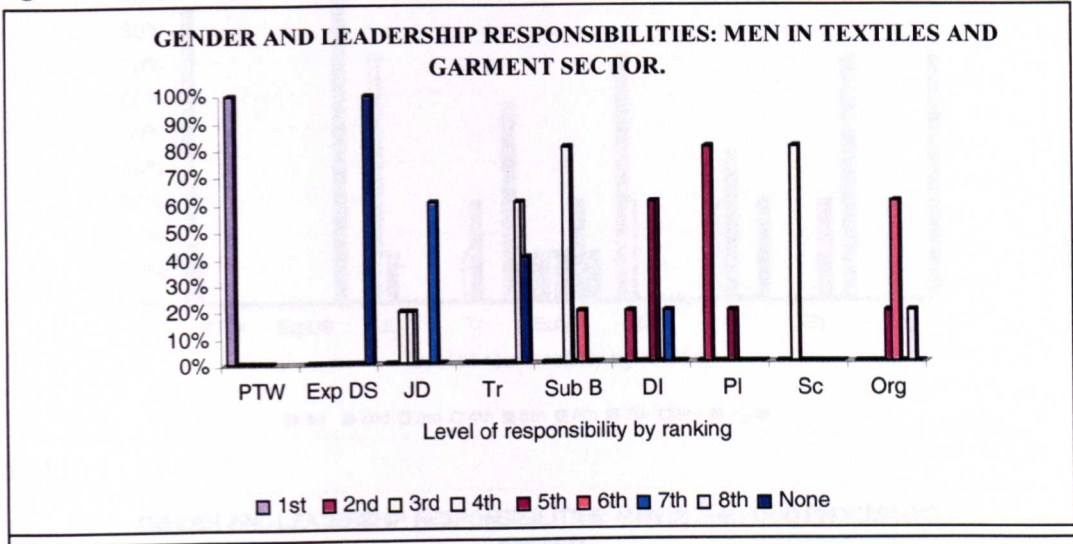
The ranking of responsibilities by male respondents revealed that planning, organising, scheduling, estimating training needs, substituting for the manager, dissemination of job related information, expansion and downsizing responsibilities were considered vital to the roles and generally ranked highest amongst their priorities as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> in that order (Fig 8.1 a, and d). Contrary to these, most women ranked prevention of waste of time, settling job disputes, and dissemination of job related information as

<sup>71</sup> The results are drawn from respondents occupying leadership positions within the intermediate and lower levels of the organisational hierarchy. There are no results from within top management, since none of the respondents had indicated that they occupied such positions.

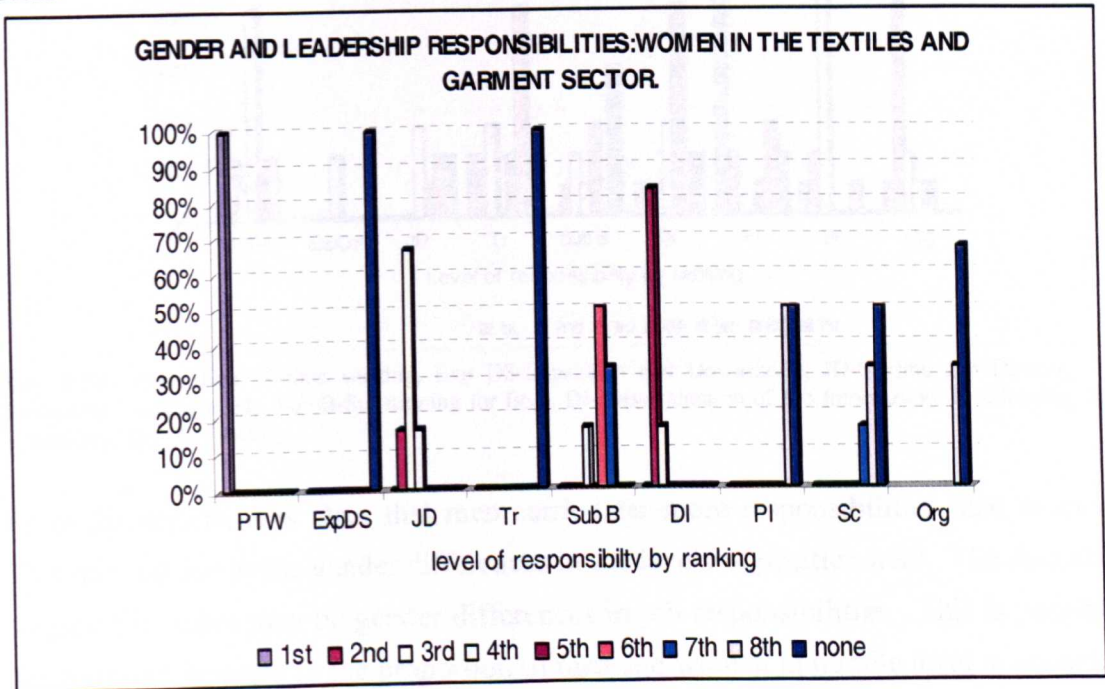
<sup>72</sup> Respondents were first asked to indicate their duties and then rank the selected responsibilities according to the order of importance with regard to their role. The ranking responsibilities had the following sequence 1-highest to 9 no-significance.

very important to their role, thereby ranking them as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> in that sequence (Fig 8.1b and c).

**Fig. 8.1a. Gender and Level of Leadership Responsibilities: A Cross-sectoral Analysis.**

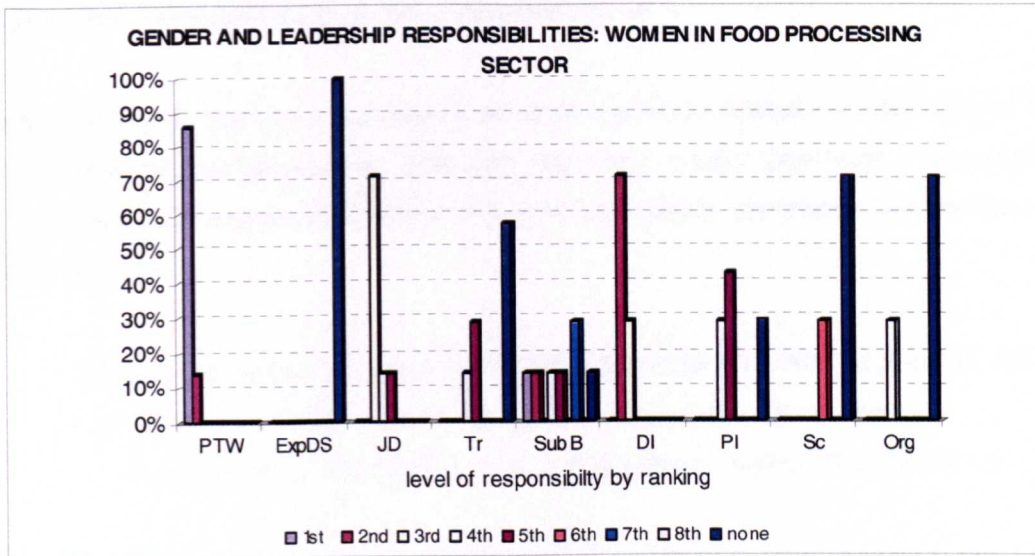


8.1b.

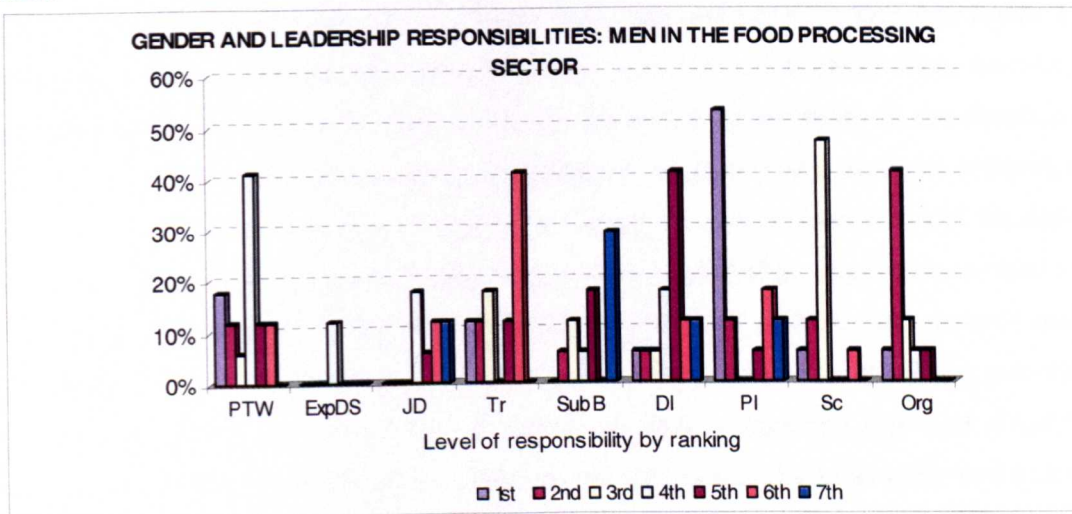


Key: PTW- Prevention of time wasting, Exp DS-Expansion and Downsizing, JD-Settling Job Dispute; Tr- Estimating Training needs, Sub B-Substituting for Boss, DI- Dissemination of Job Information, PI - Planning, Sc-Scheduling, Org- Organising

8.1c.



8.1d.



Key: PTW- Prevention of time wasting, Exp DS-Expansion and Downsizing, JD-Settling Job Dispute; Tr- Estimating Training needs, Sub B-Substituting for Boss, DI- Dissemination of Job Information, PI -Planning, Sc- Scheduling, Org- Organising

From the results, it is clear that men carried far more responsibilities than women. This may be due to the gender differences in the levels of position held. The data also suggest that there may be gender differences in job responsibilities. This is possibly due to the differences in the proportion of men and women in middle level managerial positions, as different levels have different responsibilities, even though they may overlap. There is also the possibility of management culture and preference where, although men and women may hold similar posts, management may prefer to delegate some responsibilities to men because of the stereotypical attitude they have concerning women and the work culture. As already revealed by Solomon, employers and management prefer to have people as colleagues with whom they have thoughts

and ideas in common, and select people who they think are loyal and committed to the firm to hold and perform such key functions (op. cit.).

In this study it was observed that in most of the firms visited, women played fewer key functions in management, although they held similar positions. An employer, who offered his explanation of the sex ratio and gender preference within the workplace said this:

*Everybody is talking about women's empowerment...but the point is, all the managers agree with me that you cannot plan with women...*

(Participant 3, Male Employer Confectionary, Accra, 19/1/2001).

The above data suggest the possibility of responsibilities within the work place being affected by gender, as men have different priorities and perform key functions. The workplace culture showed, for example, that men are more likely than women to substitute for their boss, (this deals with the delegation of authority in the absence of an employer or a superior (i.e. head of department, section, line managers, supervisors etc). Leadership and authority, which was vested mostly in males, could be drawn from the cultural ideology of patriarchy and male superiority. Although women and men were acknowledged to be in leadership, women most often tended to work under male superiors within the organisational hierarchy. Moreover, this trend was prevalent not only in formal structured organisations, but also within the informal structure, where mostly female supervisors worked under male supervision as observed in most textiles firms. The idea of male superiority over women tended to result in the former being granted more privileges in terms of leadership or supervision. Women possibly will then tend to get the opportunity of taking charge in the absence of their employers, only where there are no males present to take on that role.

Nonetheless, the data suggest a possibility that human relations and productivity may affect the level of women's responsibility. The high priority given to the settling of 'on the job-disputes' between workers by women in management positions reflects a workplace culture which sees women as being more prone to petty squabbles, jealousy and complaints than men. Such attitudes do not augur well for a cordial working atmosphere and the achievement of efficient and effective production and therefore need much attention by supervisors.

Generally, as shown above, the ranking of responsibilities, by both men and women in leadership positions, suggested patterns of gender difference within both the food processing and the textiles and garment sectors. It must be noted that, despite the fact that the organisational structure (in terms of the type of organisational hierarchy) and the nature of the firms played some role in gender differences in leadership responsibilities, nevertheless, it was clear from the data that men had far greater responsibilities pertaining to the five key managerial functions. Women, on the other hand, performed functions that were related towards the achievement of production efficiency.

It needs emphasising, however, that the data also revealed some sectoral variations in the results. Planning, organising, scheduling, estimating training needs, expansion and down sizing were placed as most important by leaders in the food-processing sector, rather than in the textiles and garment sector. These differences could be due to the firm size, the organisational structure and levels of management that pertain to the different sectors.

In order to execute their duties effectively and efficiently, the responsibilities and roles of leaders has to be backed by appropriate authority. This raises the issue, whether there are any patterns of gender differences in the authority that men and women have in executing the above responsibilities or influencing decisions in these areas.

Given the gender differential in leadership and leadership responsibilities, the question is whether this differential in position reflects in their access to participate and the level of decision-making authority in the work place.

#### **8.1.1.3. Leadership and Decision-Making Authority.**

“Managers wield significant influence and control over social and economic decisions...” (Anker, 1998:268). According to ILO Report, the “participation in decision-making is proving to be one of the most resistant areas yet for gender equality” (ILO, 1998).

Equal opportunity in the participation of men and women in the decision making process within the workplace is recognised as a tool towards the empowerment of women, not only for them as participants, on a micro scale, but also, on the macro

scale, as a contribution towards the process of development of their nation. However, various international and local studies have linked the low levels of female participation in decision-making to their under-representation in positions of leadership and power in most organisations and societies (Karl, 1995; Ofei, 1996; ISSER et al., 1998; ILO, 1998, 1999; Wirth, 2001)

In management, responsibility and authority are inseparable although they are two distinct components (Daft, 2000). According to Daft, “authority is the formal and legitimate right given to decision makers or a leader to make decisions, issue orders, and allocate resources in order to achieve organisationally desired outcomes” (Daft, 2000:308). Responsibility, as already indicated, needs to be considered alongside authority, as leaders should always be assigned authority, commensurate with their responsibility (ibid-p.309). He maintains that “authority is [such] that it is vested in positions and not in people” (Daft, 2000:308)<sup>73</sup>. The question is, whether men and women holding the same positions, have equal power and authority to participate in such decisions in relation to their roles. To investigate this issue in this study, respondents were asked whether they were involved in their firm’s decision-making processes, and what level of decision-making authority they were given, considering their position of leadership.

Management decisions at the workplace are classified into two main categories. These are programmed and non-programmed decisions (Simon, 1977)<sup>74</sup>. Although different management levels perform have different functions, some related issues in decision-making authority in relation to task, sanctions, and policy formulation and authority, such as the granting and prevention of pay rises, expansion and downsizing, etc may overlap (Table D.1 in appendix).

In this study, some selected decisions, which are assumed to be taken at the workplace, are classified under the various levels of management (Table D.1). However, for the purpose of analysis, the data will be analysed based on gender rather than comparison of levels of management. The data are based on the positive response drawn from 24 respondents from the food processing and 13 respondents from the textiles sector who indicated that they were in leadership positions.

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<sup>73</sup> Daft explains that managers (leaders) have their authority because of the position they hold and other people in the same position would have the same authority (ibid p. 308).

<sup>74</sup> Programmed decisions involve situations that have occurred often enough to enable decision rules to be developed and applied in the future (Simon 1977:47). These are made in response to recurring organisational problems. Examples of programmed decisions includes the type of skills required (recruitment), manufacturing/production procedures, budget etc. Non-programmed decisions, according to Simon, are made in response to situations that are unique, are poorly defined and largely unstructured, and have important consequences for the organisation. They involve strategic planning, because the uncertainties are great and decisions are complex. Examples of such decisions are designing new products or service (ibid).

The results on policy formulation<sup>75</sup> revealed that men dominated all aspects of decision-making in this area, as their representation was high in policies such as changes in product and (or) programme design, work routine, and work procedures, although a significant number of women were also involved in formulating the last two policies (Table 8.3)<sup>76</sup>.

**Table 8.3. Gender Participation in Policy Formulation Decisions in the Workplace (%).**

Policy formulation	Food Processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
a. Expansion and downsizing	24 (4)	0 (0)	14 (4)	50 (3)	29 (2)	38 (5)
b. Changes in product design / programmes	41 (7)	14 (1)	17 (5)	83 (5)	0 (0)	38 (5)
c. Changes in work routine and pace of work	100 (17)	78 (7)	83 (24)	33 (2)	22 (2)	31 (4)
d. Changes in methods and, or work procedure	100 (17)	71 (5)	76 (22)	83 (5)	71 (5)	77 (10)
e. Workplace budget	47 (8)	0 (0)	28 (8)	17 (1)	0 (0)	8 (1)

One of the most significant results of this section was the total absence of women's participation in formulating policies about workplace budgets and a relatively low percentage being involved in decisions about expansion and downsizing, and changes in programmes and product designs, which were more related to administration. It is possible that the variation in participation was caused by differences in position of leadership. There is also the probability that high level positions were associated with more responsibilities and therefore with the possibility of taking certain decisions. Again, there is also the possibility of the delegation of authority<sup>77</sup> of roles and responsibilities by superiors to their subordinates. This, therefore, can provide lower level employees the opportunity to participate in the formulation of policies based on their new responsibilities. It was observed that it was men who worked under male leadership, and who even in female owned firms, gained access to such opportunities and were therefore able to participate in decision-making at the workplace. I would suggest that this is due to male solidarity and also the confidence that employers or superiors have in men, based on the traditional perceptions of gender and leaders (see Solomon, 1990).

<sup>75</sup> The questions about the involvement of respondents in decisions pertaining to policy formulation were based on issues relating to expansion and downsizing of staff numbers, changes in product designs and programmes, the routine and pace of work, work procedures and the workplace budget.

<sup>76</sup> Table 8.3 presents the rate of response only for those respondents who participated in the outlined decisions at the workplace.

<sup>77</sup> Delegation does not mean managers or superiors are freed from their roles, but they continue to be accountable for such responsibilities and decisions made within the organisational structure (Daft, 2000).



**Table 8.4. Gender and Decision-Making Authority (%).**

Types of Authority	Textiles and Garment		Food-processing	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
<b>Sanction</b>				
Do you have any influence on				
a. Granting / preventing pay rise	17 (1)	0 (0)	100 (17)	57 (4)
b. Granting / preventing promotion based on behaviour or work performance	67 (4)	29 (0)	100 (17)	86 (6)
c. Issuing warning	100 (6)	100 (7)	76 (13)	71 (5)
d. Dismiss / suspend	17 (1)	0 (0)	76 (13)	29 (2)
<b>Task</b>				
Are you responsible for deciding				
a. Task assignment	100 (6)	100 (7)	100 (17)	100 (7)
b. Work procedures	100 (6)	100 (7)	88 (15)	43 (3)
c. Quality of work & work pace	100 (6)	100 (7)	100 (17)	100 (7)

Note: The table below presents only positive (yes) responses to the questions about authority in relation to task responsibility and sanctions at the workplace

The sectoral differences in participation can be associated with the differing types of organisational structure, in which the various leaders were found, as these affected the operation of the systems of decision-making<sup>78</sup>. Similarly, the data on gender and authority showed that men, especially in food-processing, had more authority to sanction their subordinates than women. Men influenced decisions which pertained to the granting (or the prevention) of increases in pay or promotion of the workers they supervised, based on performance or conduct (behaviour). Women, on the other hand, did have influence in regard to issuing warnings and decision-making about the promotion of the workers they supervised (Table 8.4). However, the results on task authority showed that men and women, especially those in the textiles and garment sector, had commensurate authority to decide what procedures, tools or material to be used and the rate (speed) at which the work should be done (Table 8.4).

The above results show that men were involved in a wider range of policy decision-making, and workplace authority accompanying their responsibilities than women. This suggests that the different positions held at the workplace influenced the level of participation and the type of decisions to be taken. Therefore, since more men held higher positions, there is an increased likelihood of their being involved in

<sup>78</sup> With some small and some medium scale firms, with flatter management structures, where they were operated and controlled directly by a single person (sole proprietor), it was the employer who mainly determined who took part in what decision. That is, participation levels depended on the employer's preference. On the other hand, in the well-structured and organised firm, though some processes of decision-making were decentralised, they mostly reflected the centralised forms following the organisational procedures. Thus, since men tended to dominate more areas of leadership positions than women, they had the advantage in participating in certain decisions.

administrative decisions. This trend also has gendered connotations, which emanate from the socio-cultural orientations concerning the relations between gender and authority. Women are socialised to accept themselves as inferior to men, and this ideology can act as a barrier to their participation in major decisions in the workplace and in society as a whole.

The analysis in this study is consistent with the study by Reskin and Ross on “Sex, job, authority ...among managers” in UK, which showed that men had an advantage over women in decisions related to personnel. They maintained that, “the authority gap was greatest for bread-and-butter decisions for hiring, firing and authorising promotions and pay rise. Women were usually advisers; men called the shots” (Reskin and Ross, 1995:137-6). It was further revealed that men were more likely than women to make budgetary decisions (ibid.,138)

The above results suggest that women have limited access to decision-making authority. There is the possibility that this limited access is a result of their confinement to lower positions within the managerial hierarchy as higher levels are associated with the opportunities to make final decisions (Reskin and Ross, 1995). Reskin and Ross maintained that:

*Male managers may wield more authority than females, both because women are lower in the chain of command and because similar ranks confer less authority on women.*

(ibid.,141-2).

The question is whether there is a possibility of eliminating such inequalities. In a clear response to this issue, the ILO warned that:

*One of the greatest challenges that remain is how to make the structures and dynamics within organizations more conducive and sensitive to gender equality concepts and practice. This is particularly crucial in environments where new management structures and work roles involve restructuring, downsizing, decentralization and delaying in the bid to be more globally competitive. Without such a watershed change from within firms and enterprises, women will, in the years to come, continue to experience "glass ceilings" and "glass walls" as invisible barriers to positions of management*

(ILO, 1998:3).

A further factor affecting career paths may be an individuals' level of domestic responsibilities. For this reason, the next section looks at the role of parent-workers as they combine their work with their domestic responsibilities and the effect this has on the socio-economic advancement.

## **8.2. Gender, the Parent-worker and Domestic Responsibilities.**

Cultural ideology concerning the gender roles and the sexual division of labour<sup>79</sup> in society has a different impact on men and women within both the public and domestic spheres, as the gender role and socialisation processes create differences in the expectations of men and women in terms of their responsibilities within the domestic setting. Bullock argues that:

*Culture and traditions are not only used as a means of control but also as its justification: it is not men who insist that women's head should be lower than theirs, but it is the custom. Culture and religion are used to shape attitudes, dictate practices and maintain inequality as the norm.*

(Bullock, 1994:3-4).

Lim claimed that in many societies, it is still the family that sanctions whether women can work, the kind of work that is appropriate for them and the place of work (Lim (ed.),1998). In Ghana, cultural norms and values regarding gender roles to a greater extent constrain women's opportunities for advancement within the both the public and domestic sphere. Women are culturally regarded as inferior to men and irrespective of a woman's educational or political status, the ideology that 'a woman's place is the kitchen' still hold in most Ghanaian society (Baden et al., 1994; Adu, 1999; Dolphyne, 2000; also see video-Mrs Tackie, 2001).

Structural and economic transformation in societies since the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has led to an increase in women's participation in the waged labour market, resulting in drastic changes in the nature of families and performance of family responsibilities in most societies. Yet, most studies still show that women have to

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<sup>79</sup> According to Bullock, "the division between production-paid work or economic activity and the reproduction -bearing and caring of children, plus the general management of the household-is the basis of what is known as the sexual division of labour"(Bullock, 1994:2). She adds that the maintenance of community, as well as family life, may be considered as part of reproduction (ibid)

combine their work life with household responsibilities, as their functional roles (multiple roles) still remain unchanged (Mosse, 1993; De Laat, 1999; Venable, 2001; Keene and Reynolds, 2002). As housewives, women engage in a variety of tasks such as caring, nurturing, providers of food in order to maintain the household. In outlining the responsibilities of women as housewives, Mosse revealed that:

*women tend the children, they obtain the family food supply, whether from the field or the local supermarket; they wash the clothes at the river or in the washing machine, and they may add a little to the family income by poorly paid, part time work that does not jeopardise their main work, which is caring for the home and the family.*

(Mosse, 1993:36).

Women, and particularly those who are heads of household with young children, are limited in their employment opportunities for reasons that include inflexible working conditions and inadequate sharing, by men and society, of family responsibilities (PFA 1996, paragraph 158).

In this study, I examined the patterns of gender differences in the responsibilities of men and women in terms of their domestic role. In particular, I analysed the extent to which such differences effected the socio-economic advancement of men and women in the labour market

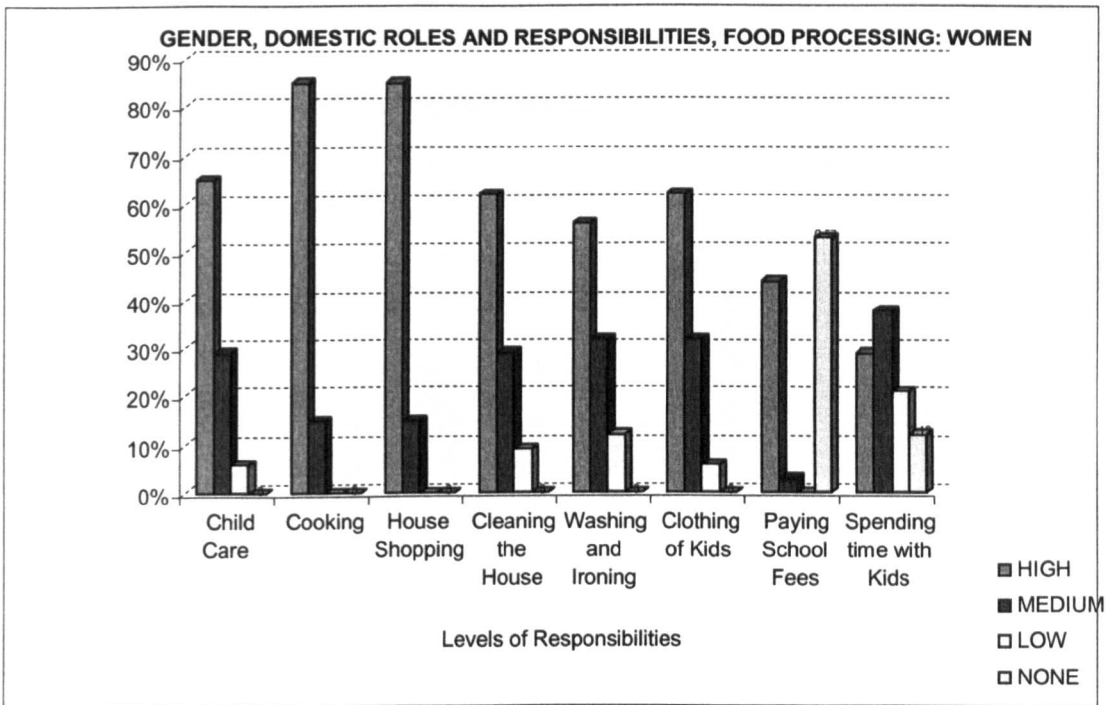
Despite the fact that a number of studies reveal the existence of gender differences in the domestic sphere, there is a need for empirical justification of these assumptions. The activities undertaken within the household are not easily measurable in terms of economic indicators although these tend to have a different impact on the status of men and women within the workplace. In order to be able to examine the patterns of gender differences, respondents were asked to show, by ranking as high, medium or low<sup>80</sup>, their level of participation in some assumed domestic responsibilities: child care, washing and ironing, cleaning of the home, shopping, cooking, spending time with children, buying clothing and paying of school fees.

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<sup>80</sup> It needs emphasising that the ranking categories of activities from 'high, medium and low are themselves subjective, but does give some indication of perceptions since the participation domestic activities in themselves are not quantifiable. The ranking of categories from 'high' in this context means participation is 'frequent', to 'low', means occasional (-infrequent) For the purpose of analysis this is to facilitate easy comparability.

Generally, the results on domestic responsibilities revealed that women’s participation was relatively high at over 50% for almost all activities; however, it was evident that their involvement was extremely high (over 60% on average) in three major areas. These were cooking, house-shopping and childcare responsibilities (Fig 8.2a and b). On the other hand, the results revealed that the level for participation of men in activities such as house cleaning, house shopping<sup>81</sup>, cooking and childcare were comparatively low or absent. However, more men showed high levels of commitment in paying of school fees as indicated in the diagram below 8.2c and d).

Fig 8.2a. Gender Roles and Domestic Responsibility:-A Cross-sectoral analysis.



<sup>81</sup> House shopping in the Ghanaian context would usually entail going to the public marketplace for groceries.

Fig 8.2b.

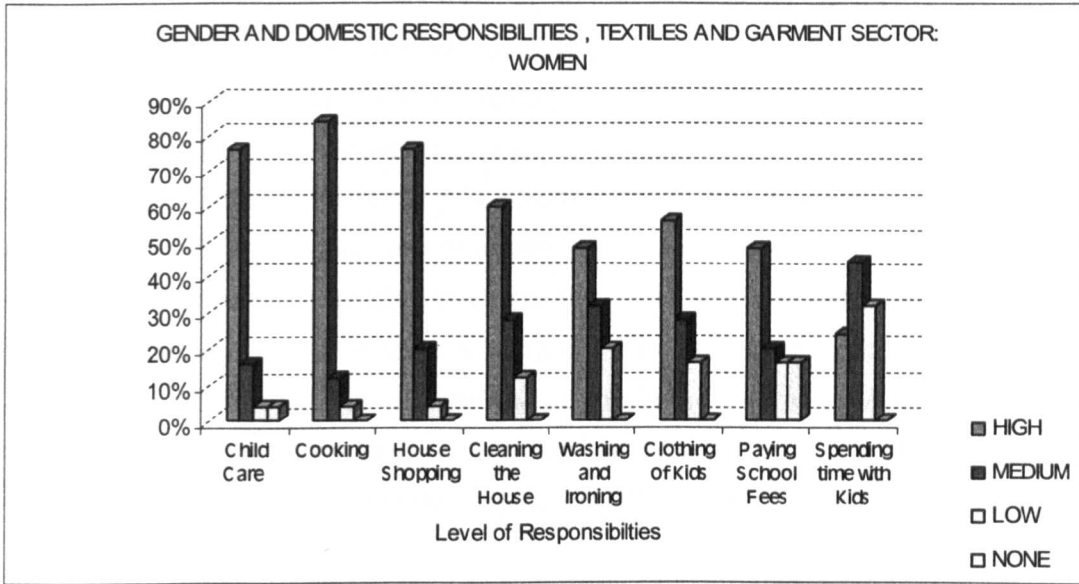
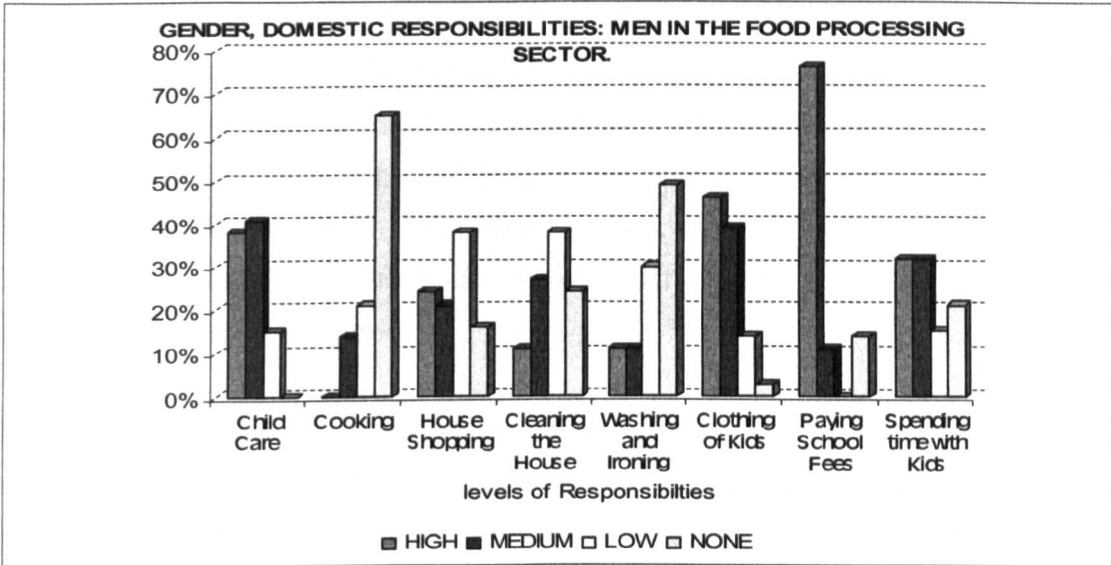
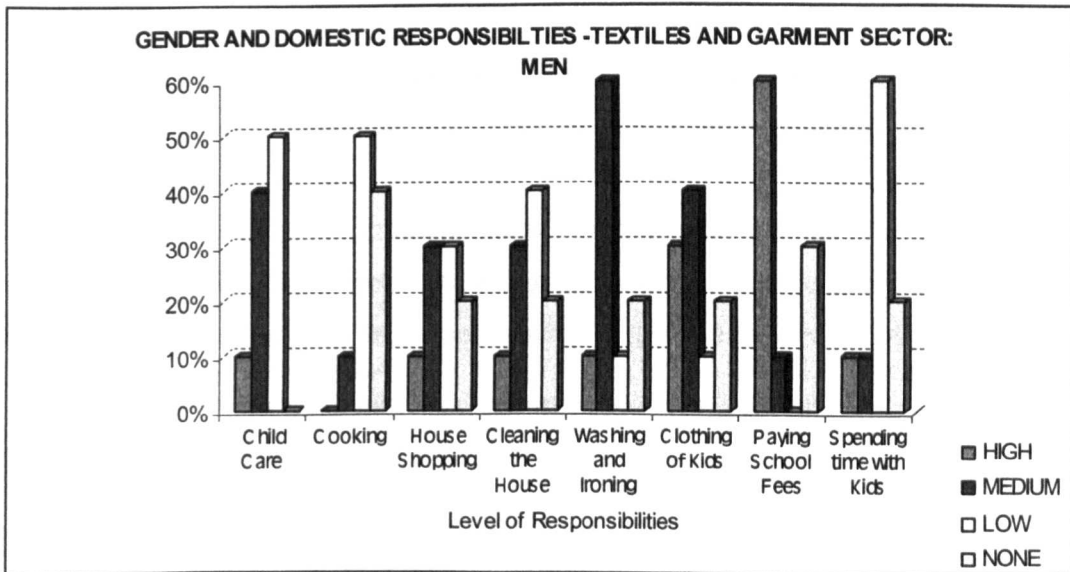


Fig.8.2c.



8.2d.



The gender differences in the levels of participation could be due to the fact that culturally, within in most Ghanaian societies, cooking, shopping (domestic), keeping the home tidy (which involves sweeping) and child care are seen as the traditional preserves of women. A married woman is expected by custom to take care of the meals for her husband, personally irrespective of the fact that she may have a helper (see Oppong, 1974; Oppong and Abu, 1987). For a man to cook or to be found in the kitchen is considered socially unacceptable, as it is perceived to undermine their status within the home by emasculating them. However, despite the fact that cooking is generally considered to be women's work within the domestic sphere, some men, as a result of changes in societal perceptions, are now entering into the public sphere with cooking (catering) as a career, by taking jobs as chefs in the service sector (see Le Feuvre, 2002).

Like cooking, for a man to take on the responsibility of visiting the market place for groceries is frowned upon by society<sup>82</sup>. They are often subjected to sarcastic questions such as: 'Where is your wife? Are there no women in your home? The strength of this feeling is shown by the existence of a traditional nickname 'a *man that goes to market*' which is translated in the local language "ɔberima a wɔ kɔ adjom". Ironically, such comments and ridicule come more from women than men. Nonetheless, men who are able to afford to do their own shopping from departmental stores are accorded some prestige<sup>83</sup>.

The data on childcare responsibilities showed that more women within both sectors revealed that their level of participation in this activity was high (Fig 8.2a and b). However, the data showed that more women in textiles than in food-processing, indicated this as a higher level of responsibility. This could be explained by the fact that, in terms of age and marital status, there were more older and married women in the food processing sector. There is also the probability that women in food processing were more likely to have older children who might assist in caring for their younger siblings<sup>84</sup>.

Generally, the clothing of children<sup>85</sup> was considered as part of the childbearing and caring responsibility of women, even though most men argued that they played a role by providing the financial resources needed to get the children clothed. Some men

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<sup>82</sup> Men become subject of social ridicule when they go to the market place to shop for groceries.

<sup>83</sup> Most men in Ghana prefer to shop from these big departmental shops at the weekend, rather than from the open market place in order to avoid such embarrassments in a public place.

<sup>84</sup> In the Ghanaian society, older children receive less attention than younger children, who need constant attention and supervision. Even though older children are given less attention in terms of care and supervision, parents most often delegate childcare responsibilities, such feeding, bathing and caring for them, to older female children.

<sup>85</sup> This responsibility involved the provision of clothing for children and making sure, they are properly dressed. The data showed high gaps of gender difference in the participatory levels for this responsibility.

stated that once the funds were provided, they felt that their responsibility for clothing was carried out. Most of the women interviewed, although they acknowledged the fact that their spouse did provide them with such funds on an occasional basis, that is, for festive seasons, they however added that this was not a regular routine. As mothers, they bore much of the responsibility, as they faced the pain of ridicule from society if their children were not well clothed. Hence, most mothers spent most, if not all, of their income on the upkeep of their children. This response from women confirmed the motives they provided for working, which was to support their family. The gender differentials in domestic responsibilities supports studies conducted in both Ghana and other developed and developing countries (Oppong, 1974; Blau et al., 1986;14-66; Moser, 1989; Mosse 1993:36; Safa, 1995; Adu, 1999; GLSS, 4: 2000; Baxter, 2002:68; Sarmiento, 2002). The Ghana's Statistical Service Report on Housekeeping Activities revealed that more women than men were involved in cooking, sweeping, child care, fetching water, etc. (GLSS 4 2000:38).

The gender differences in the payment of school fees could be explained by the fact that certain social responsibilities within Ghanaian society are considered the duty of men, and that paying for the education of one's children is considered one of the financial obligations of a father. Nevertheless, the increasing numbers of female single parents, coupled with the unstable economic conditions and hardships and the increasing rate of unemployment within the country, has meant that the problem of financing of children's education has gradually shifted towards becoming the women's responsibility, and this has been aggravated by the neglect of sponsorship by some irresponsible and non-resident fathers (Robertson, 1984; Bleek, 1975). This phenomenon was confirmed in some interviews with both male and female respondents who revealed it had been their mother, rather than their father, who had been the main sponsor of their education and upbringing. The data further revealed that on average less than 30% of parents spent time with their children, but that women still spent a higher percentage of their time with their families, than the men. It is possible that men are less likely to spend time with their children due to their long working hours and the nature of jobs that they undertake which often keeps them away from home. This authenticates studies on work and family life, which illustrate that men sacrifice their families for work (Milkie and Peltola, 1999) `

The data, which showed different levels of involvement of men and women in domestic affairs, suggest that women performed a wider range of responsibilities than



men within the home. This is largely a result of gender roles and the socialisation process, which assigns chores in a way that perpetuates gender stereotyping. It also confirms the cultural perceptions of the multiple roles and heavy burdens of women in the home.

Notwithstanding these gender differences, the role and expectations of men and women as wage earners, all things being equal, are comparatively the same, which is: to meet the demands of their employer, by showing efficient and effective involvement and commitment to levels of productivity, irrespective of the differences in income. The question is whether these gender differences have any impact on the performance of working parents who combine the dual responsibilities of both the domestic and workplace spheres.

The next section examines the effects that balancing both domestic and workplace responsibilities have on working parents.

### **8.2.1. Effects of Combining Domestic and Workplace Responsibilities.**

Some writers on 'Work-family Conflict' have argued that engaging in multiple roles is beneficial to both women and men because these roles tend to confer a degree of social integration, that is associated with access to more resources and an enhanced quality of life (Van Willigen, 2000; Barnett and Hyde, 2001). However, role conflict may negate the benefits of holding multiple roles when the obligations of the roles are conflicting (Marks, 1998; Voydanoff and Donnelly, 1999; Keene et al., 2002) in their competing demand for 'time and energy'<sup>86</sup>.

Various studies have revealed that both women and men experience tension between competing obligations to employers and families (Frone, et al., 1992a; Hochschild, 1989, 1997), as for most employees, work and family obligations remain at odds and work responsibilities continue to dominate family life (Loscocco, 2000; Gornick and Meyers, 2001). However, there is an expectation that it will be female, rather than male workers, who will suffer more from the negative aspects of work-family spill over, and other research on work and family roles support this (Voydanoff 1989; Becker and Moen 1999).

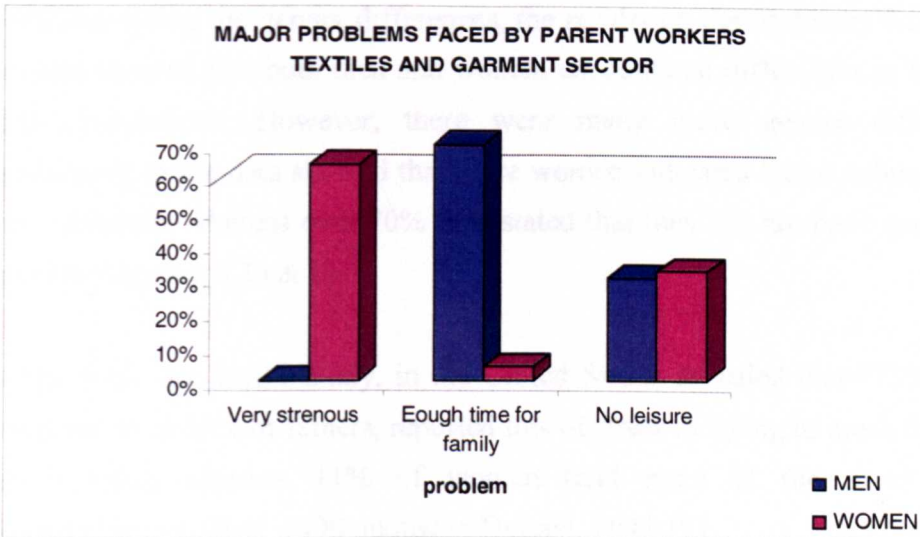
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<sup>86</sup> Time-based conflicts occur "when the time demands of one role make it difficult or impossible to participate fully in another"(Parasuraman and Greenhaus, 1997a,: 4). They add that, "Strain based -conflict occurs when symptoms of psychological strain (e.g. anxiety, fatigue, irritability) generated by the demands of the work or family role intrude or 'spill over' into the other role, making it difficult to fulfil the responsibility of that role"(ibid p.4)

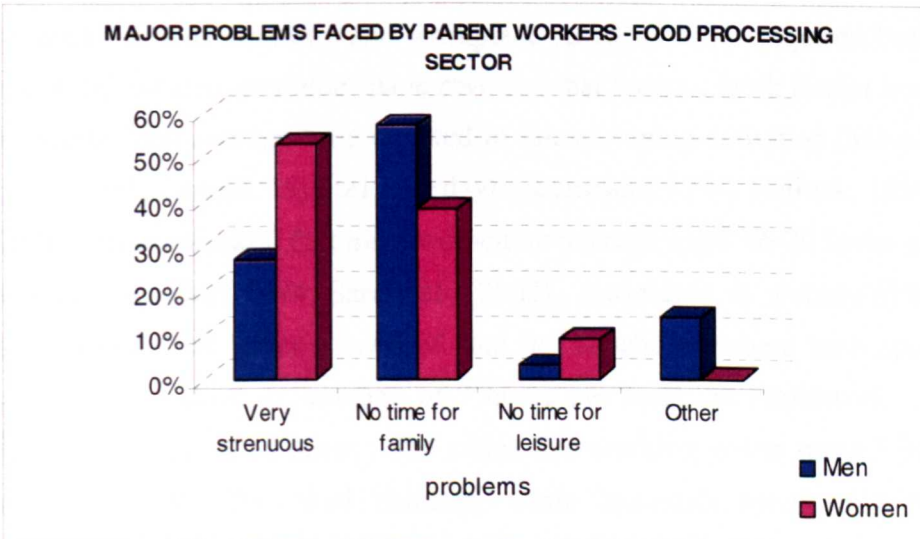
To ascertain the nature of the gender differences that exist in the effect of the dual roles and responsibilities of parent-workers within the workplace and within the domestic setting, the respondents were asked two questions: whether their family role had any influence on their occupation, and what the problems they faced as parent workers were?

**Problems Faced by Parent-workers in Combining the Work and Family Life:  
A Cross-sectoral Analysis.**

**Fig 8.3a**



**Fig8.3b**



More women, (88% (22)) within the textiles and garment and (62% (21)) food processing sub-sectors said that family responsibilities affected their jobs. On the other hand, (65% (24)) men in the food processing and (100% (10)) in the textiles and

garment sectors stated that their responsibilities within the domestic setting had no influence on their occupation.

The gender differences in response could be associated with differences in the gender roles and expectations, with men being seen as 'breadwinners' and women as 'housekeepers'. The result confirms other studies on gender and employment (Pleck, 1977; Voydanoff, 1989; Becker and Moen, 1999; Keene and Reynolds, 2002; Keene and Quandago, 2002).

Notwithstanding the gender differences, the results on the problems faced by parent-workers showed that both men and women encountered difficulties in trying to meet dual expectations. However, there were many more gender differences than similarities, as the data showed that more women indicated that combining both roles was strenuous, whereas over 70% men stated that they did not have enough time for their families(Fig 8.3a & b).

In line with this, Hall's study, in the United States, revealed that "73% of mothers, compared with 35% of fathers, reported lots of stress in trying to mesh their work and family roles, whereas 11% of women (and none of the men) encountered "extreme"stress"(Hall, 1990 quoted in DeLaat, 1999:12)

Undertaking both domestic and workplace responsibilities required both energy and time. Generally, most studies have revealed that women work longer hours than men, considering the average time devoted to housekeeping activities (Mosse 1993; Piza-Lopez, 1991; Goldin, 1990:212; Ardayfio-Schandof 1994; Bullock, 1994; Sarmiento, 2002). Studies showed that most women on average spent 16-20 hours a day working (Ardayfio-Scandorf 1994; Sarmiento, 2002). Sarmiento, in a study of households in Michigan (United States), revealed that in households where both spouses worked full-time, men spent an average of 7 hours per week on housework, while women spent an average of 17 hours. She added that working wives spent 5 hours more on housework when they had children, while husbands spent only 1 hour more (Sarmiento, 2002:39).

A survey on Ghana revealed that, on average, women spent between 99 to 152 minutes in cooking, and 182-251 minutes in childcare activities daily, whereas men spent between 38 and 128 minutes on similar activities (GLSS4, 2000:38-39). This suggests that it is women, rather than men who spend extra hours in performing

household activities, in addition to their normal working hours, which also requires the use of extra energy.

Traditionally, the expectation placed on a married woman in Ghanaian society is to perform her domestic role, regardless of her status at the workplace or within society. Therefore, a failure to execute her role, due to stress or tiredness from a hard day's work, is unacceptable because of cultural norms, and can lead to serious marital problems, as indicated in the cases below.

The dilemmas of working-mothers revealed the consequences of the inability to fulfil their expected roles as mothers and carers in the family, and also the extent of patriarchal control over women's labour, where women do not have understanding and cooperative husbands. The following were some statements shared by respondents. A woman, who received no assistance (house help), when narrating her story, said this:

*I nearly lost my husband, and family. My job [factory worker] is such that we go on shift<sup>87</sup> every fortnight. The problem my husband had, was me attending the afternoon shift, which most often resulted in me getting home late, sometimes around 11.30pm, due to lack of transportation. My husband did not like this idea and warned me to choose between the job and my marriage. His reason was that 'I did not have time for the children, his food gets cold whenever he comes from work, etc. These and other reasons [personal], always created quarrels and tension in the house. I have three young kids with no maid or gas cooker, [energy saving device]. I had to do everything alone and still get to work. To save my marriage I had to arrange with my younger sister to take care of the kids and his food when I'm on evening shift*

(Participant 6, female food-processing, Tema, 23/01/01).

Unlike the above participant, the husband of the respondent below left her and their 2 children because she was not at home to take care of the children, and now as a single mother has to struggle with work and family life all alone. This is her story:

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<sup>87</sup> In most large scale food processing firm where three shifts were run daily, women worked on one of two shifts starting from 7am -2pm or 2pm -10pm.

*My husband packed out of the house one afternoon, when one of the kids [neighbours] unfortunately pushed my daughter [the youngest child] into a bucket of hot water, which was placed behind our door by the next-door neighbour, whilst playing. This resulted in my daughter having serious burns. My husband blamed me for it, because it happened in my absence whilst at work. For the past six months, we have not heard from him, neither do we know his whereabouts. I have to work extra to earn some money, as I cannot even afford the hospital bills, provide pocket money and pay the school fees for my elder daughter. She [daughter] had to stop schooling, till I have enough money...*

(Participant 5, female food-processing, Kumasi, 06/04/01) (see video)

Single mothers, in juggling both their work and family life, are confronted even more strongly than married ones with the dilemma of having to sacrifice the family, for work, in order to survive, as indicated in diagram above.

Interestingly, such reported attitudes of men provide a clear illustration of the influence of patriarchy and the subordination of women within the home. The fact that a woman can earn an income does not reduce her functions and responsibilities within the home. The woman is still expected as a mother to care for the children, and to attend to her husband after his hard day's work, by making sure the table is well set. In general, most societies do not acknowledge the failure of men to execute shared domestic responsibilities as socially unacceptable in the same way that it is judged to be so for women to fail to carry out domestic roles. This is due to the perceived role many men play within the public sphere, as breadwinners, and their level of influence and power in society. Men are seen as having to work, and hence sacrifice their family life by spending less time at home and working more hours at the workplace (Fig. 8.3a & b) (also see hours of work per week and overtime). In addition to this, Milkie and Peltola, in their study on work adjustments, claimed that in keeping with a traditional breadwinner role, men more often take on additional paid work due to family responsibilities (Milkie and Peltola, 1999).

In their effort to meet their dual expectations, women place themselves under much stress, in order to avoid the psychological guilt of being perceived as irresponsible mothers, wives and workers. Piza-Lopez, in her study of women in Costa Rica, found

that one of the greatest anxieties shared by women was their inability to fulfil their roles as mothers and carers as they wanted to. Women were more concerned for the well-being of their children and this permeated every aspect of their lives, thereby curtailing their involvement in political sphere, so as to spend time with their children (Piza-Lopez 1991:115-116) (also see Shelton, 1990).

It is also possible that the nature of the industry itself, the time schedules of firms and the type of jobs undertaken by men and women played a major role in creating these gender and sectoral variations. It was observed, for example, that some of the firms started work earlier than others. In the bakery, and most agro food processing firms visited, firms started work as early as 6 am, in order to get their product onto the market earlier in order to maximise their sales. The early start of most businesses meant that workers had to leave their homes early in order to get to work, but the hours of work were still long, and often these firms closed late, after 6 p.m. In such firms, it was clear that the time and duration of work were highly dependent on the employer's targets for the day. In most cases, workers had to work 7 days in a week and had little or no time to spend with their family. The life style of most workers in such industries was predominantly controlled by the dictates of their work, as described by a single parent worker, who indicated that she only had a maximum of 4 hours rest a day. She stated that she hardly had any time to interact with her son, who is nine years old:

*I leave the house very early sometimes before 5 a.m. whilst he is asleep and come in late around 12.30pm to meet him sleeping'. Sunday is the only day that I stay at home because we do not go to work. This is the only day that I have in the week to do all my cooking, washing, rest and get the chance to talk with him.*

(Participant 3 female, Bakery, Kumasi 04/05/01).

Researcher: So how does he eat?

*I leave his money for school and food on the table for him, or sometimes he comes here after school to collect his money for food.*

(Participant 3 female, Bakery, Kumasi 04/05/01).

For many other women (especially single mothers), the only time they have to interact with their children is at the weekends. Even so, they become weighed down with household chores, and have less time for their children and themselves, in making preparation and provision for the week ahead. The lack of time spent with families, therefore does not necessarily become only a male issues, but that of women as well.

In conclusion, the above responses suggested that the majority of men and women faced different problems. Women predominantly indicated that combining both tasks was strenuous, and indicated that this cost much strength and energy, which affected their health (refer to problems of women). Men, on the other hand, stated that their major problem was not having enough time for their families. Men's absence from the home implied a lack of support for women and an indirect shift in domestic roles. This suggested that the more additional hours men spent at work, the less active they became in participating in household activities, and the less time they would spend at home with their families. The lack of assistance also had a 'knock-on effect' in that women would have to spend considerably more hours and exert more energy in combining their multiple roles (refer to Box A). Women are thus more likely than men to be worn out at the end of their working day, considering their dual responsibilities, as the competition of the multiple roles demand time and energy and adds further stress and strain to those normally associated with these daily activities. The availability of a domestic-help<sup>88</sup> to carry out domestic chores could serve as a form of energy saving device, if it could be afforded, as it eased the workload of the household, and helped women who worked outside the home to conserve their energy for more family centred activities<sup>89</sup>.

Leisure has been identified as one of the key economic variables for measuring the status of women (see Massiah, 1981:82) and it is significant that the results showed that more women than men indicated that they had no time for leisure, and as a corollary, suggests that they also had no time to develop their personal self-esteem. Most firms did not have definite closing hours. Workers, therefore, had little or no time for themselves if they had to fulfil their family and domestic responsibilities within their available free time.

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<sup>88</sup> Although having a domestic-help provides women with the added advantage of easing their domestic responsibilities, having female domestic-help had also created considerable problems within many homes in Ghana, leading to marriage breakdowns. The data on the use of home-helps or domestic assistants revealed that over 98% of respondents in both sectors did not employ helpers, but this response was predominantly from women. Most respondents stated that they had been deterred from having domestic assistance by the high costs involved of employing and providing board and lodging for the home-help. In addition to this, it was believed that most maidservants end up becoming the mistress of the home, as husbands tended to have illicit affairs with these maidservants in the absence of their wives.

<sup>89</sup> Employing the assistance of a domestic help limits the workload of the household and domestic chores such as house cleaning, washing, marketing and childcare, therefore providing the wife with the opportunity to conserve energy she might otherwise have to expend in carrying out such domestic responsibilities.

Although a women's paid work may be vital to the household economy, it is still often believed that her place is the 'kitchen'. Women bring in "extra income" to the family economic unit, and where necessary undertake some traditional responsibilities of men in the home. Even though their level of responsibility may change (either as breadwinner or secondary earner), it is clear that their functional role as mothers and wives does not change.

The results of this study, therefore, confirmed other observations on work and family adjustments which showed that it is women who are more likely to make sacrifices at work in order to accommodate family demands and this has contributed to the large proportion of women choosing to work either part time or in the informal sector (Bielby and Bielby 1989; Wirth, 20001). Bielby and Bielby in their study, demonstrated that women prioritise their family as they balance multiple roles (Bielby and Bielby, 1989). In addition, the study agrees with Pleck's model of work and family priorities which predicted that:

*Gender roles require women to prioritize family obligations over paid work, and therefore women are more likely to make accommodations in favour of the family. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to make adjustments in family life to accommodate paid work demands, according to traditional gender role definitions.*

(Pleck 1977 cited in Keene et al., 2002:6).

The implication of the differences in gender roles, suggest that women carry a greater part of the domestic responsibility (refer to Box A), but the question is whether the role performed corresponds to the decision-making power within the home. The next examines gender and household decision-making process.



## Box A

### Daily Life Pattern and Time-Management.

The life style of most women, married and single mothers alike seemed to follow a similar trend, waking up before 5am and working through to bed time at 11 pm, undertaking a multiplicity of daily activities (Box 1). Conversely, whilst men tend to spend fewer hours in the home, they also tend to have greater leisure-time (Box 2). Irrespective of their marital status, the woman is responsible for the household chores (Box 3)

#### Box 1

##### Routine of the Daily Life Pattern of a Ghanaian Woman.

I have three children. I wake up mostly by 4.30am. I prepare the morning meal for the family, prepare the children's meal for school, wash the children's clothes, clean up the house, and get the children ready for school.

I leave home at the latest by 6.30 to enable me get to work on time. Work starts at 8.30am and closes at 5.30pm, but I usually get home by 7.30pm because of transportation problems.

I then prepare the evening meal, see to it that the children take their bath, and have their meal, prepare the bath for my husband, wash up and clean up the kitchen, iron the children's school uniforms, check their homework and school bags, have my bath, and eat. I usually sleep by 11.20pm.

(Participant 1 female, food-processing, Accra, 10/01/2001)

In the average Ghanaian household, women have no energy-saving devices. The greater time spent implies that women have less time to relax and recoup energy for the next day's work, which also has long lasting effects on their physical and mental health.

#### Box 2

##### Routine of the daily life of a Ghanaian Man.

I wake up normally by 6am, iron my clothes and have my bath then sometimes have a meal before I leave for work. I leave the house by 7.10am to avoid traffic. Work starts at 8.30am and closes officially at 4.30pm, but I normally leave the office between 7.30-8.00 pm, finishing off most paper work, due to meetings. I normally get home late, at least by 10pm. Have my bath, take my meal, and watch television if not tired, or read the news-paper and go to sleep. I always make sure I'm in bed by 11pm.

(Participant, 2 male food-processing, Tema 18/01/2001)

The differential perception of daily life patterns between men and women can be linked to the issue of time poverty, which is linked with broader gender and development theory. This is related to the argument that women are time-poor as a consequence of the disproportionate level of household tasks they are required to perform within present social structures as compared to men (Jones et al., 1983; Grieco et al., 1989; Turner and Grieco, 1998). The increasing number of single parent households operates to increase the time poverty of women; and female-headed households are typically poorer with less financial resources available to them to buy in assistance to reduce the burden of their time poverty (Turner and Grieco, 1998).

**Box 3.**

**Routine of the daily life pattern of single men and women**

Victor and Mary are twins, aged 23 years and live together. They both work in the same garment firm

**Mary**

I wake up at 5am, clean the house, sweep the compound and wash the bath house. We both leave the house at 7am. Work starts at 8.30am and closes normally at 5.30pm. When there is enough work, we close at 8pm.. After work, I have to prepare the food and clean up. I always do the laundry on weekends. I wash Victor's clothes. I go to bed at the latest by 11pm.

(Participant 5 female, Garment, Kumasi, 19/04/2001).

**Victor**

I wake up at 6am but sometimes at 5am if I have some things to finish sewing. We leave home at 7am. When I get home in the evening, after 8.30pm, I finish my other job. I sew at home, its private. I have my meal and go to bed around 12pm. This depends on the work.

Researcher: So who does the cooking and cleaning in the house?

Victor: My sister.

Researcher: Do you pay her for her services?

Victor: No, but sometimes I buy bread and other things for the house.

(Participant 4 male, Garment, Kumasi, 19/04/2001).

### 8. 3. Gender and Household Decisions: The Parent-worker.

According to Karl, “women’s ability to participate in household decisions has an effect on the well-being of the entire family” (Karl, 1995:3). This section specifically deals with the role of parent–workers in household decisions. It examines the gender and sectoral differences in household decisions and their effects on the socio-economic advancement on men and women.

Although the home is seen as the main place where women are able to effectively participate, based on their ‘triple role’, however, their subordinated position, as a result of cultural norms and traditional perceptions about power relationships, has resulted in a lack of power to effectively participate in household decisions. Socio-economic and structural changes that have taken place in most societies since the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have affected the household structures, thereby gradually increasing women’s participation in household decisions as supplementary income earners (Foo and Lim, 1987; Safa, 1995:84; Lim, 1997:112), and yet men have the final say in most household decisions concerning the allocation of economic resources (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994; Safa, 1995; Brown, 1996; UNFPA, 2000; IFAD, 2000 ). IFAD, in the study on gender and food security in Madhya Pradesh, India revealed that, although there is considerable equality with men undertaking domestic work, this equality is not reflected in decision-making regarding income as decisions on important household expenditures were taken by the male head of the household. The study further revealed that even though tribal women contributed significantly to household income, they often had little say in decision-making regarding household expenditures although women could take smaller decision regarding day-to-day expenditure for the home. They stated that:

*In a nuclear family, which is becoming increasingly popular, the husband is the main decision-maker. This applies even to decisions regarding the care of children and health issues, as well as to decisions on agricultural matters and the purchase of consumer goods. The woman is consulted on expenditures, but in reality this often means that she is only "informed" of what the man has decided*

*(IFAD, 2000:1).*

A similar study, conducted in Morocco, revealed that women played an important role in discussions about household decisions. However, it was noted that their decision-making was often 'behind the scenes', and therefore socially invisible. Women were also consulted about children's schooling, health treatments and other relatively major expenditures (IFAD, 2000). The study revealed, however, that men were the final decision makers in all matters, especially in issues relating to finance. They noted that:

*The general rule seems to be that whenever money is involved, the final decision is the man's, and he will also be formally recognized as having made the decision. Women are usually consulted about major decisions affecting the welfare of the household.... But the final decision will be the man's, and formally he will be recognized as having made it. It is men who decide on children's education, because of the cost implications. In health care, the woman makes decisions on home remedies, but when money is needed and the husband needs to provide it, then the decision is his*

(ibid.,2)

In Ghana, Brown claimed that although structural transformation has created new responsibilities for women in the household economy, their access to the necessary resources and the decision-making process has not improved in a commensurate manner (Brown, 1996:29). Corroborating this point, Ardayfio-Schandorf indicated that although women share in the economic responsibilities in the household, they are virtually left out of the mainstream of decision-making process (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994). In her study on household headship and female earnings in Ghana, she revealed that, on average, 82.2% of all female-headed households take major decisions and bear economic responsibilities affecting their households. This is to be compared to 67.2% of married women who take major decision in the household (ibid.).

In exploring gender differences in household decisions, respondents were asked four questions as to who made the decisions in the upbringing and education of their children, finance, domestic issues, and reproduction. Decisions on these issues are highly important as these affect the allocation and distribution of economic resources

within the home, and also affect the socio-economic advancement of women given their triple role.

The results from the question as to who played the most influential role in the household decisions revealed some patterns of gender differences, although some similarities were also apparent. Women are universally said to be responsible for childcare but respondents were asked whether this role extended to playing a major role in decisions that pertained to their children's upbringing and education. The data revealed that more women acted as the main decision makers in this issue, but this was proportionally higher in the food-processing sector, than in the textiles and garment sector. The majority of men, on the other hand, stated that decisions on childcare and upbringing were made jointly (Table 8.5a & b).

The gender differences can be attributed to the high proportion of respondents who were single mothers. Although single parents are frequently in that situation because of circumstances beyond their control, rather than choice, such events however pave the way for women to become the automatic decision makers about their children's welfare and education, as the main breadwinners and heads of their households.

**Gender and who plays the most influential role in decision making in the home (%).**

Table 8.5a

Types of Decisions	Who takes the decision in the home: Food-processing					
	Men			Women		
	Respondent	Spouse	Joint	Respondent	Spouse	Joint Decision
Children's upbringing and Education	16 (6)	3 (1)	81 (30)	56 (19)	24 (8)	21 (7)
Domestic matters	14 (5)	22 (8)	65 (24)	59 (20)	9 (3)	32 (11)
Financial issues	46 (17)	3 (1)	51 (19)	56 (19)	12 (4)	32 (11)
Reproduction	14 (5)	3 (1)	84 (31)	32 (11)	21 (3)	47 (16)

**8.5b**

Types of Decisions	Who takes the decision in the home: Textiles and Garment.					
	Men			Women		
	Respondent	Spouse	Joint	Respondent	Spouse	Joint Decision
Children's upbringing and Education	40 (4)	10 (1)	50 (5)	48 (12)	8 (2)	44 (11)
Domestic matters	40 (4)	20 (2)	40 (4)	48 (12)	8 (2)	44 (11)
Financial issues	70 (7)	0 (0)	30 (3)	60 (15)	16 (4)	24 (6)
Reproduction	30 (3)	30 (3)	40 (4)	20 (5)	8 (2)	72 (18)

As indicated, male respondents generally maintained that they took joint decisions with their spouses on child welfare and education, but it was detected that, even where women were provided such opportunities to participate in such decision making, men always had the 'final say'. Confirming this point, Safa, in her study in San Juan, claimed that men made major decisions regarding household purchases or the children's education (Safa, 1974:41-45).

Being the managers of the home, most women in society spend much more time in the home than men (Bullock, 1994). The data on domestic decisions revealed that more women indicated that they were the main decision makers, whereas more men stated that decisions were jointly made (Tables 8.5). Some men maintained that their spouse made domestic decisions.

Interestingly the results on financial decisions revealed that more women saw themselves as solely responsible for such decisions in their homes. Similarly most men in the textiles and garment sector than in the food processing sector also provided this response. Nonetheless, about 50% of men in food processing maintained that decisions were jointly made on financial issues. On the whole, the data showed low results on joint decisions in financial matters, as more men and women acted as independent decision makers. It became clear, during interviews with some respondents (both male and female participants) that, due to lack of trust and insecurity<sup>90</sup>, most married couples did not operate joint financial accounts<sup>91</sup>. This fact is confirmed by Brown, who stated that in most Ghanaian families, the spouses manage their incomes separately (Brown, 1996:26). Decision-making, therefore, depends on a level of mutual financial openness (Oppong, 1974).

Women, although seen as supplementing family income, rather than being the main wage earner, often took on the full responsibility of the financial issues, and (or) decisions in times of family crisis. Numerous studies in Ghana have shown that women usually contribute significantly to and spend a larger share of their income on

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<sup>90</sup> The lack of trust and insecurity of women can be traced from the customary and traditional practices regarding marriage and inheritance in Ghana. Until the passing of the Interstate Succession Law (PNDC Law 111) in 1984, a Ghanaian woman traditionally could not inherit her husband's estate. Customarily, in most parts of Ghanaian society, the system of inheritance was such that a woman could not by tradition benefit from her husband's estate, even if the wealth had been jointly acquired, or had been gained through the efforts of the woman. The only means by which a woman could gain access to her husband's property was through a will. Based on this and other factors, such as the polygamous system of marriage, women were not allowed to acquire wealth for themselves, even in marriage. It is believed that in the matrilineal system, when a woman acquired wealth, she took it to her home (matrilineal home), but any debt she acquired during marriage was the responsibility of her husband (Oppong, 1984). Furthermore, due to the high rate of divorce, separation, extra marital affairs and the neglect of their marital families and children by husbands, most women tended to hold their own accounts for security purposes.

<sup>91</sup> It was also observed that there was a high level of ignorance, even amongst married couples, regarding the monthly earnings of their partners, as most respondents claimed that their partners did not disclose this to them, and so they also did not share the information about their earnings with their partners. Women especially feared that the disclosure of their income would result in the neglect by their spouse of their financial responsibilities.

the upkeep of the household, in spite of the sexual division of responsibility (Ahenkroa, 1991; Oduro, 1992; Brown 1996).

In most of Ghanaian society, women are not involved in deciding how many children they will have, as decisions about the reproductive rate of women, are generally controlled by men (Nukunya, 1992; Bour, 1996). Buor maintained that “with the increasing rate of formal education among women, however, their participation in such decisions is sine-qua-non” (Buor, 1996:42). The data revealed that most men and women maintained that this decision was jointly made. Confirming this, numerous studies revealed that decisions to have children among the intelligentsia elite are based on mutual consultation and negotiation between couples (Blood, 1972:27; Bour 1996:43). Again, the increasing rate of female led households, and the consequent change in the family structure, has influenced reproductive decisions (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1994:35). Notwithstanding these factors, reproductive decision-making in Ghana is also determined by other external factors such as employment status, income, place of residence, family and marriage types and the extended family system (Buor, 1996; Obeng-Afriyie, 1985; Rockson, 1991)

Generally, from the above analysis, the majority of men maintained that they shared decisions with their spouse, whereas most women, especially in female-headed households, stated that they were the sole decision makers of their household.

It is possible that the sectoral variations are a reflection of the differences in marital and parenting status as the data showed that more married women and single mothers worked in food processing than in the textiles and garment sector. It also seems that the difference in results from the men may be due to the differences in educational levels, as it seems more possible for people with higher education to accept the value of women’s participation in decision-making. This is because there is the possibility of being less committed to traditional perceptions concerning gender roles due to exposure through education to other value systems.

In spite of the structural changes that are taking place within the household, gender power relations within most homes and families within Ghanaian society still acknowledged male superiority and leadership, notwithstanding the increasing incidence of female led households. Thus, the position of men in society gives powers and privileges in relation to their role in decision- making processes, which militates against a more equitable distribution of authority and power between the spouses. In joint decision-making, it is possible that women serve as advisers whilst

men 'call the shots', as Nukunya maintained that "in the conjugal family, in both the matrilineal and patrilineal families, especially in the traditional setting, the man assumes a key position in all facets of decision-making. The rights of spouses show a bias in favour of the husband, and in Ghanaian society, the authority structure weighs heavily in favour of the men" (Nukunya, 1992:208).

#### **8.4. Conclusion.**

Equitable distribution and allocation of responsibilities and decision-making power within the workplace and the home plays a vital role in the socio-economic advancement of women, and to the benefit of the family and society as a whole. In this study, some gender differentials were uncovered in the relation to positions of leadership and responsibilities, decision making authority and job autonomy in the workplace. Irrespective of the sectoral variations, the issues outlined tended to favour men in both food processing and textiles sectors. More men, especially in food processing, had access to positions of authority, were involved in strategic decisions in relation to policy formulation in administrative, finance and personnel, and had the authority to sanction workers. This differential was largely influenced by employers' preference.

The findings on their role within the home showed that women undertook a wider range of activities, of which cooking, childcare and house shopping were the most common and major tasks performed. This suggests that menial jobs such as keeping the house tidy and the laundry were taken care of by older children in the family. Men's responsibility was highest in paying school fees, with minimal contribution to childcare, washing and ironing and virtually none in cooking (refer to Box A). Combining family and work life had significant impacts on women, as the majority found this very strenuous. Such tensions affect workers' attitudes, capabilities, and energies (Barnett et al., 1996). Men, rather, complained of having less time for their family, which is a clear indication of sacrificing their families for their work (Carikci, 2002).

The gender division of household responsibilities does not match their allocation of decision-making power. Men's status as heads of the household and breadwinners accorded them the privilege and authority to call the final shots in household decisions, even where decisions were jointly made. However, more women became



sole decision-makers on issues that pertained to the upbringing and education of their children, finance, etc, as a result of being single parents.

The relationship between gender and power resulting in inequality can be traced from socio-cultural, legal, political and economic factors. Much that hinders women's authority can be traced back to the cultural and traditional structures within society. Religion, history, tradition and legislation have placed men in positions of authority and dominance over women. The differences in cultural expectations within a society contribute to the existing trends of gender differences in the distribution of responsibility and authority within the work place and the home. In principle, 'authority is vested in position and not in people' (Daft, 2000), but this is not always found in practice. This is because, within the workplace, the attitude and perceptions of employers concerning gender roles and leadership is a manifestation of that which pertains in the home, which then becomes transferred into the world of work. Employers lack trust and confidence in women and it is perhaps the stereotypical attitude of employers concerning women, which most limits their access to positions of power and authority (Goldin, 1990; Reskin and Ross, 1995).

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **GENDER DILEMMAS IN THE WORKPLACE.**

## CHAPTER 9

### GENDER DILEMMAS IN THE WORKPLACE.

#### 9.0. Introduction.

Although the status of women has seen much improvement globally over the latter part of the 1980s until the present day, there is still much to be achieved. Progress still remains uneven; inequalities between men and women persist, and there are still some major socio-cultural barriers, such as occupational segregation, that impede women's full participation within both the economic and social spheres of life. Thus although cracks seem to be appearing in the glass ceiling, for many women it still remains unbroken (Reskin, et al., 1994; UNIDO 1995; ILO, 1999; Wirth 2001).

Based on analysis of empirical data, this chapter examines the differences in the dilemmas that men and women encounter at the workplace and the effects of these on their socio-economic advancement. The chapter is presented in the following sequence: problems and challenges in the workplace, job satisfaction and gender and employment related migration.

#### 9.1. Gender: Problems and Challenges in the Workplace.

There is much evidence which shows a quantitative increase in the rate of women's participation within the labour force globally. However, this increase has not been matched by qualitative improvement in their socio-economic advancement (Bullock, 1994; Karl, 1995; Lim, 1997; Anker, 1998; ILO, 1998; Wirth 2001). In providing a reason, the ILO claimed that:

*the quality of jobs which many women hold, particularly in developing nations are as poor as the attention that is given to them in order to defend themselves better*

(ILO-ICLTU Report, 2000).

The purpose of socio-economic development, as defined in the 1990 Human Development Report, is to offer people more options (UNDP, 1991). One of the most important options is their access to income through employment as it is considered a

necessary tool towards the socio-economic empowerment of women (UNIDO/ESCAP Regions, 1994: i). However, there is much evidence globally to show that at the workplace women are said to face all forms of discrimination (direct and subtle) which manifest themselves through the various forms of segregation. In addition to these, they often work in deplorable working conditions (Reskin et al., 1994; Lim, 1997; Manufacturing News.com 2000; NLC, 1999; 2002). Various studies conducted on factory workers throughout the world in countries such as China, Bangladesh, Thailand, Hong Kong, and the United States, revealed that women work long hours (daily shifts of between 14.5 to 18.5 hours), they are exploited, under-paid, forced to work overtime, but cheated in over-time wages. In addition, they have to work in environmental conditions that are hazardous to their health, such as handling dangerous dioxins (NLC, 1999, 2002; Wanboriboon, 2001; Mattel et al., 2002; Islam, 2002).

The question is, whether men and women within the textiles and food processing sub-sectors in Ghana encounter the same problems. The gender and sector differences in the problems encountered at the work place were derived from respondents stating three major problems that they faced that were most important to them and then selecting out of that list the one which they considered their greatest problem. The analysis for this section is therefore based on the two most important problems encountered by the respondents, in their order of priority.

Generally, the low salary and delays in salary payment, poor working conditions, lack of financial support systems and health issues were the most common problems encountered. Women were more likely than men to complain of low salaries and health issues as their major problems (Tables E.1. in appendix).

In order to facilitate a meaningful analysis of the multiple responses, the summarised results have been classified under four major themes<sup>92</sup>. These are: Financial and related matters, Work Conditions, Working Relationships, and Human Capital Development and Career Advancement issues. The components within each stated category are listed below.

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<sup>92</sup> It is worth noting that the discussion of these problems as categorised has been based on two problems as listed by respondents. That is each respondent was allowed to state two problems encountered. For analytical purposes, the summation of the responses has been based therefore on the average value of each gender group. The mean response for each gender group is therefore equal to the percentage result as given.

- Financial Issues: problems concerning salaries and delays in the payment of salaries, and lack of financial support systems at the workplace.
- Working Conditions: health related problems, poor work environment and conditions, long work hours, job insecurity, lack of working facilities (raw materials / work equipment)
- Work Relations: lack of co-operation between management and workers, lack of co-operation between workers, attitude of employers and lack of motivation from employers.
- Human Capital Development and Career Advancement issues: such as training and promotion.
- No problem: this response was provided by some respondents

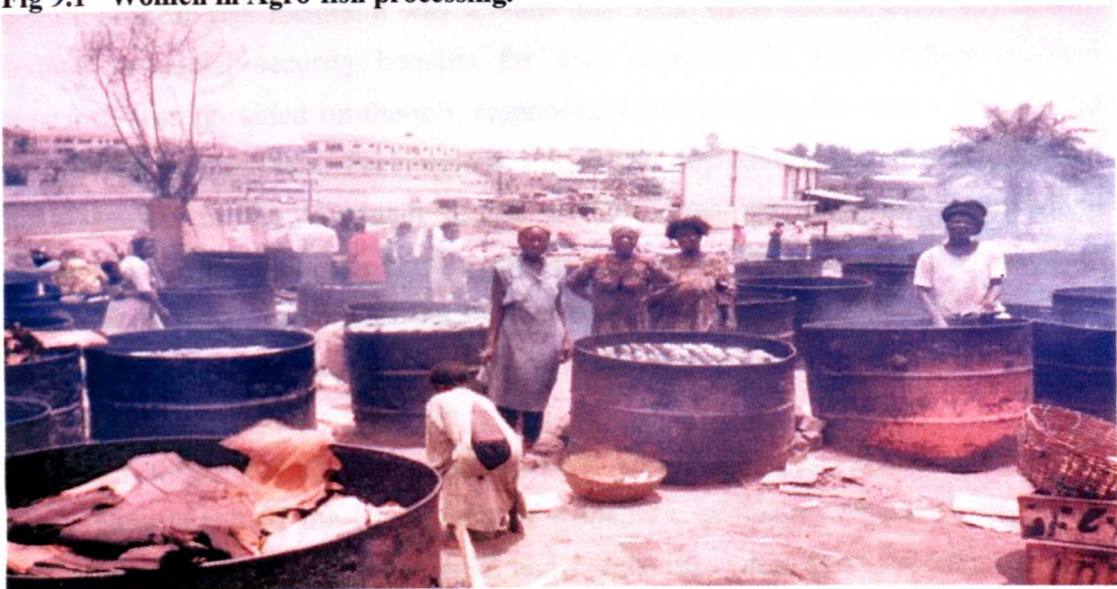
**Table 9.1. Gender and Problems Faced at the Workplace-  
(A Summary of Multiple Responses).(%).**

Problems	Food-processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Financial and related issues	23 (26)	32 (30)	27 (56)	32 (16)	40 (40)	37 (56)
Work Conditions	43 (48)	49 (46)	46 (94)	50 (25)	41 (41)	44 (66)
Working relations	16 (18)	12 (11)	14 (29)	10 (5)	16 (16)	14 (21)
Human Capital and Career Advancement	6 (7)	5 (5)	6 (12)	0 (0)	1 (1)	1 (1)
No problems	12 (13)	2 (2)	7 (15)	8 (4)	2 (2)	4 (6)
Total	100 (112)	100 (94)	100 (206)	100 (50)	100 (100)	100 (150)

Generally, the results revealed that almost 50% of respondents in both sectors indicated poor work conditions as a major problem faced at the workplace (Table 9.1). There was a significant gender difference in the results, as there were more women in the food processing sector and more men within the textiles and garment sector who provided this response.

The gendered trend could be explained by the fact that the nature of the jobs and the environmental conditions under which most women worked generally exposed them to more health hazards than men. Most women, in an agro- food processing firm visited, for example, worked under harsh weather conditions with poor shelter. The traditional methods of food processing meant that they were exposed to working daily directly with fire in hot temperatures, as they were exposed to smoke from the firewood whilst working under direct sunlight (Fig 9.1) (also see Fig E. 1b in appendix)

**Fig 9.1 Women in Agro-fish processing.**



Women engaged in fish smoking, Kumasi.

**Fig 9.2 Women in Batik- making**



A woman engaged in a de-waxing process, Accra-Ghana. She works without gloves.

Furthermore, the nature of most of the activities required long hours of continuous standing, sitting and bending, which most women complained resulted in back and waist pain, and other health problems<sup>93</sup>. A number of women, in narrating dilemmas arising from their health, attributed their inability to give birth as a result of a series of miscarriages to the nature of their job, which required long hours of standing and bending and sometimes lifting heavy objects in the process of their work. In the textiles sector (batik-making), most workers were exposed to chemicals (caustic soda) as they worked without protective clothing (Fig 9.2) (also see Fig E. 1a in appendix)

<sup>93</sup> Most women who worked under such harsh weather conditions, exposed to hot sunny weather, a smoky environment and heat radiation from the fire wood complained about eye problems, constant fevers, head and body aches as well as blood pressure. Factory workers also complained of heat due to overcrowding in sections and the effects of heat radiating from machinery.

In spite of these risk factors, it was revealed that most firms did not offer any health, medical or social security benefits for their workers. In firms where medical assistance was provided on-the-job, respondents claimed that the firm's doctors did not provide the best care. Furthermore, due to the implementation of the "cash and carry system" in the Ghanaian health service (down payment for any medical assistance), the inability to pay discourages employees from utilising such services due to the delay in the processing of claims for such medical expenses. This is a result of the world structural adjustment package implemented in Ghana in the early 1980s (ISSER, 1997).

In addition to these conditions, most workers, especially in the textiles and garment sector, complained of the long hours of work as a problem. Women particularly indicated that this affected their social and family life. Other issues mentioned were poor working conditions, such as poor (or a complete absence of) canteen services and toilet facilities. The issue of occupational health and work environments is increasingly gaining global attention. The results of this study confirm that of various other studies which have indicated that women on the whole are more seriously affected than men by poor working conditions (Lim 1996; Annan, 1997; NLC, 1999, 2002; WHO, 2000; Roger, 2001; Wanboriboon, 2001; Islam, 2002).

Income inequality has been one of the central issues in equal opportunities legislation and gender and development. Though wage employment is considered as a key to the socio-economic empowerment of women, it is, however, evident that globally women earn less than men in most countries in the world (ILO 1985, 1990, 1996; Pearson 1992; Anker, 1998:30; Wirth 2001). Ghana is no exemption, as indicated in the Table 9.1. The data on workplace problems revealed that financial and related issues were generally one of the most commonly expressed dilemmas of workers, especially those in the textiles and garment sector. Consistently, there were more women who provided this response. Women generally complained of low salaries and delays in the payment of their salaries, whereas most men, on the other hand, stressed the lack of financial support systems such as loans, salary and advances, in the workplace. This suggests the possibility of women earning less than men. The gender differences in responses could be attributed to the fact that men more often have well-paid salaried occupations than women and therefore have relatively better income. In addition to this, men were more likely than women to work over-time and long hours, which generated additional income (as already indicated in chapter 7.) There is also a

possibility that the sectoral variation could be linked to the size of the firm<sup>94</sup> and the mode of payments as most workers (mostly women) in the textiles and garment sector earned wages by piece- rate, and therefore had to work very long hours to earn a meaningful income.

Again, the issue of low salaries and salary payment delays could be explained by the fact that entrepreneurs owning most small firms expressed that they could not afford to pay high wages due to the relatively high cost of production. They further explained that, due to lack of financial capital, they had to buy on credit to remain in business, and therefore had to pay off most of their creditors first to maintain confidence in the viability of the firm, before they could even begin to sort out paying their workers. The reverse was the case in most of the large food processing firms. They had established their credibility with their banks and customers, and had a ready market for their products, as the majority were aimed at the export market.

The data on working relations revealed that workers in the food processing sector reported issues such as co-operation between colleagues and also between workers and management as a problem. However, there were more men in this category. The general results from the textiles and garment sector, on the other hand, showed that respondents complained about the attitude of their employers, and lack of motivation from employers, and these responses came predominantly from women (Table E.1 in appendix)

Human capital development is regarded as an essential tool towards the attainment of social and economic growth and development of nations (Robbins and Cornell, 1999; Jacobson 2002). Interestingly, the data on human capital development revealed low rates of response about this issue from both sectors. However, a few workers in the food processing sector maintained that this was the problem for them. Nevertheless, the majority of workers tended to consider issues which pertained to their work conditions and finance as more important to them, than those that related to human development and career advancement in the workplace.

This section has revealed that issues pertaining to work condition and finance were of greater direct importance to workers, especially women, than those which relate to human development. This is because working conditions and financial issues tend to affect people more immediately and directly than human development. This can also

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<sup>94</sup> Most businesses (small firms) depended on the marketing of their products before they could pay out workers. Furthermore, due to the scale of production, the marginal cost of production becomes very high, and hence, profit levels become low.



be considered as a gender issue as men are placed in better positions with better-paid jobs as a result of a complex interplay of discrimination within workplace and in society. In addition to this, are the gendered differences in the processes of socialisation. The role and expectations of men as family breadwinners tend to lead them to focus more on long-term aspirations and career advancement. On the other hand, the orientation of women tends to be more immediate, towards that which would best serve their interests as mothers, carers and wives.

These differences link into the issue of job satisfaction. The question is, whether men and women have the same attitude towards their jobs in terms of the satisfaction they derive from their employment.

## 9.2. Gender and Job Satisfaction

Daft claimed that “attitude is the most important component in a working situation as it influences the performance of an employee”(Daft 2000:470), and that “behavioural attitude and job related attitude are two main types of attitude which appear in every working situation”(ibid). He also stated that those attitudes which related to work, especially those which influence how employees perform (i.e. job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation) are of the most interest to managers in every business organisation (ibid.). Daft maintained that:

*Job satisfaction is a positive attitude towards one's job. This is the attitude displayed when their work matches their needs and interest, when working conditions and rewards (such as pay), are satisfactory, when employees like their co-workers...*

*(Daft, 2000: 470).*

He argued that

*Many managers believe job satisfaction is important because they think satisfied employees will do better work. (ibid, 471).*

This section examines the patterns of gender differences in job satisfaction. It looks at what employees dislikes about their job, and the issues that pertain to job security. The section is therefore presented in the following sequence: dislikes about job; job security and employment prospects and job stability.

### 9.2.1. Gender and Dislikes about Job.

In the last section, it was revealed that men and women encountered multiple problems at the work place. The most common of these were problems that pertained to their working conditions and environment, and also to finance. To provide in-depth information about the job satisfaction of respondents, given their current problems, the respondents were asked to indicate what they did not like about their current job.

The results revealed that more women indicated that they did not like their jobs because of the stresses<sup>95</sup> they incurred for them. This response was more prevalent from workers in the food-processing sector (Table 9.2). On the other hand, more workers in the textiles and garment sector maintained that they disliked their job because it was time consuming. This suggests that respondents felt that they did not have time for themselves.

**Table 9.2 Gender and Dislikes about Job (%).**

Dislikes about Job	Food-processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Stressful	43 (24)	62 (29)	51 (53)	20 (5)	26 (13)	24 (18)
Boring	14 (8)	11 (5)	13 (13)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Time consuming (No leisure)	25 (14)	23 (11)	24 (25)	44 (11)	44 (22)	44 (33)
Pressure at work	18 (10)	4 (2)	12 (12)	36 (9)	12 (6)	20 (15)
Employer's attitude	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	18 (9)	12 (9)
Total	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)

The data again revealed that it was men who indicated that they disliked the pressures at their workplace, and that this response was more common from men who worked in the textiles and garment sector. It should be emphasised here that, although men expressed their dissatisfaction about pressures faced at the work place, it was observed that this had a different connotation from the perspective of the employers. In the view of most employers, in the firms visited, the ability of the men to withstand or work under pressures was a clear indication of their commitment and loyalty to the organisation<sup>96</sup>. It was detected that men, in particular, rarely expressed their emotions by complaining about working under pressure to their superiors. This enduring

<sup>95</sup> According to Lazarus, "Stress refers to a very broad class of problems differentiated from other problems areas because it deals with any demands which tax the system, whether it is a physiological system, a social system or a psychological system and the response of that system." He adds that "the reaction depends on how the person interprets or appraises (consciously or unconsciously) the significance of a harmful, threatening or challenging event" (Lazarus, 1971)

<sup>96</sup> Loyalty in this context is a sign of organisational commitment, which involves the willingness to do more than the job's basic requirements, by showing heavy involvement in the organisation

attitude of men actually helped them gain the trust and confidence of their superiors, who considered them as being loyal and hard working. It is possible that such behaviour in the men reflects the masculine traits of toughness, self-control, and not being overtly demonstrative about their feelings.

Contrary to this attitude, most women, especially in the textiles and garment sector, expressed their dissatisfaction about the attitudes of their employers. Yet the ethos emerged that although they were more open in their attitude towards such behaviour from their employers, they had had to learn to accommodate as long as they wanted to earn an income, since they had little or no option of alternative employment. The following comments were made by a female worker, in expressing her resentment about the attitude of her employer towards her employees:

*We are workers and not servants; although we came here because of the job, we have to do almost all her housework, such as cleaning, washing and sometimes do the marketing. Not satisfied with the assistance offered, she just talks to us anyhow<sup>97</sup>, as if we are her slaves.*

(Participant 6 female Garment, Kumasi. 20/04/01).

The attitude of this employer could be linked to differences in gender role and socialisation. The employer would not expect men in similar positions to do domestic work and so this speaks volumes about the ways in which male and female employees are perceived differently by employers and how this in turn has tangible effects upon workers' conditions and career opportunities.

Interestingly, it was not only females who complained but some men also expressed their dislike about the attitude of their employers at the workplace. A male respondent indicated that his employer humiliated her staff when she discovered even the slightest error in their work. This attitude of their employer, however, made them extra careful in whatever they did and how they dealt with her.

It was found that men, although they experienced some of the same negative behaviours by their employers, tried to protect their ego, by being careful and vigilant in their work. Furthermore, men seemed to turn 'a blind eye' to such attitudes from their employers, and not to consider such attitudes as issues, which affected their working relationships.

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<sup>97</sup> The employer shouts and even goes to the extent of abusing workers verbally, embarrassing them in front of their colleagues when they fail to fulfil the task given, to her satisfaction, or show some laxity in undertaking such tasks.

The above results, which show the dilemma of workers and what they detested about their jobs, are in line with various studies conducted on occupational stress, and work / family conflict (Davidson and Cooper, 1992; Parasuraman and Greenhaus, 1997; Thompson and Beauvais, 2000; Keene and Reynolds, 2002). Davidson and Cooper in their study on occupational stress, maintained that the stress that women experienced at the workplace was closely related to the basic duties, responsibilities and requirements of the job. They argued that since women tend to suffer from the demands of two or more environments simultaneously, that is, home and work, while men are less affected by the home, so for women, the everyday responsibilities and demands of the job can be magnified (Davidson and Cooper, 1983). Similarly, a study of male managers in the UK revealed that 57% of executive managers identified working under pressure as the main source of stress (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). This suggests that men may find it equally stressful when they are put under pressure at work, which also keeps them away from their family.

Generally, the above discussion suggests that gender played a significant role in the problems faced at the workplace, although there were some cross-sectoral variations. Men, for example, were more likely to report work pressures and the lack of freedom in terms of time, as the things they disliked about their job. On the other hand, women were confronted with stress from work, which seemed to be a result of the competing demands of work and domestic responsibilities for their time.

The next section examines the job security and employment prospects of men and women, and the impact of these on their socio-economic advancement.

### **9.3. Gender and Job Security and Employment Prospects.**

Job quality includes not only the current conditions at work but also the prospects for job continuity, which may then lead on to a better job (Rubery, et al., 1994:213). The assurance of security that an individual derives from their workplace plays an important role in job satisfaction. This creates confidence in employees by making them have a sense of feeling and acceptance as part of the firm. However, the sense of job security is not only based on what the employee could offer the firm but it is also influenced by other social and economic factors, such as social acceptance.

The employment status of workers, their attitudes towards work and their opportunities of advancing their careers internally within the firm, are related to their prospects in terms of job stability (job security), i.e. the probability of remaining in their current employment. This section examines the patterns of gender differences in employment prospects. It therefore considers the issues of job security and stability and their effects on the socio-economic advancement on men and women in the workplace.

Although women constitute a significant proportion of the waged workforce, the certainty of maintaining their jobs is still bleak in the face of economic crisis, as various studies have shown that women workers disproportionately become victims of unemployment and poverty due to layoff during such periods (ILO, 1996; Manuh 1997; KCTU, 1998). An ILO report confirmed that although women mostly serve as a form of cheap labour, 'women are the last to be hired but the first to get fired' (ILO, 1996). KCTU's study on Japan revealed that the economic crisis has hit women workers particularly hard, as women became the most affected by scarce job opportunities and massive layoffs (KCTU, 1998). The study further revealed that women workers were victimised by the absence of any social safety net, such as effective unemployment insurance, and employment security. This is because most jobs available for women workers were systematically excluded from such social security and insurance benefits (ibid.).

The data on job security in this study revealed that more men felt secure about their jobs than women, but this response was more common from workers in the textiles and garment sectors (Table 9.3).

**Table 9.3. Gender and Job Security (%).**

Job Security	Textiles and Garment sector			Food-processing sector		
	Women	Men	Total	Men	Women	Total
Very Secure	48 (24)	68 (17)	55 (41)	51 (29)	30 (14)	42 (43)
Fairly Secure	40 (20)	28 (7)	36 (27)	29 (16)	45 (21)	36 (37)
Fairly Insecure	10 (5)	4 (1)	8 (6)	20 (11)	25 (12)	22 (23)
Very Insecure	2 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total	100 (50)	10 (25)	100 (75)	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)

It is possible that the reasons for the gender difference are linked to the nature and category of jobs, as more men were engaged in more specialised and technical jobs. In addition to these, other external factors such as labour market fluctuations, skill preferences by employers and the attitudes and perceptions of employers concerning gender specifications for jobs are also likely to influence the sectoral variations in the data. Jobs within the textiles and garment sector were felt to be more secure with good long term prospects as the employees could foresee their jobs creating opportunities, as it was easier for them to set up their own businesses. Despite this, job security was highly determined by employer preferences with regards to downsizing of the workforce, the market trends<sup>98</sup> and the attitude of workers towards their jobs. The following are some reasons outlined by respondents within the textiles and garment sector when asked why they felt insecure or secure.

A female respondent attributed her job insecurity mainly to her employer's decision and preference with respect to downsizing of the work force in the absence of jobs (low market demand).

*I feel insecure because madam (her employer) can choose to tell us to stay home. She often does it when there is not enough work, allowing only a few men to come to work.*

(Participant 3 female, Garment, Kumasi. 19/04/01).

A male worker confirmed this uncertainty and lack of guaranteed hours. He shared that:

*Well, sometimes you cannot guarantee if you may get enough work*

(Participant 1 male Garment, Kumasi. 11/04/01).

Job insecurity, within the textiles and garment sector, was based not only on the lack of guaranteed jobs, but also on negligence of duty. One respondent had this to say:

*I work with the wax, and nearly burnt down the place during the course of my work. I have been warned that I will lose my job if this happens again or even if I burn or spoil any fabric*

(Participant 6 male Textiles, Accra. 05/02/01).

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<sup>98</sup>It was generally observed that low demands for products affected the productivity of firms during market slump periods. Such crisis periods drove most entrepreneurs to cut down the cost of production, often by temporarily laying off some of their workers. Such fluctuations in demand therefore create a sense of job insecurity in the work force.

Another respondent explained that:

*Sometimes I'm asked to pay for or refund a fabric burnt during pressing, I have been warned. This has made me become more careful in doing my work.*

(Participant 2 male Garments, Accra. 01/02/01).

In contrast to these statements, a female worker who described her job as being secure commented:

*I feel secure because I will not do anything wrong, I come to work on time and I'm always serious with my work, do exactly what I'm told to do.*

(Participant 3 female Garment, Accra. 02/02/01).

Due to the nature of the industry, employers, as a disciplinary procedure, hold workers responsible for the items and fabrics left in their care. Such discipline either leads to the replacement or refund of the cost of the item, or the temporary dismissal of the worker. The effect of these employment practices is to make workers become diligent about their work but it also puts them under constant fear and pressure, especially when they are asked to replace or refund items that might get lost within a section. A supervisor, who had previously described her job as secure, expressed her ill feeling about some of these actions:

*We are always asked to pay for lost items or materials in the section. This sometimes becomes difficult for people who feel they have no idea about such incidents.*

(Participant 1, female supervisor, Garment, Accra. 01/02/01).

Other factors that affect the stability and security of jobs for women and men were identified as the closure of firm by the employer, redundancy, or dismissal (Burchell and Rubery, 1994: 100).

The analysis of the data reveals that more women feel insecurity about their workplace. Such insecurity can be linked with the gender difference concerning influence the intention of workers to leave their workplace to set up their own business.

### **9.3.2. Gender and Job Stability.**

Studies on work histories have shown that the rate of job turnover is higher amongst women than men (Anker, 1997; Wirth, 2001). Burchell and Rubery maintained that

*More women than men tend to experience interruptions in their careers that are mostly associated with their domestic responsibilities... the heavy domestic commitment of women reduces their chances of being able to move into better jobs*

(Burchell and Rubery, 1994:100).

The question is, has this always been the case, and do women continue to leave the workplace due to their domestic responsibilities? This section examines gender and job stability. It considers the future prospects of men and women becoming self employed, leaving their current workplace to set up their own business as a means of advancing their career.

In an international context, studies on women entrepreneurs have revealed that their numbers are increasing at a faster rate than men (OECD, 1998; Business Development Bank of Canada, 1999; ILO 2000). Birch stated that the rate of women who are now starting their own company is 1.5 times that of men (Birch in OECD, 1998). Various studies have associated the rate of labour turn over and the rise of women entrepreneurship to women gaining self-independence and control by exercising their educational and technical skills, to balance family work with their domestic responsibility and earn an income (Moore et al., 1997; Karim and ILO, 2001). However, most of these reasons were also attributed to the dilemmas (subtle forms of discrimination and inequality) that they face at the work place, which hinder their socio-economic advancement (UN PfA, 1996; Moore et al., 1997). Moore and others claimed that blocks to advancement and unsupportive work environment have been some of the main issues that have influenced women's decision to set up



businesses on their own (Moore et al., 1997). Confirming this, a report on the Platform of Action in Beijing stated that:

*The unfavourable work environment as well as the limited numbers of employment opportunities available had led women to seek alternatives. Women have increasingly become self-employed and owners and managers of micro-small- and medium- scale enterprises*

(PfA, 1996:97).

Generally, the results of this study revealed that more women indicated their intention to leave their workplace and set up their own business, and this was weighted towards workers within the textiles and garment sector (Table 9.4). Almost 50% of workers in the food processing sector maintained that they had no intention of leaving their current jobs.

**Table 9.4. Gender and the Intention of leaving current job to set up own Business (%).**

Intention to leave current job	Food-processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Yes	45 (25)	60 (28)	51 (53)	72 (18)	78 (39)	76 (57)
No	55 (31)	40 (19)	49 (50)	28 (7)	22 (11)	24 (18)
Total	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)

Factors such as the nature of the job, the type of skill acquired, the type of industry, the resources and financial capital involved in setting up, as well as the gender differences in problems faced within the respective sectors, could account for the gender and sectoral variations in results. The type of skill acquired in the textiles and garment industry facilitates easy access to self employment and dependence in terms of setting up. The financial resources<sup>99</sup> needed to set up are lower, since employees with the required skills can be acquired comparatively more cheaply, than for most technical, clerical, and professional skills employed in the food processing sector. However, it was also observed that the type of skill acquired in agro-food processing such as baking, fish smoking and cassava and maize flour processing also facilitated easy access to self employment both in terms of skill and financial capital.

<sup>99</sup> Studies have shown that the cost of setting up in most textiles and garment industry on a small scale is much lower in terms of the resources and financial capital needed (see Lall et al, 1996).

#### 9.4.0. Gender and Employment Related Migration.

As previously discussed, the access of women to wage income employment has gained much attention, not only because of the inequalities they face, but also because it is considered an important key towards their socio-economic empowerment and the betterment of their family and society as a whole (UNIDO /ESCAP Region 1994: i).

Various studies have shown that one of the main reasons that women enter the labour market is based on economic factors, i.e. to support their family (Tiano, 1990; Elson and Pearson (eds.) 1991, 1997; Lim, 1996; Karim and ILO, 2001). However, their ability to advance within the economic environment is impeded by the interruption of their heavy domestic responsibilities (Reskin et al., 1994; UNIDO, 1994, 1995; Wirth 2002, Jacobsen 2002). These interruptions directly or indirectly influence their role and status within the labour market, as they are mostly regarded as secondary workers compared to men. As secondary workers, they are placed in a disadvantaged position, which impedes their prospects for career advancement, training and development.<sup>100</sup> Despite this, studies have shown that there is still a tremendous increase in the rate of women's participation within the labour market (UNIDO (eds.), 1994, 1995; ILO, 1999, 2000).

The question is, given the economic and personal motivations that drive men and women into the labour market, whether there are any patterns of gender difference in their willingness to leave their families and homes, for better job opportunities elsewhere. This section examines the patterns of gender differences in the responses made by male and female workers in the study.

The data in this study showed that, overall, a greater proportion of men, particularly in the textiles and garment sector, indicated that they were willing to leave their family and home behind for better job opportunities (Table 9.5).

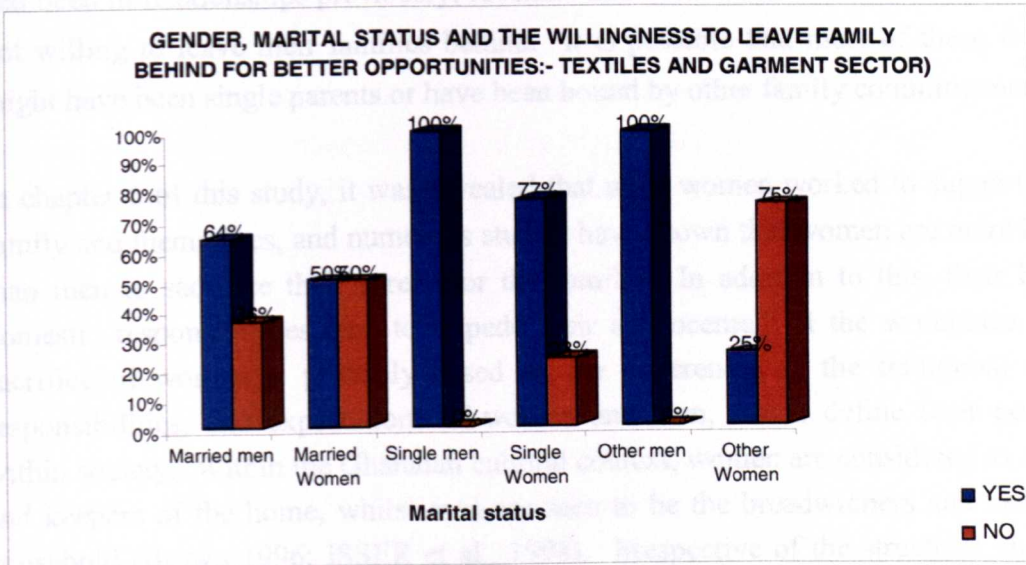
**Table 9.5 Gender and Employment Related Migration (%).**

Willingness to leave family behind for better job opportunities	Food-processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Yes	75 (42)	51 (24)	64 (66)	84 (21)	64 (32)	71 (53)
No	25 (14)	49 (23)	36 (37)	16 (4)	36 (18)	29 (22)
Total	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)

<sup>100</sup> Most studies have attributed the low status and position of women in the labour to the fact that there was low investment in their human capital. Also it is evident that most women tend to sacrifice investment in their human capital for their families

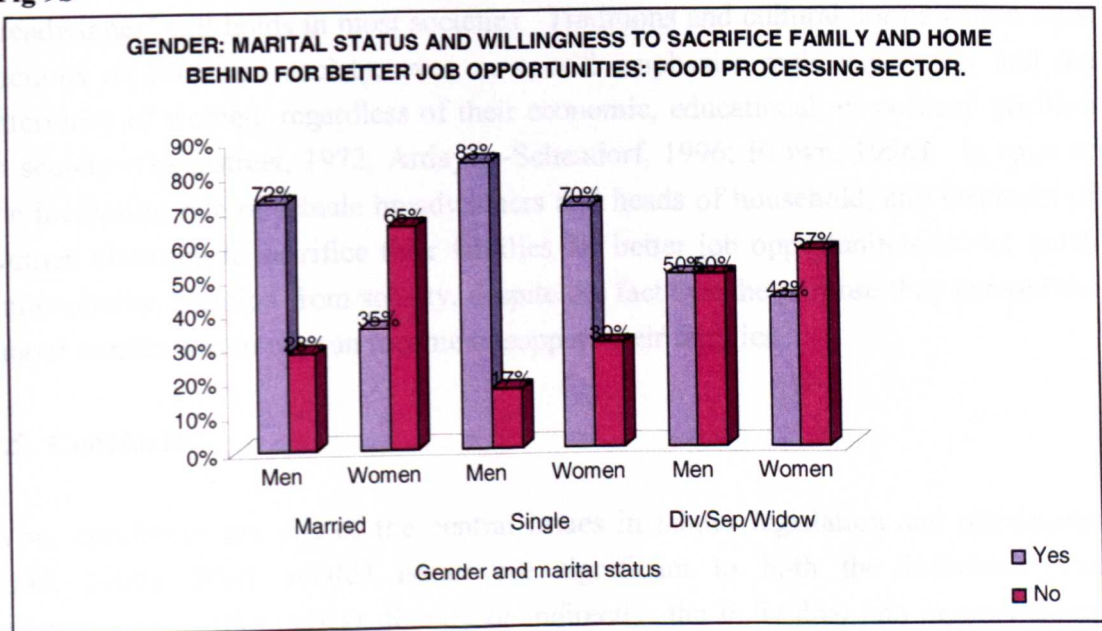
## Gender, Marital Status- and Employment Related Migration.

**Fig. 9a**



Key: other – the sum of those who have had a previous relationship (divorced, widowed, and separated)

**Fig 9b**



Surprisingly, however, over 50% of the women maintained that they were willing to sacrifice their families for better opportunities. Some interesting insights into this trend were identified when the results were related to the marital status of the respondents. More married men indicated the willingness to sacrifice their families. Although more single men than women were prepared to leave their homes, over three quarters of single women within both sectors shared this view (Fig 9a, & b). Yet, there were some single women whose response implied that they were not

willing to leave their families behind. It is possible that these young women were single mothers, as discussed in chapter 5. The response rate for men and women who had been in relationships previously, revealed that most women in this category were not willing to leave their families behind. It is possible that most of these women might have been single parents or have been bound by other family commitments.

In chapter 6 of this study, it was revealed that most women worked to support their family and themselves, and numerous studies have shown that women are more likely than men to sacrifice their career for the families. In addition to this, their heavy domestic responsibilities tend to impede their advancement at the workplace. This sacrifice of women is probably based on the differences in the traditional roles, responsibilities, and expectations of women and men, which define their position within society. Within the Ghanaian cultural context, women are considered as carers and keepers of the home, whilst men are seen to be the breadwinners and heads of household (Brown 1996; ISSER et al., 1998). Irrespective of the structural changes that are taking place within both the economic and social spheres of society, the ideological perception of the 'woman's place being in the kitchen' and 'the male breadwinner' still holds in most societies. Traditions and cultural norms within most sections of Ghanaian society, even now, still emphasise male superiority and the inferiority of women, regardless of their economic, educational, or political position in society (Greenstreet, 1972; Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1996; Brown, 1996). In spite of the increasing rate of female breadwinners and heads of household, any instances of women choosing to sacrifice their families for better job opportunities attract much unfavourable attention from society, despite the fact that the purpose they entered the labour market was to earn an income to support their families.

## **9.5. Conclusion.**

Work conditions are one of the central issues in labour legislation and regulations (ILO, 2000). Work related issues are significant to both the individual and organisations as these affect directly or indirectly, the individual and organisational outcomes, such as poor work performance, productivity and growth, labour turnover.

When the dilemmas of men and women at the workplace were explored, issues, which pertained to job satisfaction and employment prospects, showed greater gender and sectoral differences than similarities. Although men and women encountered multiple problems in relation to their work, issues that pertained to their work conditions and environment, financial issues (salary related) were the most common. Women's major problems, which were associated with work conditions, were health-related, and the long working hours. Poor health and long hours seemed to be a particular

problem for workers in the textile and garment sector. Again, the issue of finance, which was mostly related to low salary and salary delays, was a major problem for women.

In spite of the cross-sectional variations, these problems could be linked to the structure of the firm and gender-related. The gender roles and expectations of men and women differ. This therefore affects their goals and aspirations in the workplace. The discriminatory behaviour in society and the labour market has resulted in the streaming of women into secondary jobs with poor work conditions and limited or no opportunities for advancement. It was observed that larger firms mostly offered better-paid jobs than smaller firms.

Job insecurity was a major concern for most women, as they often become victims of economic crises, leading to massive layoffs and unemployment. Men tended to feel more secure about their jobs, but this response was more common from workers in the textiles and garment sector. It is possible that the nature of the job skills acquired influences job security. However, irrespective of the skill acquired, security depended on other factors such as the respondent's perceived attitude towards work (diligence, loyalty and commitment), their employers' preference backed by an interplay of socio-economic issues. It was observed that workers in small and medium sized firms were rarely covered by insurance or social security, which they could utilise in times of unemployment, as most firms were not covered by such policies. Nonetheless, the skill acquired by workers in textiles and garments was a form of security for employees in this industry, who had higher prospects of being self-employed. This was confirmed in the data on job stability and employment prospects, which showed that the majority of workers, especially women, in this sector intended to leave their jobs to establish their own businesses. It was observed that workers in the textiles and garment sector rather saw their time in the workplace as a transitional period towards the preparation for setting up their own enterprise. On the contrary, most workers in food processing firms believed that they would lose their benefits and entitlements if they left their workplace before the prescribed age of retirement. Correspondingly, most employees, within this sector had served more years with their respective firms than those within the textiles sector.

To start a business necessitates the accumulation of sufficient capital. Given the low income of women, how will they be able to start their own business in terms of capital accumulation, in addition to their existing financial responsibilities?

Wage employment is considered as one of the essential keys to the empowerment of women. Both women and men revealed economic motivation as their main objective

underpinning their movement into the labour market: to support their family and for future security. Yet the data on whether men and women were prepared to migrate in such for better employment opportunities elsewhere showed that more men were willing to leave their families. Given their marital status, most married and single women declined to sacrifice their families for work opportunities. Yet there were a few women within this category who were prepared to leave their families behind. However, these women still felt a greater obligation and responsibility than the single men questioned to ensure that extended family members cared for their families. This attitude can be attributed to gendered differences in expectations of domestic responsibilities. Women, as part of their reproductive roles, are more liable for childcare responsibilities than men are.

Showing the commitment of such female bonding and the support offered especially by female relatives, one woman expressed her support and willingness to take care of her grand children, if her daughter decided to travel to seek a better life and employment. Her argument was that:

*I don't see anything wrong with my daughter travelling because she got a better job, which will enable her to take care of herself and children. I will be willing to take care of my grandchildren. After all, I always do take care of them and even help her financially, because what she earns is not enough and her husband is not earning enough as well to keep them. I think it will help all of us ...*

(Participant 9 female Employer, food-processing, Kumasi. 21/04/01).

The reasons provided by most men and women who indicated their willingness to sacrifice their families were mainly economic: to earn a better income in order to support themselves and their families. Nevertheless, those men who preferred to sacrifice their job opportunities indicated that their priority was the upbringing of their children rather than losing control over them in their search for money. A male respondent gave this comment:

*What do you gain if you work for all the money and your children go wayward? You end up paying the price for it. I would like to see my children brought up in the way I want. The woman [referring to spouse] cannot take care of them especially the boys who are now in*

*their teens. I have to have my eye on them [children] and give them the direction they need at this stage...*

(Participant 3 male, food-processing Accra. 24/01/01).

This masculine attitude does not conform to the stereotyped gender role and expectation of men. However, it does demonstrate a stereotypical lack of confidence that men may have in women's ability to supervise, even within the domestic sphere.

It is an undisputed fact that traditional gender role expectations may make work sacrifices for the sake of family more normative for women than men, and family sacrifices for the sake of work more normative for men than they are for women (Pleck, 1977; Voydanoff, 1989; Bielby et al., 1989; Becker and Moen 1999; Keene and Reynolds, 2001). However, these gendered roles are gradually changing, in response to changing economic trends, family needs and patterns of employment.

## **CHAPTER TEN**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**



## Chapter 10.

### Conclusion and Recommendations.

The aim of this study has been to provide a detailed investigation of existing patterns of gender inequalities within selected sectors of the manufacturing industry in Ghana. It examines the structural factors responsible for these gender differences and how they affect the socio-economic advancement of men and women in the process of economic development in Ghana. This systematic gender analysis is important in as much as it provides a demonstration of the ways in which the relationship between socio-cultural, economic and legal structures affects social relations between men and women. The economic participation of men and women, the allocation of economic resources and the balance of power in decision-making processes within the world of work and the household are explored as part of this gender analysis.

This chapter discusses the conclusions of this study under the following themes: methodology, occupational segregation, equal opportunities in the workplace, and work and family life.

The study included men as well as women because issues that pertain to gender inequality deal with relationships that can only be effectively and efficiently grasped by understanding the value of the social construction of both men and women and the symbolic relations that exist between them which shape their ways of life. As William has argued, rather than restricting analysis to only half the equation,

*Bringing men into ... analysis of segregation has the potential to transform the sociological understanding of how gender operates in the work world*

(William, 1993:2),

and thus enables the development of effective strategies to address the phenomena of gender inequality.

The causes of inequality between men and women in Ghana's manufacturing industry are complex because various forms of inequality can be linked to an interplay of

socio-demographic, cultural, economic, and legal structures that form the very fabric of the society, leading to the economic marginalisation of women.

One of the basic aims of this study was to determine the forms of gender inequality in relation to access to the allocation and distribution of economic resources within the labour market. The study provides empirical evidence to support the fact that within the Ghanaian manufacturing work setting, there exist both visible and invisible barriers, which marginalise women. Inequality and discrimination manifest themselves mainly through mechanisms associated with the occupational streaming of men and women, which in turn affects access to employment, training and career development processes, leadership and authority, and wages, all forming barriers to women's advancement. Economists, feminists and many social scientists have tried to explain this complex phenomenon and the status of women within the labour market from various theoretical perspectives such as theories of labour market segmentation, human capital and the dual systems approach of patriarchy and capitalist relations. The findings of this study were analysed in the light of some of these arguments.

### **Occupational Segregation and Gender Discrimination.**

Occupational segregation exists within Ghana's manufacturing industry as a result of an interplay of mechanisms within the labour market. Social norms, cultural stereotypes and power in organisations provide the "invisible foundation" for organizational decisions about which jobs and level of opportunities are suitable for which types of worker. These decisions determine the ways that organisations structure work, creating barriers for women and keeping them from advancing within the organisation. The results related to job distribution reveal that men in the food-processing sector are more likely to be employed in professional, administrative and more technical jobs for example, as managers, engineers, technicians, machine operators and accounts officers. Women, on the contrary, dominate skilled and unskilled productive occupations such as packing and agro-food processing (see chapter 6.1.1). In the textiles and garment sector, apart from the general dressmaking and tailoring activities, men and women undertake different activities. Men engage in weaving, embroidery and appliqué designing, whilst more women are involved in batik making, sewing and finishing activities (Table B. 1b). The job distribution shows that women were more likely than men to be employed in activities which are

characterised by the use of manual dexterity, ‘nimble fingers’, and which are also perceived as requiring less intellectual ability. This reflects the assumed gendered attributes and roles of women as proposed by feminist theorists (see Game and Pringle, 1983; Bradley, 1989; Hakim, 1996; Anker, 1998). Although manual dexterity is a predominant requirement of most occupations within the textiles and garment sector, nevertheless job segregation exists. Men in these sectors are mostly engaged in male stereotyped activities such as cloth weaving, machine embroidery and the sewing of men’s garments (see video). Cloth-weaving is traditionally protected by religious and cultural norms in most Ghanaian societies, which debar women from entering this profession (see Rattray, 1927; Christine, 1959). In addition, machine embroidery is largely monopolised by men, as a result of mechanisation of the industry and the length of time required for training. Men, alongside their areas of specialism, only choose to sew women’s clothing because it is financially more profitable. This situation, where weaving and machine embroidery have become stereotyped activities for men in most Ghanaian societies, contrasts with traditional gender stereotype in many other countries throughout the world (Anker, 1998:283, 295).

Horizontal segregation seems to be much more pronounced within the textiles and garment industry than in the food-processing industry in Ghana (see chapter 6). Vertical segregation on the other hand, is much more evident within the food-processing industry (see chapter 8.1.1), as discussed under “Leadership” later in this section.

It needs emphasising that the explanations for the two types of segregation (horizontal and vertical) may not necessarily be the same or be linked to the relative importance of employer’s taste and preference for workers in relation to the different aspects of segregation. For example the rationale for discrimination, influencing occupational streaming in large scale mechanised firms, especially in the case of food processing, is often based on logical economic arguments which are mostly related to the nature of the job, industrial laws and regulation and market competition for example:

*Women are not that strong, and the job (referring to production floor activities) here requires the use of physical strength. Men will not complain even when they are tired, because they need the money and will even work overtime, unless you stop them. As for women,*

*they will complain that my here [holds waist]hurts today, I'm sick tomorrow, that ... and will even not come to work. But remember this is business...*

(Participant 2 male, MD Confectionery, Accra. 18/01/2001.)

Discrimination in favour of male employees is not only found among male employers since female employers, in the textiles and garment sectors, also demonstrate a preference for male employees, rather than women, and provides similar arguments, such as

*This is a labour intensive industry, and we always have to work extra hours to meet the demand on time. To depend on women for this job, means going out of market. Women have their mood swings, with complaints today, excuses tomorrow. You cannot depend on them to run this business when you have orders to meet. For the men, you can go all out [work longer hours]; they don't have problems like women*  
(Participant 7 female employer, Garment sector, Kumasi.19/04/2001).

The preference for having men in strategic positions within the organisational hierarchy, on the other hand, is more subjective, being dependent on the employer's judgement of an individual's "ability to deliver" (see chapter 7.2.1) which is intertwined with the concept of human capital discussed later in the chapter.

Generally, economists attribute the differentiation in occupational structuring partly to employers' preference, reflected in recruitment procedures and work schedules; and partly to the workers, as a result of their choices and attitudes (see Reskin et al., 1994; Anker, 1998). This study shows that gender discrimination exists in recruitment and selection procedures. Within both masculine and feminine structured work environments, selection criteria and processes are biased as these are predominantly influenced by employers' preferences and/or by the nature of the job which often result in the initial placement of women in jobs that have short or nonexistent job ladders. This is reinforced by the use of inexpensive and expedient "screens" for job applicants, and from recruiting candidates through sex-segregated means.

Employers generally show a high preference for men, irrespective of their age and marital status, in both sectors (see chapter 6). The preference runs parallel with the

general pattern of employment in most newly industrialised and Third World countries (see Bullock, 1994; Lim, 1997; Elson and Pearson, 1997; Kibria, 1998). Employers' preferences are highly influenced both by their orientation towards productivity and maximisation of profits and by gendered perceptions about men's and women's attitudes towards work (see chapter 6.2.3; also see Blau, et al.1986). Legal restrictions such as the Night Work, Maximum Weight and Maternity Leave Acts further fortifies the preference for men. This confirms demand-based explanations put forward by human capital theorists (see Anker, 1998). Where there is a preference for women, this is based on gender stereotypes, as some employers prefer to employ unmarried young women rather than married women with family commitments. This preference is more pronounced in textiles and garment firms than in most small food processing firms, (see chapter 5), demonstrating a pattern similar to that in world export factories in China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and many other Asian countries (Goonatilake, 1988; UNIDO, 1994; Lim, 1997; Kibria, 1998; NLC, 2002). Although employers, to some extent, seemed economically justified in their reasons for their preferences, in reality, the constraints faced by women are generated by society as a result of the gendered differentials in expectations, over which women have no control. The most serious obstacles for women in the recruitment process lie not only in their lack of access to job information, but also in their lack of influence and support when trying to obtain a job. These processes are mostly based on social networks, which are characterised by 'whom you know', instead of 'what you know' (see chapter 6). This heightens the effects of job structuring and segregation at the workplace, as men tend to lobby for stereotyped jobs for their friends and male family members, rather than the opposite sex. As Rees, points out, "such networking tends to reproduce job gendering" (1992:81).

In addition to the streaming of men and women into different occupations and jobs, the organisation of the workplace also strengthens occupational segregation. Men and women are physically separated through layouts of work and the structuring of activities. The clustering of similar work processes into a group of the same or similar units results in one sex dominating a particular section or line of production. For instance, women are clustered around production lines in which the nature of job requires manual dexterity, whereas men dominate sections that require the use of physical strength, that are technical, or that are felt to require greater intellectual thought (see chapter 6).

Some writers have established that the attitudes and behaviour of the workforce concerning gender relations may enhance or prevent occupational segregation (Bradley, 1989; Reskin et al., 1994). Men may refrain or refuse to work with the opposite sex (Nilson, 1976; Bergmann and Darity, 1981; Jacob and Powell, 1983). This study, however, does show a change in perception, as the majority of workers, both men and women, showed a willingness to work with the opposite sex. Again, even though the majority of men and women worked in sex-segregated environments, the majority of workers (both male and female) also perceived their job as unisex, in as much as activities could be undertaken by a member of the opposite sex (see chapter 6.1.3.2). This suggests a breaking down of cultural stereotypes and the gender division of activities, even within the sectors regarded as feminised. Men bake bread, and women weave cloth-‘kente’ (see video). However, in spite of changing attitudes, the movement of men and women into traditional male or female occupations has been slower for women. Men are making much more progress breaking into feminised sectors and occupations, than women are into male dominated occupations (Fig 10.a & b). The inroad of men into feminised sectors can be attributed to an interrelationship of factors such as technological advancements in modern industry, increased education, and the lack of alternative employment options within the country.

Inequalities in the labour market are also perpetuated and strengthened by other socio-cultural factors that affect the labour supply components, thereby erecting barriers that stream men and women into the culturally defined and sex-stereotyped occupations. In this study, these other explanations could be attributed to the socio-cultural and economic background of respondents, which tended to favour men over women. Gender differentials in society form the foundation upon which the educational structures and curriculum are based, thus creating sex-inequalities by channelling men and women into different subject and job areas. Moreover, in Ghana, education is seen as more relevant for males, and this gender expectation hinders the access of women to education. This was demonstrated in this study, as men, especially in food processing, were more likely to have received higher education than women (see chapter 5). These gender differences therefore provide a limited range of occupational options for women, and consequently hinder their job opportunities. The results of this study, thus, to some extent confirm the human capital argument which attributes women’s disadvantaged position to their lack of education, skill and training (Momsen, 1991; Reskin et al., 1994; Anker, 1998). Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand and acknowledge that the human capital approach is overly simplistic and fails to adequately account for indulging structural inequalities and discrimination

that can prevent women accessing such resources. I would argue that, within the context of this study, education can be seen as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the employment of women, as a result of variations in job requirements by the sectors.

**Fig 10a.**

**Crossing Over- Men in Traditional Female-Dominated Bakery industry in Kumasi**



Men in traditional baking engage in all processes from, removing bread from the earth oven to the kneading of bread dough, an activity that requires manual dexterity.

**Fig 10b. Crossing Over: Women in the Traditional Male Dominated Industry**  
**Women in Cloth-weaving (Kente) industry**



Traditions are being broken -this participant is the second to enter into the traditional kente weaving in Bonwire in Ashanti region.

**Women in metals**



Women in training in a Metals Manufacturing Institute (ITTU). The only female in a class of eight men. A fourth year student in ITTU in Tema,



Again, not all men are better qualified than women, as the academic qualification held by most men in the textiles and garment sector is below secondary education (see Table 6.9a & b). This suggests that men progress in spite of lack of qualifications. From this point of view, it is possible to argue that segregation of jobs is influenced by the cultural stereotyping of jobs as men's work and women's work, which can be linked to the process of socialisation.

The labour supply is also influenced by the choices that employees make with regard to occupation and sector of work, which are in turn influenced by the interrelation of a complex set of factors. Men are more likely to select occupations related to their educational backgrounds than women, as the effect of economic constraints on parents largely results in their female offspring dropping out of the formal education system and instead learning a trade as an option for acquiring a vocation (see chapter 6.2). In spite of these differences, the study suggests that the driving force behind the movement of men and women into wage employment is mainly economic, although significant differences can be detected by gender and marital status. As expected, more married men and women in this study worked to support their families than single men and women. More single women than men also worked in order to support their dependents, whilst single men were more concerned with future security (see table 6.5). The gender differences therefore seem to reflect the societal expectations of males and females, as it was generally evident that women tended to spend a greater proportion, if not all, of their income on their families and household. This shows a possibility that many women are being 'pushed' into the labour market for family reasons rather than personal interest. It is also likely that such conditions would limit the ability of women to save towards their own personal development. With the increasing number of female breadwinners and heads of household, coupled with the harsh economic conditions in Ghana, it is inevitable that such decisions are driven strongly by factors such as household composition, the needs of the household and the role of the individual within the context of the household. It is arguable that women do not seek to enter low-paid, dead-end jobs, but the reality is that with harsh economic conditions and the quest to escape from economic impoverishment, these women have to survive, sustaining both themselves and their families. Faced with limited options as a result of complex structural barriers (invisible and visible) imposed on them by society, women are driven by economic necessity into areas where they can gain easy access to a job, earn an income and gain the flexibility that will enable them to combine their work and family life effectively. This process leads

to the occupational and sectoral clustering of women, resulting in their marginalisation in the labour market.

Another form of marginalisation is demonstrated by the clustering of firms by size. Generally, women dominate small-scale firms (especially agro-food processing), whereas men are largely found in medium and large-scale firms. The reasons for men dominating the formal sector can be associated with an interrelation of factors which include the mechanisation of industries, the nature of the job, workers' choices, employers' preferences and other labour regulations, as already indicated. This trend is typical of the dominance of women in the informal sector of manufacturing, in contrast to men's dominance of the formal sector as many studies in Ghana and other developing countries have demonstrated (Momsen, 1991; UNIDO, 1994-1995; Ofei-Aboagye, 1996; Nikoi, 1998; GLSS 4, 2000).

With a comparatively low representation in large and medium scale firms, women tend to be concentrated in the small firms (see table B2) that demand long hours of labour input but produce low returns as a result of the comparatively limited growth potentials of such firms. The clustering of women in low status jobs and small-scale firms has an impact not only on their wages but also on job security and other prospects of advancement at the workplace. These firms cannot afford to pay the minimum wage stipulated by government, provide security benefits, or facilitate formal training and development of employees, because of their comparatively disadvantaged position within the labour market. The reality is that most entrepreneurs work indirectly for their creditors, rather than for themselves. Therefore, job security is not assured as most employers battle with the dictates of the market economy and struggle to survive. Moreover, employers commonly employ the 'piece rate system' as a way to reduce production costs. Consequently, most employees in these firms have to work longer hours in order to earn enough income to sustain themselves and their families, unlike their counterparts in most large and medium scale firms. In addition to low wages, they are confronted with a problem of salary delays (see video). Most women in these food processing and textiles and garment firms work in poor, inhumane conditions and environments; this exposes them to physical, chemical and other occupational health hazards which have long lasting damaging health effects (see chapter 9). So, the reality faced by these women is that they lack health insurance, retirement benefits, job security and respect on the job.

The type of activities, work conditions and environment associated with informal employment share similar characteristics with the descriptive categorisation of the segmentation theorists' classification of "secondary" and "primary" sector jobs (Doeringer and Piore, 1971; Loveridge, 1983:159, 1987) or informal sector jobs as postulated by the ILO (ILO, 1972). The dual system theorists claim that the core primary labour market consists of higher paying jobs, characterised by high status in terms of job security, with good career advancement opportunities, good working conditions usually with fringe benefits and are often unionised. In contrast 'secondary' sector jobs tend to be relatively poor as regards pay, chances for promotion, career advancement and working conditions. There is little or no job protection or security, and tight supervision, with less job autonomy. In addition, the dead end, low wage nature of secondary jobs often leads to high levels of absenteeism and job turnover, as well as low levels of commitment on the part of workers (Momsen, 1991; Bradley, 1992; Hakim, 1996; Anker, 1998).

The application of this conceptual contrast to specific conditions can be a complex matter. This is partly because definitions of skilled and semi-skilled jobs may vary by country, industry, sector, and over time. It is also because the versatility of some skills can facilitate movement from one sector to another, through human capital development. The findings of this study are inconsistent with the labour segmentation argument and categorisation of secondary sector jobs as necessarily unskilled, or having skills which are firm-specific, without a high span of discretion and long-term stable income (Hakim, 1996:147-48). Jobs within the textiles and garment industry in most developing Asian, African and Latin American countries may be classified as unskilled/or semi skilled, in that a worker may learn only a unit of the entire process of production. In contrast, jobs undertaken in most of the Ghanaian industries in this study are regarded as skilled jobs, even though skills may be acquired through informal channels. Furthermore, the skill acquired provides the individual with the opportunity for setting up a small business in the future (see chapter 9.3.2), which both serves as a source of income in the long term and also a means of creating job avenues for others within the same industry. The new firm (small scale) emerging out of that acquired skill has the potential, in time, to develop into a private formal sector business (large or medium), depending on the entrepreneur's ability to network and gain access to capital financing in the mainstream financial and labour market. The workplace, and the experiences gained there, are regarded as a springboard for

accruing capital, building up networking, and gaining more insight, so as to establish oneself as an entrepreneur.

### **Equal Opportunities:**

Gender equity in both the workplace, and within wider society, has gained significant importance in macro policies and legislation as part of the process of promoting women's empowerment and sustainable economic development. Investigating the extent to which men and women have equal opportunities once they are in the workplace means taking into account the differentials regarding the allocation and distribution of economic resources - access to human capital and development, income, power and decision-making processes.

Human capital accumulation is an important determinant of economic growth and productivity, with education, training and development forming its major key (Robbins and Cornell, 1999; Lorgelly, 2000; UNFPA, 2000; Orloff, 2001). However, the prospects of access to training and development for women, and thus their chances of promotion in manufacturing industry are bleak. As discussed in chapter 7.1.2, this is a result either of a virtual absence of formal organised workplace training and development programmes or of limited opportunities for gaining access to such facilities in firms where they exist. However, the informal process of skill acquisition, which is largely inbuilt through learning on-the-job, by observation, imitation and internalisation, is gendered as a consequence of the nature of work and gender-stereotyped work environment. In the few firms where organised training and development programmes exist, equal opportunities for such facilities are not the norm, as selection criteria are based on leadership, work performance, length of service and the nature of the job, and these tend to favour men. Women are subject to a very limited range of selection criteria such as work performance and being in positions of leadership. Even so, these criteria are subject to the discretion of employers, whose investment decisions are influenced by an interplay of stereotyped perceptions about the individual or group of workers, their work life expectancy within the labour market, and the long term benefits that accrue to the firm, all of which can lead to discrimination against women (see chapter 7.1.2.1).

Career development is considered as a major aspect of human development (Ettinger, 1996), and promotion is one of the channels that enhance career mobility in the

workplace. Nonetheless, for the majority (70%) of workers, in both the food processing and textiles and garment sectors, access to promotion was unattainable as in most firms promotional systems did not exist, as discussed in chapter 7.2. Instead, salary increment served as a substitute for genuine career-oriented promotion. In firms with promotional structures, access to promotional opportunities on the job is very limited for women. Men, as in the case of food processing, are promoted more frequently than women (see table 7.3). The lack of opportunities for women to attain promotion can be attributed to the fact that the majority of women occupy jobs where there is little upward mobility, and a very limited range of assessment paths, as women are mostly promoted on grounds of work performance. Men, on the other hand, seem to have much easier promotional possibilities, as they are promoted largely on the basis of job experience and educational / skill up-grade, length of service, or work performance, as discussed in chapter 7.2.1. Already hindered by these variations in promotional criteria, women are further handicapped by the way that decisions on promotion are also influenced by other factors, such as the type of position to be occupied and the level of demand, and the availability of vacancies, all of which are further determined by employers and/or by management. The apparently neutral mechanisms used in promotion become prejudiced by the subjective criteria of employers, such as the perceived 'loyalty' and 'commitment' of the worker to the firm. These subjective variables in turn lead to favouritism in deciding who gets promoted. These subtle and overt forms of discriminatory behaviour by some employers serve as a hindrance to the advancement of eligible candidates, especially women, who might not have equal representation in places of authority to lobby on their behalf, and have fewer opportunities to prove their worth to employers. In practice, the behaviour and organisational culture governing workplace advancement are gendered and emanate from differentials in social role and expectations rather than being based on the individual's ability to perform. If promotion is valued by men and women as a path to greater pay, authority and job satisfaction (Markham et al., 1987:227), then inequality in promotion has consequential effects on women's advancement as it reduces women's opportunities to exercise authority on the job, and depresses women's wages (Reskin et al., 1994:85).

Leadership and authority is another area of inequality within Ghana's manufacturing industry. Despite the fact that firms are bound by both international and national legislation to promote equal participation at all levels in management and in decision-making processes, the 'sticky floors' still exists and the 'glass ceiling and walls'

remain untouched. In most firms, men wield significant power and control over economic decisions which pertain to the strategic goals of their firms. As discussed in chapter 8. 1, women's access to authority and decision-making processes within the food processing and textiles and garment sectors is limited by their under-representation in positions of authority (see tables 8.3 & 4). The majority of women are in low-mobility jobs, and few are in top, middle level managerial or lower level supervisory positions. Furthermore, women's participation in the making and implementation of decisions as supervisors on the factory floor is limited in most cases. Women are excluded from decision-making by more than just a lack of education, which serves as a means of participation in decision-making processes. Some workplaces are more or less a political arena, where participation in decision making and implementation processes is influenced not only by education and one's level of responsibilities but is also subject to an interaction of stereotyped factors. These factors include: gender stereotypes concerning women's role and power relations, employers' attitude perceptions of commitment and loyalty, the type of work environment and sex composition (masculine/feminine). All these serve as barriers to involvement in mainstream managerial decisions, as they manifest themselves through invisible glass walls and ceilings, which prevail because of promotion procedures and criteria, which not only prevent women from taking up positions of leadership but also deter their participation in work-place decision-making bodies.

This study confirms findings in Ghana, and elsewhere, which show that women are poorly represented in ranks of power, policy and decision-making, and that invisible barriers arising from complex sets of structures in the workplace prevent women from obtaining positions of authority and decision-making (UN, 1991; Reskin and Padavic, 1994; Reskin and Ross, 1995; Bradley, 1999; Wirth, 2001). It also supports the argument that by occupational segregation, employers contribute to the discrimination against equally qualified women in hiring, placement, access to training programmes and promotion for traditional male jobs (Blau et al., 1986: 241).

Equal pay for work of equal value is one of the leading issues concerning gender and employment. The principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value has been incorporated in Ghana's labour legislation. However, differentials in earnings continue to exist within its food processing and textiles and garment sectors. Women generally earn less than men as discussed in chapter 7.3.1. Even within the same

occupational group where men and women undertake similar tasks, there is the likelihood of men earning more as a result of the differences in the level of work experience, the nature of job assignment, the duration of service and other factors coming into play. The majority of women earn below the mean income of ₵200,000 (cedis) (equivalent UK£ 20) per month. The gender differentials in wages emanate from the variations in the factors that determine one's income. Although the nature of the job and the hours worked, are constant variables, the income for men (especially in the food-processing sector) is also based on the position held, and the level of educational qualification, as discussed in chapter 7.3.2. For most women, on the other hand, income is determined by their level of productivity, as well as the nature of the job, and the number of hours worked, with education and position having a less significant impact on what they earn. Generally, educational qualification is considered as a less important variable in the determination of wages in textiles and garment firms and most small-scale food processing firms in Ghana, where wages are calculated on the basis of the 'piece rate' system. Output, number of hours worked and the nature of the job are all more important wage factors. The irrelevance of educational value in determining wages in these firms is in line with Blunch and Verner's study on manufacturing in Ghana, which showed that formal education is a less important wage factor in non-unionised sectors, although acknowledged by management in unionised sectors (Blunch and Verner, 2001:22).

In addition, the differentials in earnings can be attributed to the structural distribution of the firms as a result of the differences in internal and external advantages that accrue to these firms. Workers in formal sector firms (large and medium scale firms) also gain comparative advantage, as a result of the firms' strict compliance with government wage legislation, and the presence of trade unions. Men, as with the case of food processing, are more likely than women to benefit from these advantages as they have better access to the more favoured jobs. Women who work in these firms also tend to benefit from these advantages; although they still tend to earn less than men, these women are comparatively better off, earning better wages than men and other women in the non-unionised, informal sectors, within the same occupational category (See tables C.6 & 7). The differential in wages can also be associated with the fact that women have fewer opportunities for training and development and for promotion.

## **Work and Family Life:**

The economic participation of men and women is highly dependent on the gender division of labour within the domestic sphere (Brydon and Chant, 1989; Mosse, 1993; UNIDO, 1995). The distribution of domestic labour is fundamental to the analysis of women's work, both from the conceptual viewpoint and in terms of the very practical reality of women's work and family life. Managing the conflict between work and family responsibilities is recognised as a critical challenge for both individuals (especially working mothers, and single parents) and organisations (Morgan and Miliken, 1992; Kossek and Ozeki, 1998).

Within Ghanaian society, gender inequality is ingrained in the allocation of gender roles, and in the socialisation and training processes. In spite of new functional and social responsibilities brought about by socio-economic transformation, the traditional roles and expectations of women remain the same. The position of a woman in the home confirms the prevailing gender socialisation, which primarily orients women towards their role as mothers and wives and caretakers of the home. Women undertake a wider range of domestic responsibilities than men, especially in activities such as childcare, cooking and shopping as discussed in chapter 8.2. The role of men in relation to these domestic responsibilities, on the other hand, is a reflection of their social expectations as breadwinners and the head of household. However, socio-economic transformation has brought structural changes in households, with an increasing incidence of female heads of household (Brown, 1996). This has led to a great shift of parental responsibilities with regard to fathers' financial obligations and domestic roles, as over a third of women shoulder these responsibilities as single parents with non-resident husbands (see Fig 5.3a & b, and also chapter 8.2). Even in cases where their marriages appear stable, the participation of most men in domestic chores is relatively low, if not entirely absent, notwithstanding their high level of commitment towards financial obligations such as the payment of school fees and controlling financial decisions within the household (see Fig 8.2 a-c, and also table 8.5a & b). The main reason for the generally negative attitude and low participation in most domestic chores by men is the negative comments and ridicule they receive from society, including female relatives, which insult their ego, and emasculate them. Justifying their attitude and behaviour, here is one of the several comments passed by men who to some extent felt guilty about the dilemma faced by their wives:



*You know (referring to researcher), it is unacceptable in this society (culture) for me to be helping in the kitchen, cooking, washing up dishes or sweeping. I don't mind doing these when there is no one around (referring to relatives or friends). It will cause a lot of problems for my wife and I if my relatives find out or even hear about this, as the traditional anthem will be: ɔbrima kwasia, hye de wa ma ne yeri aye no.*

This statement is literally translated as:

*Foolish man, look at what he has made his wife do to him.*

(Participant 4 male, food processing, Accra, 18/01/01).

The implication of such a comment is that the husband has been bewitched by his wife, and is controlled by her and thus has no control of his masculinity. The truth is, no man within Ghanaian society wants to be told that '*he is controlled by the wife*'. It is an insult to their masculinity, and therefore they will try to avoid any situation which might generate such comments or confrontations.

Men generally spend less time with their family and children at home: thus they show low paternal interaction and family commitment. Their family responsibilities have no effect on their working life. Yet the working-wife bears full responsibility for domestic matters and is blamed for unsatisfactorily meeting the expectations of her husband at home. This most often results in marriage conflicts and even breakdown.

Under the pressure to meet their domestic obligations satisfactorily, female parent-workers are faced with the stress of combining work and family life, which confirms various studies on work and family life (Goldin, 1990; Mosse 1993; Cariki, 2002). Men generally spend more time at the workplace. They on average work between 65-70 hours per week including overtime. Compared with the maximum time of 54 hours per week spent at the workplace by women, this partly explains men's absence from the domestic responsibilities (see Fig 7.8 and Fig A.1). This strengthens the ideology of men's endless commitment and loyalty to work, although they sacrifice their family life for their work. This socially accepted behaviour of men contributes to the deterioration of women's work life, as they experience stress and health related problems, as they are forced to spend more hours and extra energy in undertaking

both responsibilities (Scharlach and Boyd, 1989; Dexbury and Higgens, 1991; Thomas and Ganster, 1995).

Leisure facilitates social development. Both male and female parent workers have less time for themselves. Less time for oneself is associated with lower personal well-being and greater susceptibility to negative spillovers from job to home (BWND, 2002:29). The burden are particularly great for women, yet this tends to be socially accepted largely due to the cultural perception that women are somehow inferior to men (MOWA, 2001).

The degree of power that women can exercise within the home, does not match their level of domestic responsibility. The decision-making process within the domestic setting is mere 'window dressing' in most homes (see tables 8.5a & b). Generally, women are only able to take and implement domestic decisions independently in two situations, either as single parents or over minor domestic issues which need immediate attention. In matrimonial homes, most women do not actually participate in decision-making processes. In principle, men inform rather than consult their wives in financial and social matters. Major decisions in matrimonial homes are based on the wishes of the man, even where the funds might be coming from the woman's purse. This is related to the Ghanaian perception of the women's role in the matrimonial home as subordinate to that of the man, as reflected in the Ghanaian adage:

*Se ɔbaa tɔ tuo a etwre ɔbarima den mu.*

Literally translated as:

*If a woman buys a gun, it is kept in a man's room.*

Some women, as heads of households, are able to achieve a great degree of autonomy, but overall, women generally have less social autonomy and independence than men (see chapter 5.3.2 and tables 5.2a & b). Whereas men have traditionally had the freedom to leave home to live on their own as a result of their work, women are bound by traditional norms and expectations that they will either remain in the matrimonial home or live in the 'family house' as a member of the family unit before or after marriage (Nukunya, 1992). The rationale is to provide family security

(protection and safety) and support for women. However, this form of security and support becomes a barrier to women's social liberty and independence. It also places on women direct or indirect financial burdens, which in turn limits their ability to save and invest for future development and advancement. Women, married or unmarried, are pressurised by the extended family to fulfil additional financial commitments and responsibilities by caring for extended family members (younger siblings, parents and relatives) (see tables A. 6a & b). Even where men do undertake these commitments, such bonding is less, as they live on their own or with their nuclear family.

Pressurised by economics and socio-cultural constraints within the domestic sphere through no fault of their own, these structural constraints affect women's access to primary sector jobs, human capital development and career mobility opportunities. These processes have multiplier effects on women's placement and income status (Harlen and Berheide, 1994; Karsten, 1994; Reskin and Ross, 1995; Maloney, 1998; Cunningham, 2001).

It can be concluded that the majority of women do not experience equal opportunities with men even in the "feminised" textiles and food processing industries let alone within Ghanaian society as a whole. Gender inequality persists. The causes of this phenomenon are multiple, interlocking and deep-seated. The process is complex in that it is intertwined with cultural, social, economic, legal and political elements that dictate the life-style of men and women and the relationships that govern the allocation and distribution of society's economic resources and the nature of power in relation to decision-making processes. Given the complexity of the phenomenon and the diversity of factors responsible for these differentials, I strongly argue that it is employers' preference and predilection for discrimination which plays the most central role in perpetuating gender inequality in the industries under study. These preferences are based on the economic rationale of profit maximisation and production efficiency. Employers' justification for overt bias in favour of male employees is given in comments such as:

*Women are not reliable, their absence is too much, and every time makes excuses, which does not make the work progress. Men work well, are regular, punctual and more reliable (see video).*

(Female employer, Garments, Kumasi).

The rationale also affects judgements in relation to skill acquisition, a component of the human capital argument. Similarly, such prejudice affects workplace decision-making and authority concerning leadership and job autonomy. The processes are shaped by an interaction of factors such as the nature of the economic system as well as labour market legislation and regulations which amplify the cost-benefit assumptions of this labour market theory (Reskin and Ross, 1995; Karl, 1995; Bradley, 1999; ILO, 1999; Wirth, 2001). For example, most provisions made by the Industrial Act and Labour regulations such as the Maximum Weight (Convention 27) and others, as mentioned earlier, strengthen these forms of inequality within Ghana's manufacturing industry and reinforce occupational segregation. In spite of the fact that most of the labour regulations and legislation are for the benefit and protection of women, paradoxically, they can also serve as a major barrier to the employment of women, especially in large and medium scale manufacturing firms (formal sector) (Anker, 1997; Reskin et al., 1994). Employers can hide behind these laws in restricting the employment of women, making comments in justification such as this:

*One thing, which is in accordance with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), ladies don't work beyond certain hours and in that case you cannot put a lady on night shift, alone. So on that basis since production is 24/7, then you expect that if a lady want to work on production or maintenance, the lady will have to go on some of these shifts and, you know, some of these shifts are not women friendly... (see video).*

(Male participant, Metals, Tema).

In 38 large firms in Ghana, less than one-fifth (7) employ women in production, with only three (which are basically agro-food processing firms, in which the nature of the job largely requires manual dexterity), having a predominantly female workforce (Ministry of Industry, 1998; Ghana Free Zone Report, 1999). Women in these firms only work on daytime shifts. All the other firms are largely male-dominated or exclusively male. The small number of female workers in large and medium scale firms enjoy, to some extent, the benefits of other aspects of labour regulations such as Maternity Protection, the Discrimination Convention, 111 (1958), Equal Opportunity (recommendation No. 165), the Equal Remuneration (Convention 100), etc. Ironically, most workers in small firms (who are predominantly women), are not covered by the provisions of these legislations.

Employers' economic judgements are also influenced by the cultural environment, and by the stereotyped attitudes and expectations towards the roles of men and women in society. One example of how role socialisation and cultural stereotypes affect the position of women and men within the labour market is the way in which jobs are categorised as 'men's work' and 'women's work'. In short, the employers' rationale is shaped by cultural as much as by economic forces; this can sometimes be justified by hard economic reality, but the socio-cultural, and economic constraints placed on women by these societal structures are unjust and undeserved.

The expectations of men and women within the domestic sphere also have a differential impact on their economic participation. Men and women face different role conflicts in combining their work and family life. Faced with competing demands, men tend to sacrifice families for work. The consequence is that men indirectly shift an additional workload to the already heavily burdened woman, especially single parents, who then struggle to juggle with their domestic responsibilities, in most cases without any form of physical or material assistance (house-helpers or energy saving devices). Women are engaged in more domestic activities than men, thereby expending more energy in the daily routine of cooking, house shopping and childcare. The spillover effects of the energy and time expended have a significant impact on women's health and capabilities and, consequently on work performance. The position of women within the domestic sphere thereby affects their status within the economic sphere as they are generally perceived to sacrifice their work for their family life.

Ghana's industrial sector tends to be more masculine than other sectors of the economy, as it is controlled mostly by the private sector and this affects the conditions and the relationships created within the sector. Private sector employers are more likely to take decisions that favour productivity and profitability in the face of stiff market competition. The mechanisms enforcing these decisions serve as a detriment to women's socio-economic advancement, not only in the labour market but also in society as a whole. Discriminatory decisions concerning job placement lead to unequal earnings, and authority, which then affect the social status of women and men. The long-term effects of such inequality also affect the process of growth and economic development of the nation as a whole. As some writers have established, the phenomenon of gender inequality is a major source of labour market rigidity and economic inefficiency, wasting human resources, and preventing change. Inequality

holds back the growth and the development of the country and the evolution of its society, to the disadvantage of both women and men (World Bank, 1995; Birdsall and Sabot, 1995; Anker, 1998; Klasen, 1999; Dollar and Gatti, 1999; UNFPA, 2000; Lorgelly, 2000; Orloff, 2001).

This study is important because it adds to the body of existing social and economic research, revealing that even within so called 'feminised' sectors, occupational segregation by gender exists and also that women are disadvantaged in terms of job assignments, training and development, promotion, leadership and authority and income. It shows that women's occupational and sectoral choice is not based only on their lack of educational skills, as argued by human capital theorists, but also involves the interaction of other aspects of socio- economic, cultural, and labour market mechanisms over which they have no control. For example, women in Ghana generally have no control over initial decisions concerning the early stages of the education process (both basic and secondary), nor the subjects offered. Women's access to secondary and higher education is to a greater extent determined by family income. Even where parents have the financial resources to educate girls, their ability and their willingness to do so is often influenced by culture. Other factors emanate from the school environment itself, such as the structuring of the school curriculum, the subjects taught and the teachers' attitude; all of which can discriminate against women. The study also reveals that formal education is not the only factor that leads to the segregation of men and women in the workplace, but there are also other factors such as the nature of the job and its requirements, the work setting and job layouts and employers' preferences. In addition to these, is the attitude of society towards the gender stereotyping of jobs as 'men's work' and 'women's work'. Furthermore, this study unveils the complex interactions between personal characteristics and the external factors affecting the effective working of the legally accepted principle of Equal Employment Opportunity Convention (No 100) with regard to the persistent gender division within Ghana's food-processing and textiles and garment sectors.

Recommendations to address the structural inequalities which exist between men and women in Ghana's food processing and textiles and garment industries, and in society as a whole, are set out below.

## **10.2. Recommendations and Areas for Further Research.**

There are no immediate or easy solutions for transforming gender inequality and the economic marginalisation of women in Ghana's manufacturing industry. However, this is not to say that nothing should be done. Indeed, there are a whole range of measures that could be implemented over the short, medium and long term. In terms of practical change and future policy agenda and legislative change, I consider that if the following measures are implemented they will go a long way towards alleviating such gender inequalities. These will not only tend to improve the socio-economic status of women, but also have a long lasting positive impact in the enhancement of family welfare and the process of growth and economic development of the nation as a whole.

In this study, the issues of gender inequality that serve as barriers to the socio-economic advancement of women in employment have been identified as:

- **Marked gender based occupational segregation. This includes:**  
Large gender disparity in non-traditional occupations,  
Recruitment preferences by employers,  
Socio-cultural restrictions on women's employment,  
Under representation of women in large and medium scale firms (formal sector),  
High concentration of women in non-growth potential small-scale firms.  
Lack of opportunities for advancement in low-paid and low mobility jobs,  
Structural discrimination due to impact of gender stereotypes and women's, lack of access to leadership and decision-making.
- **Low level of human capital development:**  
Large gender disparity in secondary and higher education.  
Lack of training in technical and marketable skills,  
Lack of access to institutional training and development support systems

- Constraints on female employment opportunities arising from household divisions of labour and from increasing numbers of female heads of household.

- Inadequacy of legal frameworks to support the interests of female participation in industry:

Ghanaian Labour laws do not adequately address issues of sex-stereotyping, occupational health and safety.

The Labour laws do not protect workers with families or the informal economy.

Improving women's socio-economic advancement, and with this the growth and development of Ghana through the elimination of gender inequalities, will therefore require radical changes in socio-cultural, economic and legal structures. These changes can only be brought about by the effective collaboration of the government, non-governmental bodies, media institutions, men and women and society at large in working together towards the achievement of the common goal. Moving towards an elimination of sexism and gender stereotyping from society and organisations can occur only if the rigid cultural institutions and organisational hierarchies that institutionalise gender inequality are drastically reduced through the following strategies:

### **1. Reduce gender-based occupational segregation and increase advancement opportunities for low-income and job mobility workers.**

To reduce occupational segregation and increase the advancement opportunities for low income and mobility workers, especially women, there is a need to reduce cultural and other stereotyped barriers to occupational mobility and career advancement. This could be achieved if institutions and the government undertake the following measures:

#### **(i) Government Strategies:**

The government can help reduce the amount of inequality generated by economic and educational institutions by designing medium and long-term policies and programmes that would:



- Develop gender sensitisation policies and programmes on the effects of stereotyping of occupations: undertaking campaigns to change cultural perceptions of gender stereotypes of work.
- Develop gender awareness programmes and campaigns for women and men in the private sector, particularly employers and senior managers, and inform employers of the impact of the changing market conditions on production and technology, the quality of labour force and the benefits to be gained from investing in the training of a female industrial workforce.
- Create job opportunities for women: promote and encourage women's entry into traditional male dominated occupations, particularly in the trades and technical occupations; introduce an employment quota for women's employment in all sectors in the manufacturing industry; introduce incentives to employers who fulfil these quotas (especially in non-traditional areas); create a Public Works Programme that will specifically target women for employment in these areas, and also provide training and development skills.
- Increase women's employment in formal sector manufacturing: develop a gender aware employment policy; improve women's access to information about job opportunities through the creation of recruitment networks, counselling at schools, work information centres, and job placement programmes for women.

It is important to note that the majority of women who work in the lowest-paying jobs do not work for large corporate employers or in the public sector but are predominantly found in small-scale firms (the informal sector) with no growth potential and opportunities for advancement. The new role of the informal sector in the current development strategy is regarded as one of the engines of growth for the economy (see Vision 2020). For women to benefit from the government's development strategies, there is the need to develop long-term policy strategies to:

- Change the structure of external and internal labour markets to create an enabling environment for the informal sector: provide women with access to infrastructural facilities and services, which address both their productive and reproductive roles. This includes access to affordable childcare centres and labour saving devices for housework.
- Reform the legal framework for industrial relations so that it offers opportunities for representation and collective bargaining rights to the

contingent work force. Provide better protection for workers in low-paying jobs through increased unionisation.

- Increase access to training in employable skills, higher education, especially in degree programmes in colleges and universities, for those women living in poverty.
- Provide support for workers in transition: many women move from paid employment into self-employment, setting up their own small businesses. The government should provide the necessary support, in the form of developing micro-financing strategies (with low interest rates); make easily accessible market and management information, entrepreneurship training (at affordable rates), etc. to facilitate a smooth take-off in the process of transition and the establishment of business.

(ii) Employers' Actions towards elimination of segregation.

Organisations can perpetuate inequality between women and men through implementing policies that have significant gender tones, which widen economic disparities or that fail to support women, through their structures, ways of working, decision-making and institutional 'culture'.

(a) To eradicate inequality and segregation in the workplace, organisations could:

- Change recruitment and training attitude toward women employees to enhance occupational mobility.
- Develop and use role models of women in technical and managerial posts in industry.
- Redirect organisational "diversity" initiatives away from changing attitudes toward reducing structural inequalities in organisations.

(b) To increase the advancement opportunities for low-paid and low mobility workers employers should:

- Improve advancement opportunities through changes in administrative promotion systems and redesigned job ladders.
- Make substantial investments in the education and training of the lowest-paid employees.
- Raise the wages of low-paying jobs through equitable compensation policies.

## **2. Human Capital Development: Education and training aimed at empowering women**

The extent to which women can benefit from human resource development will depend on the extent to which policies directly address gender specific constraints such as removing cultural barriers and stereotyped attitudes and behaviour that impede women's access to educational training and development. It is also evident that parental poverty is a crucial factor in limiting access to secondary and higher education, as female participation in education is more strongly conditioned by family wealth than is male participation. The challenge therefore is not only to provide girls with access to secondary and higher levels of education, but also to equip them with marketable skills and wider occupational options, in order to begin to curb the differences in occupational structuring.

Government and Educational agencies could achieve this by:

- Creating gender awareness programmes: gender sensitisation of the educational relevance of women and its impact on a nation's economic growth and development.
- Enforcing policies and legal instruments for compulsory primary and secondary school attendance for girls: fine parents for not sending their children to school or making their wards absent themselves from school without very tangible reasons; provide greater flexibility in the hours and location of schooling to allow girls who have domestic child care and work responsibilities in the home to continue their education.
- Revising educational curricula: remove gender biases and introduce syllabuses in skills training in junior and senior secondary school level that are in line with current market trends.
- Providing incentives and encouragement for girls to study science and technology subjects which are connected to possible job opportunities.
- Introducing affirmative action programmes in technical education and training: introduce mentoring in schools, using role models of women in non-traditional occupations. Set up counselling/career guidance in secondary schools about employment opportunities for women in higher industrial occupations.

**At the work place.**

Although basic education, literacy and skill-training programmes enable women to enter the labour force, these are not enough to provide women with the education needed for upward mobility. Therefore, in order to improve women's advancement opportunities, there is a need for a change in stereotyped attitudes towards training and investment decisions, and also for a systematic, unbiased, value based job evaluation systems. In this regard, employers, in conjunction with government and non-government agencies should:

- Increase private sector investment in the education and training of low-wage and mobility workers and encouraging employers' training investment in non-exempted jobs. Affirmative action training programmes should also be aimed at women at the bottom of the organisational hierarchy.
- Reduce gender imbalances in technical education and training: design and schedule training courses tailored to the needs of female workers and provide the necessary welfare support for women to be able to attend. Educational training, development programmes and courses designed by firms and organisation should cater for the needs of women.

### **3. Increase women's participation in decision-making and implementation processes within the workplace and at the home.**

Raising the low level of participation of women in decision-making processes can be achieved by addressing the status of women within the various contexts of decision-making processes (the workplace and the home).

#### **(i) Organisational level:**

- Eliminate discrimination against women at all levels: institutions need to re-examine their organisational culture and work practices, create a gender balance in administrative decision bodies; integrate women into workplace politics; encourage women to accept leadership (senior management) position;
- Create more women-and family-friendly institutions and organisational cultures by recognizing that shared work and parental responsibilities promote women's increased participation in public life. This could be achieved by reducing working hours, introducing flexitime and career

structures for women, and promoting home-based work to employees at more senior levels to give women the confidence to accept senior positions.

- Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership: establish equal access for training and development; organise mentoring programmes for not only for those in senior management positions, but also for those women who can be identified as potential leaders.

(ii) Women's Network: Encourage women in senior positions to act as role models and mentors for young women. Establish women's networks that support career development and promotion in the workplace and society.

### **At Home.**

To increase female participation in household decision-making and implementation, there is an evident need for a change in the cultural attitude and behaviour of men towards women. To encourage and initiate change, the following practical and strategic approaches could be developed:

(i) Gender awareness programmes: educate men to recognise and respect women as equal citizens and human beings with a contribution to make, and to acknowledge the significance of women's role in household decision-making. Provide opportunities for women to develop self confidence-in being able to voice their opinion and have it heard. Educate men to encourage women to speak out, when they have something to say, and to respect their opinion.

(ii) Gender socialisation and self-confidence: encourage changes in the ways in which we socialise our children, for example, provide daughters with equal access to the same quantity, quality and type of education as sons receive. Encourage girls to develop their self-confidence; provide girls with opportunities to develop their decision-making skills and leadership capacities; train girls to voice their opinion; educate boys (sons) to respect girls (their sisters) as equals.

### **4. Changing societal attitudes and cultural expectations of women's domestic role and employment.**

Global economic trends have created a situation where the role of women is increasingly extending outside the home. The long held perceptions of 'women's role as looking after the kitchen' and her position as 'inferior to man' should give way to more modern and enlightened recognition of women as equal partners to men in the process of economic development. The social devaluation of women's work persists in spite of the importance of their role in household maintenance and substance. This social devaluation is a reflection of lack of gender awareness in public policy; there is therefore a clear need for an effective gender awareness policy and a change in social attitudes and behaviour which will go a long way, as a form of empowerment, towards enhancing the socio-economic status of women.

To achieve this, the government/ institutions/media should undertake the following:

(i) Gender sensitisation campaign: this can help to question the validity of deeply rooted cultural values and social norms in the light of present realities. Changes in the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of both men and women are necessary conditions for achieving the harmonious partnership of men and women. It is only when there is genuine commitment among all actors (of the society) to examine the causes of the present gender inequalities by society at large, that government intervention can become truly effective.

(ii) Gender awareness in public policy: undertaking campaigns to change cultural perceptions of gender stereotypes of work and family role for women and men. Encourage discussion on the changing context of gender relations, the roles of women and men working together towards gender equality and the need for changing those stereotypical and traditional roles that limit women achieving their full potential. Introduce gender programmes into the school curricula.

(iii) Government initiatives on addressing issue of the increasing rate of single-parent and female headed households: provide legal and social support for female-headed households. Encourage men to share equally in childcare and to provide their share of financial support for their families, even if they do not live with them; encourage men to take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour and their social and family roles.

(iv) Male involvement: men play a key role in bringing about gender equality, since they exercise greater structural power in nearly every sphere of life, ranging from

personal decisions regarding the size of families to the policy and programme decisions taken at all levels of Government. Therefore, men should be actively involved in the process of enhancing gender equity. To achieve this the following measures need to be taken to enhance male involvement: All leaders at all levels, as well as parents and educators, should promote positive male role models that facilitate boys to become gender-sensitive adults and enable men to support, promote, and respect women as equal partners in public and private life.

#### **4b. Reducing family and work life stress amongst women.**

Increasing the flexibility of work practices for both men and women would reduce conflict between their work and family roles. To achieve this, greater investment should be made by all concerned with the enhancement of women's roles in developing appropriate measures to lessen the daily burden of domestic responsibilities, such as adopting the following strategies:

(i) Institutional Strategies: life stress, resulting from family and work pressures, has an ongoing effect on the productivity of organisations. Institutions can respond positively by adopting the following measures:

- Stop requiring excessive time commitments that force employees to "prove" that their job is more important than their family. Encourage men to share equally with women, the household and childcare responsibilities.
- Creating a family-friendly organisation: promote policies and programmes, which not only aim to meet the needs of employees with family commitment, and thereby help control absenteeism, but also boost the confidence of women to accept leadership positions. Companies should design Family Support policies or Work/Life Benefit Programmes to include the following as employed in the US (see Lobel and Kossek, 1996; BWND, 2002):
- Time-based strategies: - to help employees manage time pressure, by offering flexible ways of working, for example: compressed work week which involves working longer hours in fewer days, provided normal work hours are covered; flexitime, which allows employees to decide when to start work and end their day; job-sharing; leave programmes which include parental leave, paternity leave, childcare leave for men, leave for school functions etc.; on-site health services

- Money-based strategies: programmes to provide financial assistance to employees such as: affordable health care insurance; tuition reimbursement
- Direct service programmes: providing direct services such as on-site child care facilities, before and after school child care programmes; sick child care and emergency child care services.

Such family support and work/life benefit programmes when implemented in the United States, were reported to have drastically reduced the level of absenteeism and increased productivity in most firms (see Thompson and Beauvais, 2000; BWND, 2002:26). The provision of child care facilities by organisations in Ghana has been implemented by the 31<sup>st</sup> December Women's Movement. The organisation set up day care centres within industrial sites, commercial and other areas in urban centres, at affordable rates, with the aim of assisting working parents, especially mothers. This example could be replicated with a little financial assistance from donor agencies.

(ii) Government Initiatives: To promote gender equality in all spheres of life, including family and community life, the government could undertake the following:

- Promote and encourage equal participation of women and men in all areas of family and household responsibilities, including family planning, child rearing and housework. This should be pursued by means of information, education, communication, employment legislation and by fostering an economically enabling environment, such as establishing family leave for men and women so that they may have more choice regarding the balance of their domestic and public responsibilities.
- Establish a Family-Friendly Workplace Act which would provide for:
  - a biweekly work schedule option that would allow employees to work 80 hours over a two- week period, in any combination;
  - flexible credit hours that would allow any hours worked over 40 in one week to be saved and used towards paid leave later;
  - compensatory time and a half off in lieu of overtime pay, but the time off must be taken within the year, or the hours revert to overtime rate wage.

## **5. Government policies and legislations with regards to women and employment.**



To ensure that fair and equal employment laws and employment –related benefits exist and are not enforced in a way that restricts women’s access to the labour market.

To achieve this, there is the need to:

- Modify specific aspects of current labour legislation and conventions: the government should modify protective legislations, e.g. Night Work, Maximum Weight Acts, in order to avoid discrimination in employment. Most of these laws are not meant to discriminate against women; however, they tend to have multiple effects, taking into account the economic implications from employers’ perspective.
- Ratify and enforce ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156).
- Review labour proposals to include the extension of labour market protection and regulation to cover the informal sector (small firms) and devise an appropriate mechanism for its enforcement.
- Monitor government policies: The monitoring of government policies regarding labour market laws and regulations involves many of complexities, due to the variations in trade agreements and concession for different firms under the different industrial bodies (see GFZB Act, 1997). In addition, there is the problem of variations in company by-laws and legislation and the difficulties in capturing informal /small firms in the legal framework, as indicated in the testimony of a participant responsible for labour laws.

*Activities in the informal are not well organised, and are often seen as their own employer’s (self-employed) which make it difficult to be legislate and extend inspection to this sector. More so formal sector had always superseded the informal ...*

(Key informant 2, Legal Practitioner, Accra, 20/02/01).

However, this does not imply that the operations of such firms should be overlooked or excluded from the process of change. This process is essential, as women form the bulk of the workforce in the informal and small-scale firms. Therefore, a process of change geared toward capturing this group would go a long way to enhance the empowerment process for women and economic development of the nation as a whole. Therefore, the government should find suitable mechanisms for implementing these

policies in the informal sector. The government should also put in place effective mechanisms in the form of checks and balances that will facilitate the administration of these laws and ensure that the spirit and the body of these laws/company by-laws are in line with Ghana's constitutions, industrial act and ILO conventions.

These recommendations are wide ranging and involve both substantial, practical and structural change at the macro-meso-micro levels, but nevertheless such issues need addressing if change is to occur. Of course all these recommendation have to be seen within the Ghanaian context of economic c conditions, low GNP and SAP which have imposed cost recovery policies and user fees for health and education services. Furthermore, the relatively rapid change in governments do nothing to facilitate and encourage long term, sustainable, strategic policy change.

**Areas of further research:**

The exploration into gender inequality in Ghana's food processing and textiles and garment sectors unearthed several related issues that could not be thoroughly addressed or investigated due to the limited time frame and scope of the study. However, I would recommend that further research should be undertaken on the following issues arising from this study:

- The impact of economic change on single-working parents.
- Assessment models for job appraisals and their effects on gender and occupational mobility in industry
- Ways of developing small-scale sector enterprises (informal) as a means of fostering the socio-economic empowerment of women, in the process of economic development.
- Unitary and collective household decisions on investment and allocation of economic resources and their effects on the family and individual welfare.
- The relation between gender and culture in Ghana's kente weaving industry.

- Whether the entry of men into feminised industries has had any impact on the process of advancement of women within these sectors.

## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A.

**Table A 1. Gender and Educational Attainment Levels:  
A Cross Sectoral Analysis.**

Educational attainment	Textiles and Garment		Food Processing	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Primary	8 (2)	6 (3)	0 (0)	17 (8)
MSLC/ JS S	52 (13)	46 (23)	30 (17)	47 (21)
Vocational	8 (2)	14 (7)	13 (7)	9 (4)
Secondary	32 (8)	30 (15)	32 (18)	23 (11)
Polytechnic	0 (0)	4 (2)	9 (5)	2 (1)
University	0 (0)	0 (0)	16 (9)	4 (2)
Total	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (56)	100 (47)

**Table A2. Gender of First Sibling to Attain Highest Educational Level and Academic Qualification Attained.**

**A.2a. Food-processing (%).**

Highest Educational level attained by Siblings	Gender of first sibling to attain highest education		
	Male	Female	Total of Respondents
University (degree/masters)	16.5 (17)	3.9 (4)	20.4 (21)
Polytechnic (HND/Diploma)	16.5 (17)	1 (1)	17.5 (18)
Teacher Education	1 (1)	1 (1)	1.9 (2)
Secondary(O/A Level/SSS)	43.6 (45)	8.7 (9)	52.4 (54)
MSLC/JSS	4.9 (5)	2.9 (3)	7.8 (8)
Total% of Respondents	82.5 (85)	17.5 (18)	100 (103)

**A.2b. Textiles and Garment.**

Highest Educational Level Attained by Sibling	Gender of first sibling to attain highest education		
	Male	Female	Total % of respondents
University (degree /masters)	2.7 (2)	1.3 (1)	4.0 (3)
Polytechnic (HND/Diploma)	13.3 (10)	4 (3)	17.3 (13)
Teacher Education	2.7 (2)	1.3 (1)	4 (3)
Secondary(O/A Level/SSS)	50.6 (38)	18.7 (14)	69.3 (52)
MSLC/JSS	4 (3)	1.3 (1)	5.3 (4)
Total % of respondents	73.3 (55)	26.7 (20)	100 (75)

**Table A.3. Occupational Background of Respondents' Parents (%).**

Type of Occupation	Food Processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Fathers	Mothers	Total	Fathers	Mothers	Total
Unemployed/Retired /Housewife	0 (0)	3 (3)	3 (3)	0 (0)	3 (2)	1 (2)
Agriculturist/farmer	21 (22)	19 (20)	20 (42)	28 (21)	20 (15)	25 (37)
Businessman/Trader	7 (7)	50 (51)	28 (58)	15 (11)	44 (33)	29 (44)
Civil Servant	11 (11)	2 (2)	6 (13)	13 (10)	0 (0)	7 (10)
Professional	14.5 (15)	0 (0)	7 (15)	5 (4)	0 (0)	3 (4)
Educationist	7.7 (8)	4 (4)	6 (12)	4 (3)	4 (3)	4 (6)
Clerical and related	4.8 (5)	14 (14)	9 (19)	9 (7)	5 (4)	7 (11)
Transport	9.7 (10)	0 (0)	5 (10)	4 (3)	0 (0)	2 (3)
Productive and related worker	18.4 (19)	9 (9)	14 (28)	17 (13)	24 (18)	21 (31)
Security/ Services	5.8 (6)	0 (0)	3 (6)	4 (3)	0 (0)	2 (3)
Total	100 (103)	100 (103)	100 (206)	100 (75)	100 (75)	100 (75)

**Table A. 4. Working Hours: A Cross -setoral Analysis.**

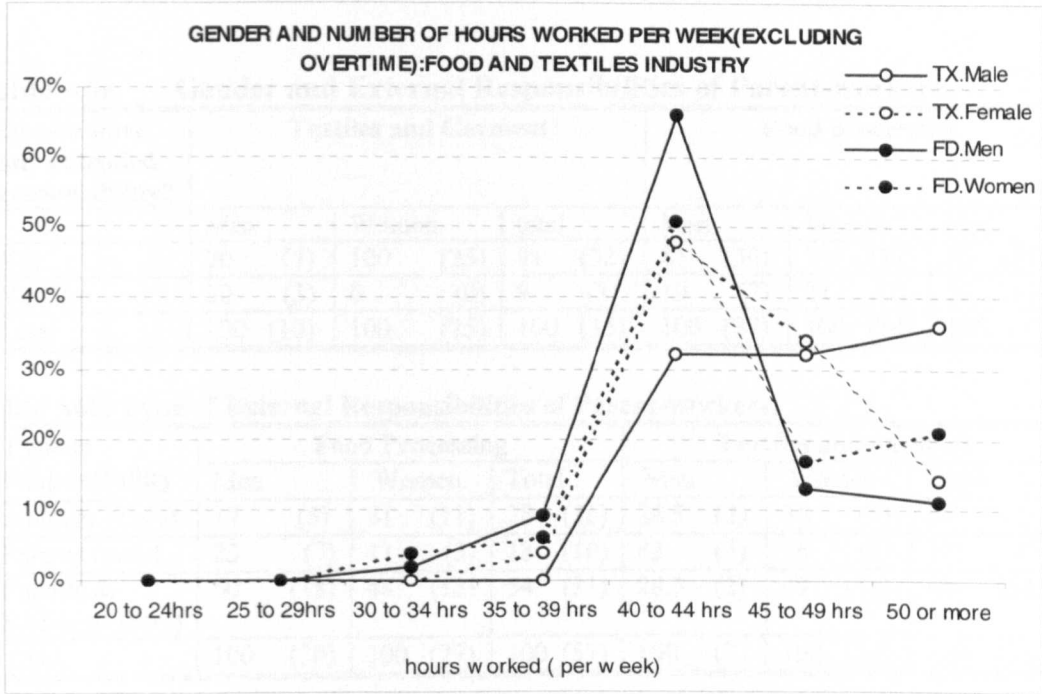
**A.4a. Textiles and Garment**

Work Starts (Times)	Closing Time				
	2pm	4.30-5.30	6-8pm	After 8 pm	total
8.00- 9.00	2.7 (2)	33 (25)	43 (32)	21 (16)	100% (75)
total	2.7 (2)	33 (25)	43 (32)	21 (16)	100% 75

**A.4b. Food -processing.**

Work Starts (Times)	Closing Time					
	2pm	4.30-5.30	6-8pm	9 pm-10pm	After 10pm	total
Before 8am	20.3 (21)	0 (0)	7 (7)	4.7 (5)	11 (11)	42.7 (44)
8-9.00am	0 (0)	30 (31)	4.7 (5)	8.7 (9)	4.7 (5)	48.5 (50)
2pm	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	8.7 (9)	0 (0)	8.7 (9)
total	20 (21)	30 (31)	12 (12)	22 (23)	16 (16)	100 103

**Fig A. 1. Gender and Number of Hours Worked per Week (Excluding Overtime):  
Food Processing and the Textiles and Garment Sector.**



**Table A5. Gender and the Number of People Fed Within the Household by Parent-workers:  
A Cross- Sectoral Analysis (%)**

Number of people fed	Textiles and Garment			Food-processing		
	Male	Female	Total	Men	Women	Total
1	0 (0)	12 (3)	9 (3)	3 (1)	6 (2)	4 (3)
2	10 (1)	16 (4)	14 (5)	11 (4)	9 (3)	10 (7)
3	40 (4)	36 (9)	37 (13)	14 (5)	27 (9)	20 (14)
4	50 (5)	16 (4)	26 (9)	22 (8)	24 (8)	23 (16)
5	0 (0)	4 (1)	3 (1)	11 (4)	24 (8)	17 (12)
6	0 (0)	12 (3)	9 (3)	22 (8)	9 (3)	16 (11)
7	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	14 (5)	0 (0)	7 (5)
8	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)	1 (1)
9	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)
10	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Total	100 (10)	100 (25)	100 (35)	100 (37)	100 (34)	100 (71)

**Table A6a. Gender and External Responsibilities of Parent-workers.**

Do you have any extended responsibility?	Textiles and Garment			Food processing		
	Men	Women	total	Men	Women	total
Yes	70 (7)	100 (25)	91 (32)	81 (30)	79 (27)	80 (57)
No	30 (3)	0 (0)	9 (3)	19 (7)	21 (7)	20 (14)
Total	100 (10)	100 (25)	100 (35)	100 (37)	100 (34)	100 (71)

**Table A6b. Type of External Responsibilities of Parent-workers.**

Type of Responsibility	Food Processing			Textiles and garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Siblings (only)	17 (5)	41 (11)	28 (16)	28.5 (2)	36 (9)	34 (11)
Parents (only)	23 (7)	11 (3)	18 (10)	43 (3)	16 (4)	21 (7)
Parents & Siblings(others)	60 (18)	48 (13)	54 (31)	28.5 (2)	48 (12)	44 (14)
Total	100 (30)	100 (27)	100 (57)	100 (7)	100 (25)	100 (32)



## Appendix B.

### . Gender and Job Categories: A Cross- Sectoral Analysis.

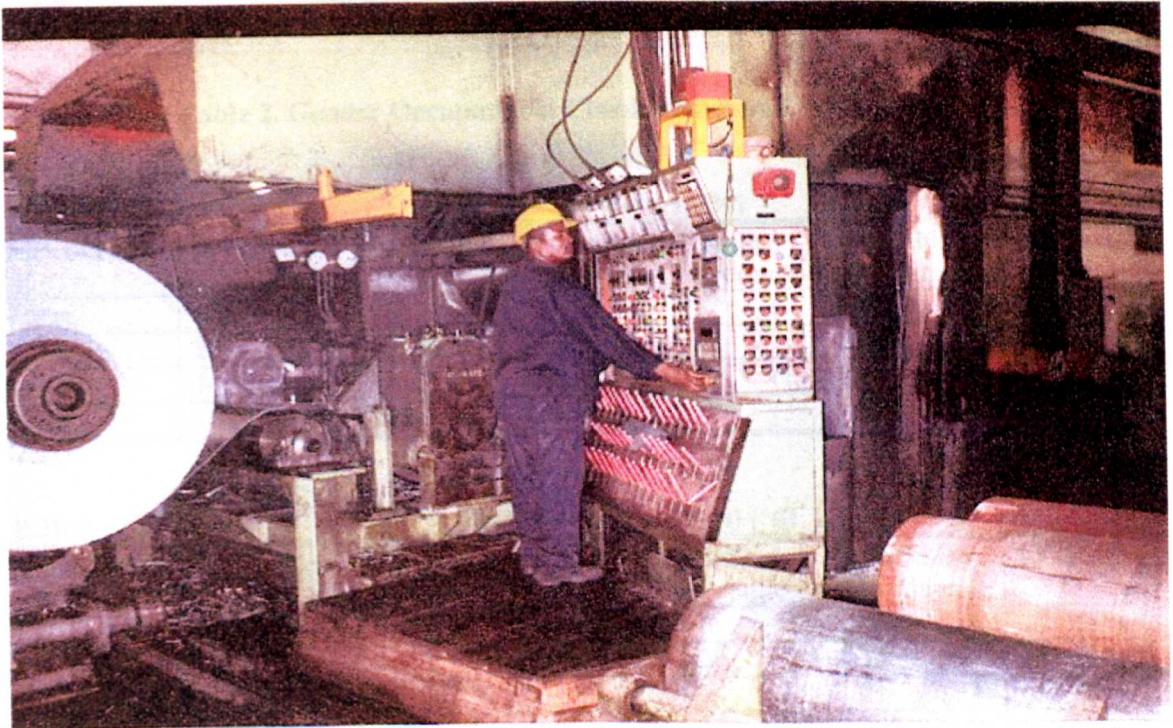
**Table B1a. Food-processing. (%).**

Job Category	Gender				Total	
	Men		Women			
Manager	11	(6)	0	(0)	6	(6)
Accountant	6	(3)	0	(0)	3	(3)
Research/Quality Control	2	(1)	2	(1)	2	(2)
Data Analyst	0	(0)	2	(1)	1	(1)
Clerk	7	(4)	0	(0)	4	(4)
Cashier/Accounts clerk	4	(2)	2	(1)	3	(3)
Secretary	0	(0)	2	(1)	1	(1)
Packers/sorters	20	(12)	34	(16)	27	(28)
Bakers/ related workers	9	(5)	28	(13)	17	(18)
Fish processors	4	(2)	11	(5)	7	(7)
Product inspectors	0	(0)	4	(2)	2	(2)
Technician	2	(1)	0	(0)	1	(1)
Engineers	7	(4)	0	(0)	4	(4)
Machine operators	21	(12)	4	(2)	14	(14)
Supervisors/foreman	7	(4)	11	(5)	9	(9)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(56)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(47)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(103)</b>

**Table B1b. Textiles and Garment (%).**

Job Category	Gender				Total	
	Men		Women			
Secretary/ Receptionist	0	(0)	6	(3)	4	(3)
Clerk/Accounts clerk	12	(3)	0	(0)	4	(3)
Embroider/Appiqué Designer	20	(5)	0	(0)	7	(5)
Batik/tie-dye marker	20	(5)	22	(11)	21	(16)
Tailor / Dressmaker	20	(5)	48	(24)	39	(29)
Sewer/Finisher	12	(3)	18	(9)	16	(12)
Cutter	8	(2)	0	(0)	3	(2)
Machine operator	4	(1)	2	(1)	3	(2)
Designer	4	(1)	4	(2)	4	(3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(25)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(50)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(75)</b>

**Fig B1.**  
**Men in metals firms in Tema**



The metal industry in Ghana is male dominated.

**Fig B2. Women in Bakery Industry in Kumasi.**



Women engaged in the kneading of bread. This activity requires manual dexterity and nimble fingers.

**Table 2. Gender Occupational Classification and Size of Firm**

**B2 a:**

**Men (all sectors) (%)**

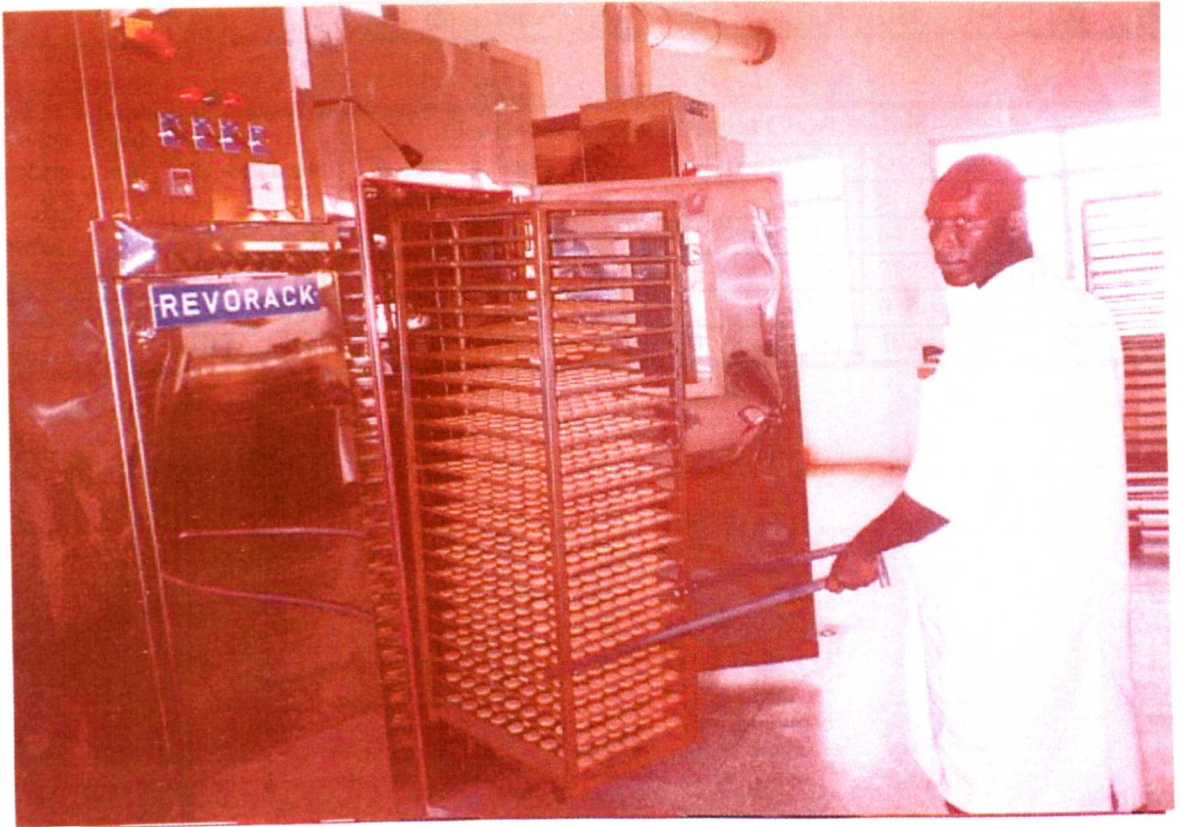
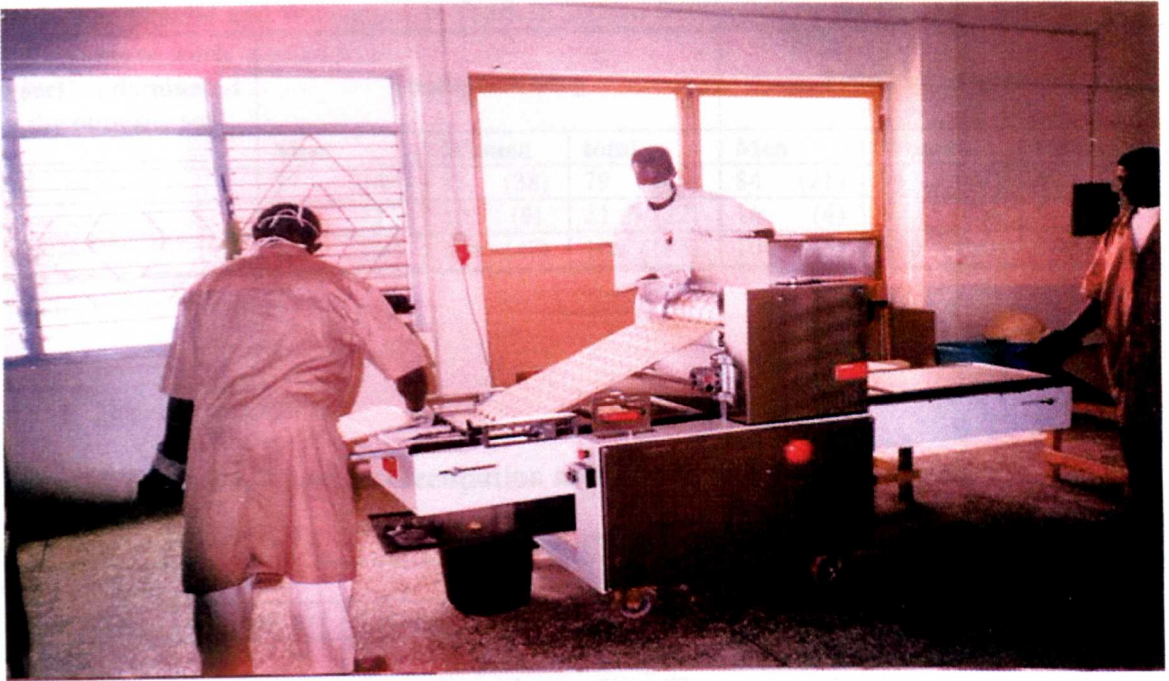
Size of Firm	Professional		Clerical		Supervisor*		Skilled Productive		Unskilled Productive		total
Large	57	(8)	33	(3)	22	(2)	32	(12)	73	(8)	41 (33)
Medium	29	(4)	56	(5)	44	(4)	18	(7)	18	(2)	27 (22)
Small	14	(2)	11	(1)	33	(3)	50	(19)	9	(1)	32 (26)
Total	100	(14)	100	(9)	100	(9)	100	(38)	100	(11)	100 (81)

**B.2b**

**Women (all sectors) (%)**

Size of Firm	Professional		Clerical		Supervisor*		Skilled Productive		Unskilled Productive		total
Large	50	(1)	0	(0)	36	(4)	6	(4)	43	(6)	15 (15)
Medium	50	(1)	40	(2)	18	(2)	20	(13)	36	(5)	24 (23)
Small	0	(0)	60	(3)	45	(5)	74	(48)	21	(3)	61 (59)
Total	100	(2)	100	(5)	100	(11)	100	(65)	100	(14)	100 (97)

**Fig B. 3. a. Confectionery firms are Male-Dominated-Men in biscuits firm in Tema**



**Table B.3. Gender and Willingness to Work in Section Dominated by the Opposite Sex (%).**

Willingness to work in section dominated by the opposite sex	Food-processing			Textiles and garment		
	Men	Women	total	Men	Women	total
Yes	77 (43)	81 (38)	79 (81)	84 (21)	94 (47)	91 (68)
No	23 (13)	19 (9)	21 (22)	16 (4)	6 (3)	9 (7)
total	100 (56)	100 (47)	100 (103)	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)

**Table B4. Gender, Occupation and Access to Job Information.**

**B. 4a Women (All sectors) (%)**

Means of Job Information	Gender and Occupational Classification					
	Professional	Clerical	Supervisor	Skilled Prod	Unskilled	Total
Relative	0 (0)	20 (1)	45 (5)	26 (17)	14 (2)	26 (25)
Friend	0 (0)	40 (2)	45 (5)	57 (37)	64 (9)	55 (53)
Application	50 (1)	20 (1)	9 (1)	12 (8)	21 (3)	14 (14)
Advertisement	50 (1)	20 (1)	0 (0)	5 (3)	0 (0)	5 (5)
Total	100 (2)	100 (5)	100- (11)	100 (65)	100 (14)	100 (97)

**B. 4b. Men (All sectors) (%)**

Means of Job Information	Gender and Occupational Classification					
	Professional	Clerical	Supervisor	Skilled Prod	Unskilled	Total
Relative	14 (2)	11 (1)	0 (0)	26 (10)	9 (1)	17 (14)
Friend	33 (5)	67 (6)	67 (6)	47 (18)	64 (7)	53 (43)
Application	29 (4)	11 (1)	11 (1)	24 (9)	27 (3)	22% (18)
Advertisement	21 (3)	11 (1)	22 (2)	3 (1)	0 (0)	7 (6)
Total	100 (14)	100 (9)	100 (9)	100 (38)	100 (11)	100 (81)

**Table B. 5.**

**Gender Occupational Classification and Job Requirement.**

**B.5a.**

**Food-processing sector (%).**

Job Requirement	Occupational Classification											
	Professional/managerial/administrative		Clerical and related workers		Unskilled productive		Skilled productive		Supervisor (production)/Forman		Total	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Occupational aptitude	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	8.3 (1)	35. (5)	5 (1)	16.7 (4)	25 (1)	0 (0)	5.4 (3)	19.1 (9)
Educational qualification	64.3 (9)	100 (2)	83.3 (5)	100 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	20 (4)	8.3 (2)	50 (2)	0 (0)	35.7 (20)	12.7 (6)
Prior experience	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	8.3 (1)	21.4 (3)	20 (4)	8.3 (2)	25 (1)	80 (4)	10.7 (6)	19.1 (9)
No basic experience	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	83.3 (10)	42.8 (6)	50 (10)	66.7 (16)	0 (0)	20 (1)	35.7 (20)	48.9 (23)
High level experience	35.7 (5)	0 (0)	16.7 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	12.5 (7)	0 (0)
<b>Total</b>	100 (14)	100 (2)	100 (6)	100 (2)	100 (12)	100 (14)	100 (20)	100 (24)	100 (4)	100 (5)	100 (56)	100 (47)

**B. 5b.**

**Textiles and Garment (%)**

Job Requirements	Occupational Classification.							
	Clerical and related workers		Productive and related workers		Supervisor (production)		Total	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Occupational aptitude	0 (0)	33 (1)	12 (2)	17 (7)	0 (0)	17 (1)	8 (2)	18 (9)
Educational qualification	100 (3)	67 (2)	29 (5)	15 (6)	20 (1)	0 (0)	36 (9)	16 (8)
Prior experience	0 (0)	0 (0)	52 (9)	41 (17)	40 (2)	33 (2)	44 (11)	38 (19)
No experience	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (1)	27 (11)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	22 (11)
High level experience	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	40 (2)	50 (3)	8 (2)	6 (3)
<b>Total</b>	100 (3)	100 (3)	100 (17)	100 (41)	100 (5)	100 (6)	100 (25)	100 (50)

## Appendix C.

### Gender and Duration of Acquisition of Skill On-the-Job before Mastering Skill.

**Table C 1a. Food Processing (%).**

Length of training	Gender				Total	
	Men		women			
> 3 weeks	20	(7)	21	(7)	20	(14)
3-4 weeks	34	(12)	21	(7)	28	(19)
1 to 6months	31	(11)	50	(17)	41	(28)
7 to 12months	9	(3)	6	(2)	7	(5)
1 to 2years	6	(2)	3	(1)	4	(3)
Total	100	(35)	100	(34)	100	(69)

**Table C.1b. Textiles and Garment (%).**

Length of training	Gender				Total	
	Men		Women			
3 to 4 weeks	7.7	(1)	0	(0)	2.2	(1)
1 to 6 months	21.4	(3)	28.1	(9)	26.1	(12)
7 to 12 months	28.6	(4)	31.3	(10)	30.4	(14)
1 to 2 years	14.3	(2)	25	(8)	21.7	(10)
More than 2 years	28.6	(4)	15.6	(5)	19.6	(9)
Total	100	(14)	100	(32)	100	(46)

**Table C.2 Criteria for Selection for Training and Development in the Workplace<sup>101</sup>.**

Training criteria	Food Processing sector			Textiles and garment sector		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Work performance(meeting production targets and deadlines)	18 (2)	18 (2)	18 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Leadership	64 (7)	72 (8)	68 (15)	25 (1)	50 (2)	27 (3)
Length of service(without breaks)	9 (1)	9 (1)	9 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Nature of Job	9 (1)	0 (0)	5 (1)	75 (3)	50 (2)	63 (5)
total	100 (11)	100 (11)	100 (22)	100 (4)	100 (4)	100 (8)

<sup>101</sup> This response is derived from those who indicated that their employers firm provided training, however workers were not offered equal access to training in the workplace.

**Table C. 3. Gender and Promotional Criteria: A Cross-sectoral Analysis (%)**

Promotional criteria	Food Processing			Textiles and Garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Work performance(meeting production targets and deadlines)	37 (7)	64 (9)	48 (16)	67 (4)	83 (10)	78 (14)
Educational upgrade	16 (3)	0 (0)	9 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Length of service	37 (7)	29 (4)	33 (11)	33 (2)	0 (0)	11 (2)
Skill upgrade	11 (2)	7 (1)	9 (3)	0 (0)	17 (2)	11 (2)
total	100 (19)	100 (14)	100 (33)	100 (6)	100 (12)	100 (18)

**Table C.4. Gender, Occupational Classification and Promotion.(%)**

Sector	Gender	Gender and Occupational Classification					
		Professional	Clerical	Supervisor	Skilled Productive	Unskilled	Total
Food Processing	Men	21 (4)	10.5 (2)	21 (4)	10.5 (2)	37 (7)	100 (19)
	Women	0 (0)	0 (0)	36 (5)	50 (7)	14 (2)	100 (14)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12 (4)</b>	<b>6 (2)</b>	<b>27 (9)</b>	<b>27 (9)</b>	<b>27 (9)</b>	<b>100 (33)</b>
Textiles and Garment	Men	0 (0)	17 (1)	83 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	100 (6)
	women	0 (0)	8 (1)	50 (6)	42 (5)	0 (0)	100 (12)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0 (0)</b>	<b>11 (2)</b>	<b>61 (11)</b>	<b>28 (5)</b>	<b>0 (0)</b>	<b>100 (18)</b>
<b>Total all sectors</b>		<b>8 (4)</b>	<b>8 (4)</b>	<b>39 (20)</b>	<b>27 (14)</b>	<b>18 (9)</b>	<b>100 (51)</b>

**Table C.5. Who plays the most Influential Role in determining workers promotion?**

Decision-maker for workers promotion	Food Processing sector			Textiles and Garment sector		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Employer/management	58 (11)	64 (9)	61 (20)	66.7 (4)	75 (9)	72 (13)
Supervisor	42 (8)	36 (5)	39 (13)	16.7 (1)	17 (2)	22 (4)
Fellow workers	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	16.7 (1)	8 (1)	6 (1)
Total	100 (19)	100 (14)	100 (33)	100 (6)	100 (12)	100 (18)

**Table C. 6 Gender Firm Size and Income (All sectors) (%)**

Monthly Income range '000 cedis (¢)	Gender and Firm Size.							
	Large scale		Medium scale		Small scale		Total	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
0-99	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (1)	14 (1)	15 (9)	1 (1)	10 (10)
100-199	12 (4)	20 (3)	41 (9)	52 (12)	23 (6)	49 (29)	23 (19)	45 (44)
200-299	48 (16)	20 (3)	27 (6)	22 (5)	35 (9)	27 (16)	38 (31)	25 (24)
300-399	9 (3)	7 (1)	9 (2)	4 (1)	15 (4)	5 (3)	11 (9)	5 (5)
400-499	6 (2)	7 (1)	14 (3)	0 (0)	8 (2)	2 (1)	9 (7)	2 (2)
500+	24 (8)	47 (7)	9 (2)	17 (4)	15 (4)	3 (2)	17 (14)	12 (12)
Total	100(33)	100 (15)	100(22)	100(23)	100(26)	100(59)	100(81)	100(97)



**Table C.7. Who Plays the Instrumental Role in Determining Your Income?**

Decision Maker	Food Processing sector			Textiles and garment sector		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Employer	77 (43)	87 (41)	82 (84)	96 (24)	94 (49)	97 (73)
Trade Union	13 (7)	0 (0)	6 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Government	9 (5)	13 (6)	11 (11)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Worker (self)	2 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)	4 (1)	2 (1)	3 (3)
total	100 56	100 (47)	100 (103)	100 (25)	100 (50)	100 (75)

## Appendix D

**Table D.1. Decision -making categorisation by leadership position**

Management levels	<b><i>Types of decisions</i></b>
	<b>Policy Formulation Decisions</b>
Top level	Expansion and down sizing, change in products and programmes, budget, budget organisation
Middle level	Changes in products and programme design, routine pace of work, changes in methods of production, budget,
Lower	Pace of work, work procedures
	<b>Sanction Authority</b>
Top level	Grant and prevent, firing of workers
Middle	Grant and prevent pay rise, promotion, firing, warning
Lower,	Warning
	<b>Task Authority</b>
Middle	Deciding specific task to be done, procedures,
Lower level	Deciding specific task, procedures,

## Appendix E

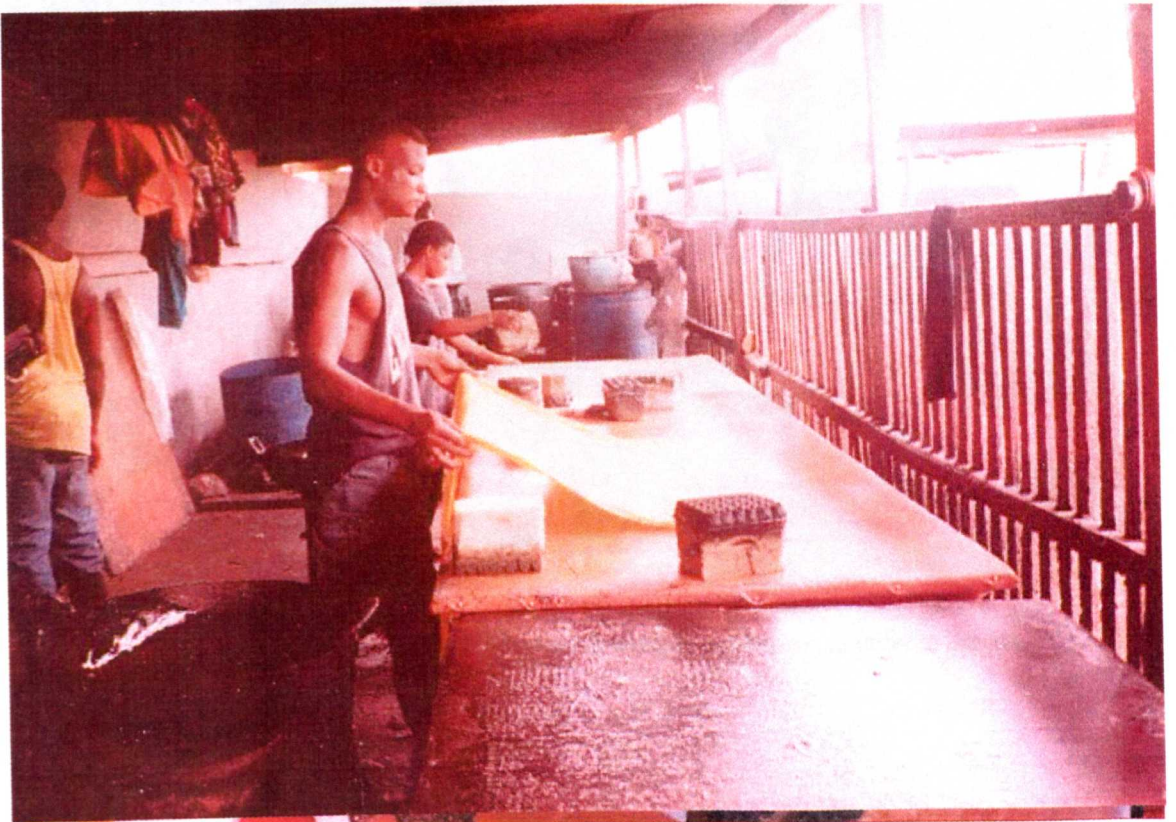
### Problems and Challenges -The Dilemma in the Workplace: A Cross-sectoral Analysis

Problems/Challenges	Food Processing			Textiles and garment		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	women	Total
No problem	12 (13)	2 (2)	7 (15)	8 (4)	2 (2)	4 (6)
Low salary and salary delay	13 (14)	29 (27)	20 (41)	28 (14)	39 (39)	35 (53)
Lack of financial support system	11 (12)	3 (3)	7 (15)	4 (2)	1 (1)	2 (3)
Health problems	4 (5)	20 (19)	12 (24)	10 (5)	10 (10)	10 (15)
promotion	3 (3)	4 (4)	3 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
lack of training /career advancement	4 (4)	1 (1)	2 (5)	0 (0)	1 (1)	1 (1)
lack motivation from employer/management	6 (7)	3 (3)	5 (10)	6 (3)	7 (7)	7 (10)
job insecurity	7 (8)	5 (5)	6 (13)	10 (5)	1 (1)	4 (6)
Poor working conditions	18 (20)	13 (12)	16 (32)	16 (8)	6 (6)	9 (14)
long working hours	7 (8)	10 (9)	8 (17)	10 (5)	22 (22)	18 (27)
lack of working facilities(raw materials /tools)	6 (7)	1 (1)	4 (8)	4 (2)	2 (2)	3 (4)
Lack of cooperation among workers	7 (8)	5 (5)	6.3 (13)	0 (0)	4 (4)	3 (4)
lack of understanding between management and workers	3 (3)	3 (3)	3 (6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Employers attitude	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (2)	5 (5)	5 (7)
Total	100 (112)	100 94	100 (206)	(100 (50)	100 (100)	100 (150)
	56	47	103	25	50	75

**Working Conditions**

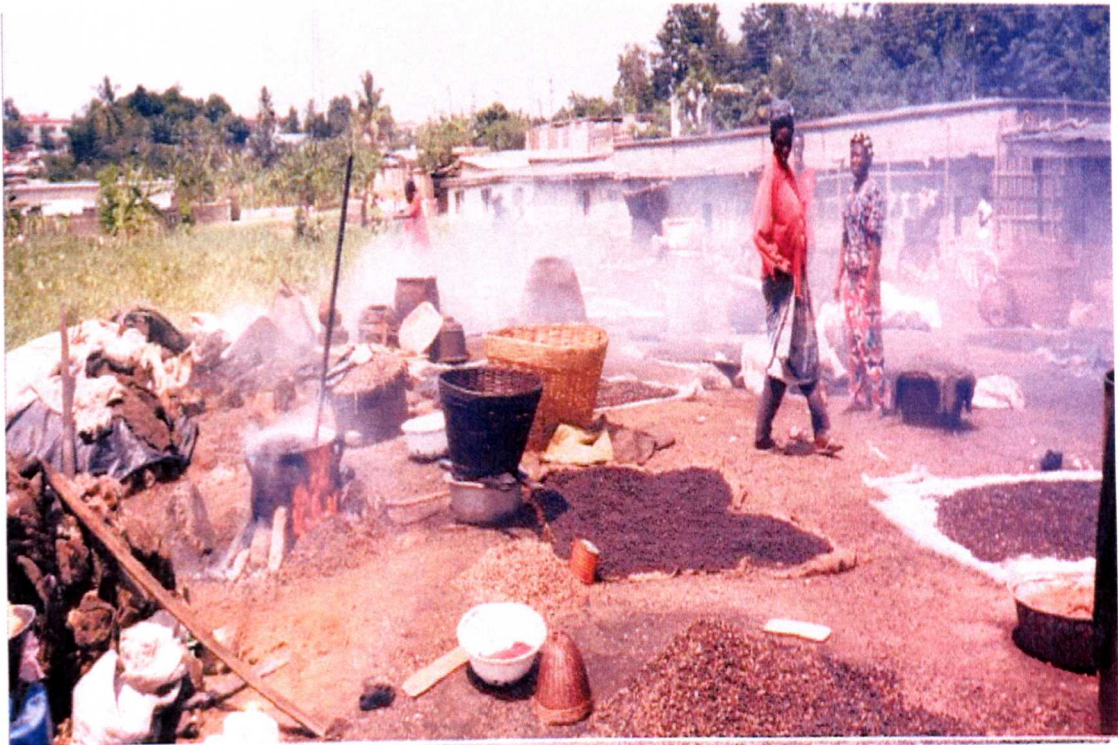
**Fig E1a.**

**Workers in Batik -making Industry**



Workers in the tie and dye and batik-making work without protective clothing.

**Fig E.1b Women in Agro-Food-processing working in deplorable conditions, Kumasi.**



Battling each day with the smoke and heat generated from the life fire, these women have to also continuously work in the scorching sun and other harsh weather conditions, in order to survive..

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