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Enhancing the careers of women in Ghanaian organizations

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to enhance the careers of women in Ghanaian Organizations. The study did indicate that career women face several challenges in the pursuit of their chosen professions, notable among such challenges being discrimination. It seems, we have not totally rid our mindset off the ancient and traditional perception that the woman is best at being a reproductive agent and caretaker of the home. The study further found out that for a career woman to be able to succeed, there is the need to plan their career from the onset and to also look out for an understanding partner. But, not all respondents agreed to this assertion. But 100% of the respondents did indicate that they believe legislative provisions that seek to protect women and for that matter the career women are not adequate. It is therefore recommended that government and stakeholders make an effort to resolve the situation as it stands and for families to appreciate the dynamic role of the woman of the 21st Century.

Keywords: Women career, Women Development, Women impact in Development

Introduction

This study seeks to examine the careers of Ghanaian women employees and how they can progress or grow to assume higher responsibilities as working women. This chapter contains the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study and organization of the study.

A woman has always been relegated to the background when it comes to pursuing professional roles in society and in business since time immemorial. Traditionally, it has always been believed and accepted as the norm that the woman's rightful place in society is the home, and consequently the kitchen. That was the woman's so-called profession. This conception clearly contradicts what has been generally accepted as a working definition of a career woman; a woman who follows a professional or business career.

Furthermore, marriage and parenthood brought women new responsibilities, if they had done so before, most women do not worked outside the home. A few women retained their jobs or acquired new ones, but only if necessary to support their families. Otherwise, they were expected to raise their children and perform most of the household chores. In the early 20th century, simple chores were a lot more involved. Clothing was washed by hand and usually had to be ironed. Most foods were prepared from scratch and for those women who attempted to keep their jobs, balancing the act was an arduous task. Today, this situation is not any different.

Therefore, men dominated and still do, in every field of profession, from medicine through to law, marketing, human resource management and politics. The woman, really never had a chance to make any professional impact in society. The challenges or impediments hindering from succeeding in professions and business obviously suppressed any positive prospects and the men continued to have their way.

In the 21st century, perceptions started changing and ideologies shifted. Women were gradually, the world over, beginning to get the much needed recognition. Probably, the biggest and most effective forum on the advancement of women was the famous Beijing Conference. The United Nations convened the Fourth World Conference on Women on September 4- 15, 1995 in Beijing, China. Delegates had prepared a platform for Action that aimed at achieving greater equality and opportunity for women. The three previous World Conferences were in Mexico City, Mexico (International Women's Year, 1975),

Copenhagen, Netherland (1980) and Nairobi, Kenya (1985).

The official name of the Conference was “The Fourth World Conference on Woman: Action for Equality, Development and peace”. The Conference was participated by 189 Governments and more than 5,000 representatives from 2,100 non-governmental organizations. The principal themes were the advancement and empowerment of women in relation to Women’s Human Rights, women and poverty, women and decision-making, the girl, violence against women and other areas of concern. The overriding message of the fourth World Conference on Women was that the issues addressed were global and universal and that deeply entrenched attitudes and practices perpetuate inequality and discrimination against women, in public and life, in all parts of the world.

Accordingly implementation requires changes in values, attitudes, practices and priorities at all levels. The Conference signaled a clear commitment to international norms and standards of equality between men and women; that measures to protect and promote the human rights of women and girls as an integral part of universal human rights must underlie all action; and that institutions at all levels must be reoriented to expedite implementation. Governments and the UN agreed to promote the “gender mainstreaming” in policies and programmes (Online Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2009).

A World Bank report has indicated that a program to develop a gender strategy in Ghana by the Government led to a study in 1999 to ascertain the situation on the ground. It was discovered that in attempt to consider the links between gender and economic productivity, and the development of human capital, women were faced with challenges that could definitely hamper their ability to succeed on a greater scale in profession or business. The illiteracy rate among adults was higher in women, while the same women worked longer hours than men. Access to credit for women was a problem, especially when the credit unions in the country do not focus on women was a problem, especially when the credit union in the country do not focus on women (World Bank, 1999). The researchers believe that the problem with women having less access to credit stems from the traditional ideology that the man is necessarily the head of the household and must handle financial situations.

In as much as the above generally describes the situation with regards to women in the country, some level of progress has been made. Today, more women combine marriage and other social commitment with work, they also are able to express their beliefs and aspirations. The prospects of progress in their chosen fields are not too clear especially with men still dominating in the high ranking positions and also ardent supporters of the rhetoric, “What can a woman do?”

Literature Review

In this chapter the concept of a career woman, theories surrounding the concept and some conceptual framework is discussed. The attempt in this chapter is aimed at bringing to the reader some level of information that will facilitate understanding of the topic under study and to appreciate current trends and ideologies on the issue of the 21st century Career Woman. The chapter is arranged in such a manner so as to facilitate reading and appreciation of the discussion.

Conceptual / Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the theories and opinions of some leading writings on the concept of a career woman and also considers the impact that working women have on society and how their works also affect their homes.

Career is a term defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as an individual’s “course or progress through life (or a distinct portion of life)”. It is usually considered to pertain to the informal sector who are committed to and successful at their chosen businesses are considered to be in a successful career of ‘business’. The etymology of the term is somewhat ironic in that it comes from the Latin word ‘Carrera’, which means race.

A career is mostly seen as a course of successive situations that make up a person’s occupation. One can have a sporting career or a musical career without being a professional athlete or musician, but most frequently “career” in the 20th century referenced the series of jobs positions by which one earned one’s money. It tended to look only at the past.

As the idea of personal choice and self-direction picked in the 21th century, aided by the power of the internet and the acceptance of people having multiple kinds of work, the idea of a career is shifting from a closed set of achievements, like a chronological resume of past jobs, to a defined set of pursuits looking forward. In broadest sense, career refers to an individual’s work and life roles over their lifespan. In the relatively static societies before modernism, many workers would often inherit or take up a single lifelong position (a place or role) in the workforce, and the concept of an unfolding career had little or no meaning. With the spread during the enlightenment of the idea of progress and of the habits of individualist self-betterment, career became possible, if not expected (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2009).

The career woman, for that matter translates into a woman who has chosen for herself a professional path for which she intends to follow throughout her life and with the intention of succeeding above expectation. Today, many women have chosen the oath of education leading to successful careers in various field and others, who are into businesses, have worked hard to ensure they are successful. The drawback for women had been the societal expectation to combine their careers with marriage. This means motherhood and the responsibility of also ensuring the success of their martial homes, children and being effective supporters of their husbands.

Women’s career development is, generally different from men. It is often more complex (e.g. conflict between work and family) and is often characterized by different career stage or patterns (e.g. intervals away from full time employment to assume care responsibilities). Various pieces of research indicate that (according to EOC 1999 in Bimrose, 2003):

- Women’s labour market participation is more restricted than men i.e. they are under-represented in a variety of fields and professions, and enter low paying and low status jobs;
- Women’s abilities and talents are underused i.e. they are less likely advance to higher levels in their occupational fields.

Betz (1994) presents an overview of issues relating to women of particular relevance to careers counselling.

Citing numerous research studies, she establishes the importance of employment for the psychological (as well as economic) well-being of women. She charts the nature of women's participation in the labour market in North America (similar to the UK) which has increased dramatically over the past four to five decades, discusses occupational segregation (horizontal and vertical) and highlights the particular implications for career theories. Since the majority of women are employed in restricted occupational areas and at lower status levels, Betz questions whether career theories which are based on the assumption that occupational choice involves either matching jobs to abilities or self-actualizing as part of career development apply to women at all.

In response to the perceived inadequacies of current theories underpinning the practice of careers counselling and guidance, approaches specifically designed to respond to the needs of women are being evolved. One of such approaches is summarized below:

Gottfredson (1981) developmental theory of occupational aspirations is applicable to both women and men. She set out to explain "how the well-documented differences in aspirations by social group (e.g. race, sex and social class) develop. Gottfredson's theory represents an attempt to reconcile the different perspectives of psychology and sociology. The theory is concerned with both the content of career aspiration and how they develop. Gottfredson argues that career satisfaction depends on the match or fit with the self-concept.

It is different from psychological theories since:

- It views career development as an attempt to implement primarily a social self and secondarily a psychological self;
- It focuses on how cognitions of self and occupations develop;
- It treats vocational choice largely as a process of eliminating option and narrowing choices;
- It considers how individual compromise their goals in coming to terms with reality as they try to implement their aspirations.

How do women, career and marriage mix? Not well, say social scientist as per a recent study published by Forbes Magazine, according to Noer (2008). The social scientist insists that just, whatever you do, don't marry a woman with a career, because you run a higher risk of having a rocky marriage. While everyone knows that marriage can be stressful, the studies found professional women are more likely to get divorced, more likely to cheat and less likely to have children. And if they do have kids, they are more likely to be unhappy about it. The study further found that women, even those with a "feminist" outlook are happier when their husband is the primary breadwinner. Not happy conclusion, especially given that many men, particularly successful men, are attractive to women with similar goal and aspirations. After all, your typical career woman is well educated, ambitious, informed and enabled.

Many factors contribute to a stable marriage, including the marital status of your spouse's parents (folks with divorced parents are significantly more likely to get divorced themselves), age at first marriage, race, religious beliefs and social-economic status. And, of course, many working women are indeed happily and fruitfully married – it is just that they are less likely to be so than non-working women.

Corcoran (2008) argues differently. "Studies aside, modern marriage is a two-way street. Men should own up to their responsibilities, too. In spite of those dangerous statistics, my husband and I are about to celebrate our 18th wedding anniversary. The expert think that professional women are more likely to get divorced, to cheat and to be grumpy about either having kids or not having them. Women have faced this kind of competition squarely for years and nothing is going to change that" (Corcoran, 2008).

The expectation held by a society defines the roles of its members. While many factors influence the parts individuals play in their cultures and communities, education has always been the crucial element in the establishment of social roles. Education was the catalyst which changed women's roles in society from what they were in the late 1800s to what they are now.

Education did not guarantee pursuit of an occupation. Society's expectation that women care for home and family left little room for personal growth and professional development. Women who sought jobs or professional work were still rare and women who worked outside their homes did so only under duress or because they were 'odd'. As things became more urbanized, the need for workers grew and thus the presence of women was required. But women were working in factories, as teachers, or in other 'womanly' jobs only. A woman's usefulness was not equated with professionalism. Women studied courses useful in their personal life such as home economics (Pegues, 2000).

But by and large, women have come to occupy leadership roles in the home, work, society and even in government. And increasingly, their effectiveness have proved the need to allow more women to access leadership positions at work and in society.

Today, the impact of women on society is phenomenal. In Ghana, we can point to Ms. Joyce Aryee of Ghana Chamber of Mines; Nana Oye Lithur a renowned human rights activist, Ms. Anna Bossman of the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ); Mrs. Afenyi Dadzie, one time President of the Ghana Journalist Association (GJA) and members of the Council of State; Mrs. Gifty Amey Obeng of FC perfumery; among others. These women are certainly career women who have succeeded in their various fields and have positively impacted on society.

Much as we did like it otherwise, women are still facing obstacles in their quest to pursue their careers. Some progress has been made but there is a lot more to be done before we can drop the issue of challenges women face. However, some authors have identified some of the challenges and the researcher believes it is worth noting here in this document. The challenges include, but not limited to:

- The fact that many professional women on the way up still feel the need to prove themselves not just to colleagues (male or female) but to themselves. The career comes before anything else. All too often the cost is one's personal social life.
- The need to do it all; a vast majority of women are still attempting to do it all have a successful career, be a fabulous parent and spouse, run a household and still have time for other interests.

Women CEO's are still in the minority, which means fewer mentors for the younger women on the way up. And, of course, many who've made it to the top are all too often labeled tough, hard, difficult, and cold. In other words, possessing the same skills as their successful male counterparts. Those traits that are desirable in men are still seen as negative in women.

Generally women take involvement in household activities and interested in going for jobs like doctor, nurse, teacher and government jobs. Many hurdles are faced by a woman or a group of women who start a business. Owning and controlling the enterprise by a woman is really a big thing. The woman entrepreneur should possess the qualities of devotion, innovation and capabilities of management and control. Just like men, some women do not want to fit themselves in white collar jobs. They want to express their skill and talent to the world. Initially, the women entrepreneurs were interested in petty business. Now they want to land into big business deals. They want stand on their own legs and prove themselves. The education, the courage, knowledge about the field, decision making qualities and independent nature helps them. Many women who study well are denied of good education. Unfortunately, some parents and spouses restrict them. This is a phenomenon that usually occurs in the rural areas and poor homes.

The system of growing up also does not help with decision making. In the young age itself, the decision making quality and freedom to choose make girls and for that matter, women grew well, not only for studies, for marriage and choosing their career. Women are expected to spend more time with the family and more responsibilities are thrust on them so that they cannot even think of any business. This stems out of the archaic traditional conception that women belong only in the home and to bear children and increase the size of the family. It is an unfortunate situation, because women also have the right to choices. (Gold, R. E. 2004).

Women have a greater number of career options now than ever before. However, as women begin to reach the management levels in business organizations, they are experiencing frustration over unexpected discrimination by men. This frustration may lead to counterproductive behavior as women strive to overcome the problem they encounter.

Women are becoming incrementally more successful in the workforce and some of the news is good. Women are represented in the workforce in greater numbers than ever and holding a higher percentage of managerial and executive jobs than in the past. Women owned businesses have doubled in the last dozen so years. Lack of pay equity and the ever-present glass ceiling continue to be obstacles to women's career success. But women have weapons, opportunities to deploy their special strengths, and the ability to adapt talents typically thought to be men's domain (Hansen 2002).

Education is, by far, women's most powerful secret weapon, and we have been preparing for a sneak attack for at least the last decade. In a world increasingly dependent on the education and training provided by colleges and universities, women are preparing for that world. We are heading into a world where the interests and values of women will gradually come to displace the interests and values of men. It will be a different kind of world. The

workplace may not have quite caught up, but women are making serious inroads in the "knowledge in power" equation.

Get the highest degree you can possibly manage. The old obstacles of lack of money and time need not deter women anymore because many new options for financial aid and distance learning are available. (Hansen 2002).

Career planning is important for everyone, but especially for women because they generally have more twists and turns to negotiate along the road to career success than do men. If you have a road map, you'll be less likely to become derailed if you should, for example, decide to relocate to be with a significant other, have a baby, or suddenly need to care for an elderly parent. Decide where you want to be five, 10, and 15 years from now. Build flexibility into your career plans to allow for changing circumstances. Your plan may need to change to accommodate those life changes, but your core plans will better equip you. (Hansen, 2002).

Although there are constitutional and other statutory provisions that on paper afford women a fair measure of protection, policies, procedures and practices often prevent women from the full and enjoyment of these rights and privileges, and hinder them from accessing justice. The constitution of Ghana specifically states that, "Every person in Ghana, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, religious, creed or gender shall be entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual contained in this Chapter but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of other and for the public interest". It further states that, "Every person has the right to work under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions, and shall receive equal pay for equal work without distinction of any kind"(1992 Constitution of Ghana, Part III, Section 10).

In the 2003 Labour Law, ACT 651, clear provisions have been made for the protection and promotion of women at work pursuing a career. (Part VI, Section 55) deals with the employment of women. Among other protections it stipulates the instructions for the treatment of pregnant women at work. Specifically, the law insists that pregnant women cannot be allowed to work beyond some specific hours and must be allowed maternity leave three weeks before and after birth. It insists that pregnant women cannot be dismissed or made redundant because of their situation. The aim is to protect the job of women and to ensure that equity prevails.

Methodology

This chapter explains the methodology used in this study. It describes data type and source. Definition of all the variable and a prior description of expected signs of the variables have also been stipulated. The chapter basically describes how the researcher intends to gather data for the study to enable her achieve the research objectives and to answer the research questions stated in Chapter One.

Purpose and Research Questions

The general purpose of this study is to find out what strategies can be adopted to empower career women in Ghana. The study is premised on the following research questions:

1. What challenges do career women face?
2. How do these challenges affect their determination to self-actualize?

3. What can career women in Ghana do in order to succeed in their chosen careers?
4. How do women perform in leadership positions?

Research Design

The study is both descriptive and analytical. It employs qualitative techniques in analysis of data collected from the field. Data was collected by administering structured questionnaire. The research setting was based on a field study.

Population and Sampling

Target Population

The population of this study is defined as all female workers and entrepreneurs in various professions and businesses. This is to ensure a fair representation of views and contributions from target population.

Sampling Frame

The major units used for the research were five (5) each from the following professional and business fields

- Medicine
- Law
- Media
- Marketing
- Public Service
- Accounting

Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling technique was employed in administering the questionnaire. The purposive sampling technique is a type of non- probability sampling that is most effective when one needs to study a certain crucial domain. This sampling method is mostly used with both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. It therefore helps to obtain quick and accurate information. This is to ensure that the right information was obtained.

This convenience Approach was adopted due to time constraint and the need to also access the right information. In the process of administering the questionnaire, the Snowball effect emerged as some individuals indicated other personalities who will be willing to participate in the study. Interviews were also used in this study.

Sample Size

The sampling size is 30 people, consisting of 5 medical doctors, 5 lawyers, 5 media practitioners, 5 accountants, 5 marketers and 5 public service personnel's. With regards to the time constraints, the researcher believe the sample size was a fair representation of the population.

Research Instruments

Data was collected by the researcher through the administration of semi-structured self developed questionnaires. There was one set of questions for all respondents with about fifteen (15) questions. A copy of the questionnaire is found in the Appendix of this document.

Data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data was derived from books, journals, published and online source of literature. All sources of data were gathered and are listed in full in the references.

The primary data was sourced through questionnaire. The data was collected over a period of two weeks.

The subjects were given the questionnaire to respond to by filling it by themselves as all the respondents could read and write.

Procedure and Time Frame

The research began in April, 2014 and ended in June, 2014. The major procedure was with regards to administering the questionnaire. This was successfully done.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical software SPSS was used in analyzing data collected from the field. The results from the data were interpreted using the analytical and qualitative methods. Here, data is collected from the field and analyzed statistically using the statistical SPSS software. This software is being used because it gives precise and concise details and results to the data collected and hence its data interpretation using the analytical and qualitative methods.

Validity and Reliability

The validity of the instruments was tested to ensure their effectiveness. This was to ensure that the questions were well understood and covered the topic effectively.

Eventually, some questions were restructured and others exempted in an attempt to ensure reliability.

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

This chapter covers the analysis and presentation of the results of this study. The results cover the areas of the study, which sought to enhance the careers of women in Ghanaian Organizations. The analysis is a results of interacting with thirty (30) different women in six (6) professions, within Accra. The analysis is essentially based on qualitative description and the results are also presented in tables charts.

Respondents answered structured questions on a scale of 1-4, where 1 indicated strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Agree and 4 strongly Agree.

Analysis Demographics

In undertaking this study, the researcher sought to measure against responses some demographic characteristics of the sample population as marital status, educational level number of year in the profession and in current organization. The researcher also attempted to gather information on the positions the women occupy in their organizations. Interestingly, 100% of respondents refused to answer most of those demographics-related questions.

But, the marital status was answered. 36.7% of respondents indicated that they were single; 3.3% fell under non respondents and 60% showed they were married. This, the researcher believe, gives an indication that more career women actually combine family expectations with their aspirations and hopes of achieving greater heights in their chosen professions.

Table 1: Marital Status of Respondents

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
Single	13	36.7
Married	16	60
Non Respondent	1	3.3
Total	30	100

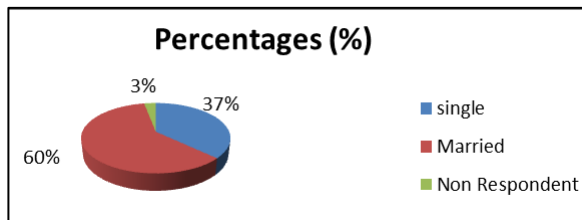


Fig 1: Marital Status of Respondents

Source: field Data: June 2014

Data Analysis

This section, in a descriptive manner presents the analysis of data collected through the administration of the research instruments. The questions were based on the research questions and objective as stated in Chapter 1 of this document.

Discrimination: Worse form of Challenge

It is generally accepted that women are discriminated against at the workplace. The respondents confirmed this assertion when 36.7% Strongly Agree that discrimination was the worst form of challenge they encounter. 40% said they Agreed, while 13.3% Strongly Disagreed that discrimination was a career woman’s worst form of challenge and 10% supported this. The table and chart below illustrates the situation as it prevails by virtue of this study:

Table 2: Discrimination: Worse form of Challenge

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
1: Strongly Disagree	4	13.3
2: Disagree	3	10.0
3: Agree	12	40.0
4: Strongly Agree	11	36.7
Total	30	100

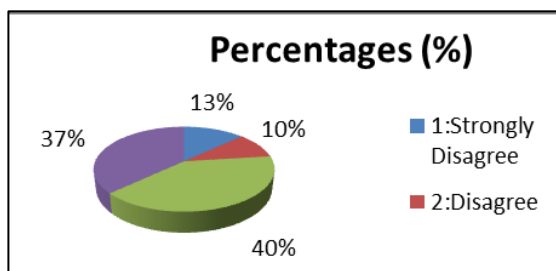


Fig 2: Discrimination: Worse form of Challenge

Source: field Data: June 2014

Male Chauvinism: Woman’s sole role is at Home

The respondents were also asked for their opinion on a statement about how their male colleagues at work perceive their role. 20% strongly Disagreed that their male colleagues believe their sole role was at home and not at work and 16.6% supported this group. But a total of 63.4% supported the statement; 36.7% Agreed and 26.7% Strongly Agreed.

Table 3: Male Chauvinism: Woman’s sole role is at Home

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
1: Strongly Disagree	6	20.0
2: Disagree	5	16.6
3: Agree	11	36.7
4: Strongly Agree	8	26.7
Total	30	100

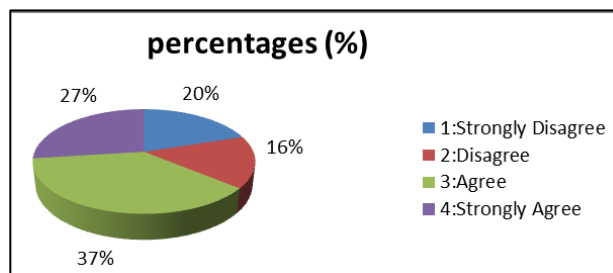


Fig 3: Male Chauvinism: Woman’s sole role is at Home

Source: field Data: June 2014

Challenges faced are a Demoralizer and Weakens Resolve to Succeed

33.4% of the respondents Strongly Disagreed that the challenges they faced was a demoralizer and weakens their resolve to succeed, supported by 53.3% who just Disagreed. Only 13.3% Agreed that the challenges they did face demoralized them and made them think of giving up. No respondent strongly agreed to the assertion.

Table 4: Challenges faced are a Demoralizer and Weakens Resolve to Succeed

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
1: Strongly Disagree	10	33.4
2: Disagree	16	53.3
3: Agree	4	13.3
4: Strongly Agree	-	-
Total	30	100

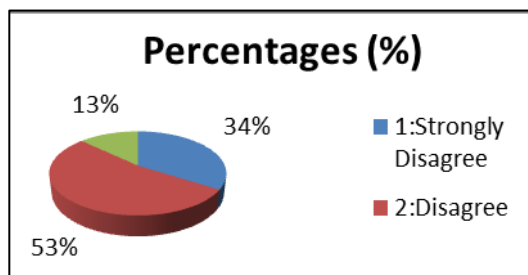


Fig 4: Challenges faced are a Demoralizer and Weakens Resolve to Succeed

Source: Field Data June 2014

Men believe they are Better Qualified for Bigger Responsibilities

The respondents were asked to measure if they thought men tend to believe they are better suited to work in higher positions and have bigger responsibilities at work. The response shows what the general perception has always been; amazingly 76.7% Strongly Agreed to this assertion, supported by 23.3% who Agreed. This means that a total of 100% actually confirm the perception. The researcher believes this is a major catalyst to the challenges career woman face at the workplace.

The Challenges women face serves as a Motivator

Does the challenge woman face in the line of their careers serve as a motivator? 3.3% did not respond to this statement; 30.0% Strongly Agreed, 56.7% Agreed and only 10.0% Disagreed that the challenges woman faced served as a motivating factor for success.

Table 5: The Challenges woman face serves as a Motivator

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
1: Strongly Disagree	-	-
2: Disagree	3	10.0
3: Agree	17	56.7
4: Strongly Agree	9	30.0
Non-respondent	1	3.3
Total	30	100

Planning is Key to the Success of a Career Woman

It seems that the respondents were generally in agreement about what constitutes the key solution to solving the challenges the career woman face. 73.3% Strongly Agreed that planning is key to success, and supported by 26.7% who said they Agreed to the statement.

Table 6: Planning is key to the success of a Career Woman

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
1: Strongly Disagree	-	-
2: Disagree	-	-
3: Agree	8	26.7
4: Strongly Agree	22	73.3
Total	30	100

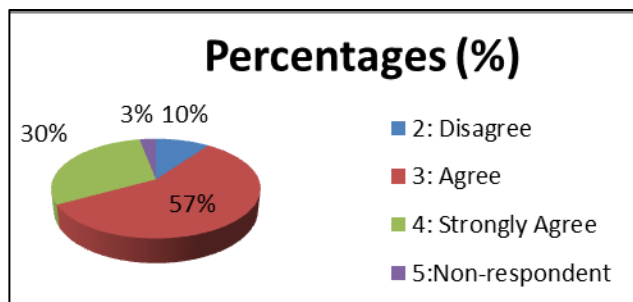


Fig 5: The Challenges woman face serves as a Motivator

Source: Field Data June 2014

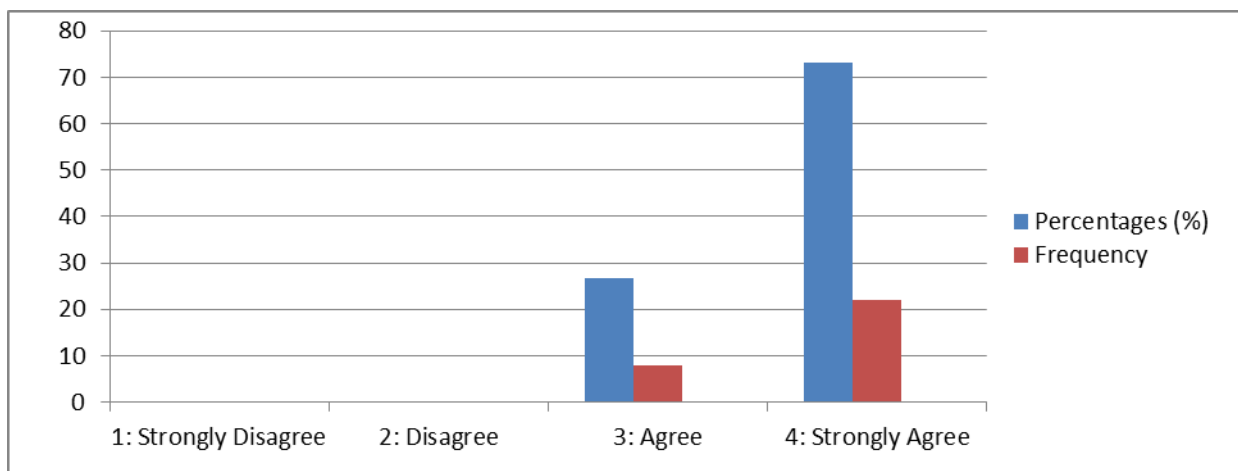


Fig 6: Planning is key to the success of a Career Woman

Source: Field Data June 2014

A Career Woman needs an Understanding Partner to Succeed

Majority of the respondents indicated that for a career woman to succeed, she needs an understanding partner. This is exhibited when 53.3% of respondents Strongly Agreed to the statement and 33.3% supported them. 10% Disagreed to the assertion and 3.3% Strongly Disagreed. The researcher is compelled to believe that the 13.3% that says a career woman does not need an understanding partner to succeed is those who do not intend to marry in order to focus on their career. The table and figure below paints the picture:

Table 7: A Career Woman needs an Understanding Partner to Succeed.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
1: Strongly Disagree	1	3.3
2: Disagree	3	10.0
3: Agree	10	33.3
4: Strongly Agree	16	53.3
Total	30	100

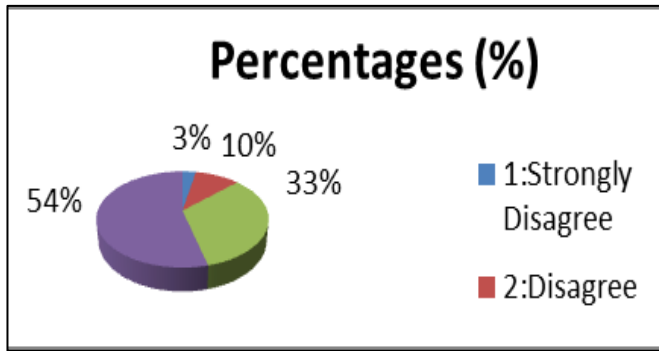


Fig 7: A Career Woman needs an Understanding Partner to Succeed.

Source: Field Data June 2014

To Succeed a Career Woman must Ignore Societal Expectations

Usually, women look up to what the society expects of them and tries to fulfill that expectation alongside their profession, or more often than not, at the peril of their careers. The respondents were asked whether it was necessary to ignore societal expectations in order to succeed. The response was almost balance. The researcher believes this is an area that needs some form of debate or appropriate forum to aid discuss. 3.4% StronglyDisagreed to ignoring societal expectations in order to succeed whiles 33.3% Disagreed to ignoring society. 20.0% said that they Agreed to ignoring society in order to succeed and they were Strongly supported by 33.3%. 10.0% of respondents did not answer this statement.

Table 8: To Succeed a Career Woman must Ignore Societal Expectations

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
1: Strongly Disagree	1	3.4
2: Disagree	10	33.3
3: Agree	6	20.0
4: Strongly Agree	10	33.3
Non-respondent	3	10.0
Total	30	100

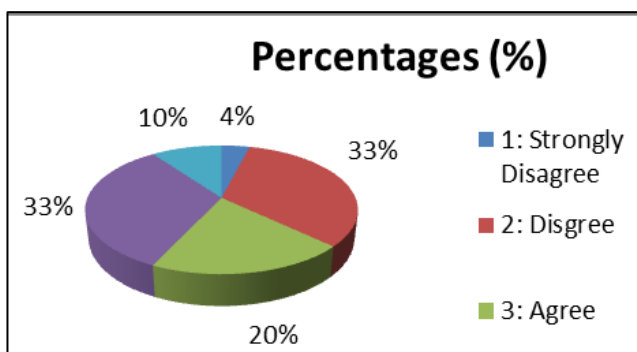


Fig 8: To Succeed a Career Woman must Ignore Societal Expectations

Source: Field Data June 2014

Government Committed to Promoting the Ideals of a Career Woman

93.3% of the respondents indicated that they were aware that government had shown some level of commitment to promoting the ideals of a career woman and this was Strongly supported by 6.7% of the respondents.

Legislative Provisions covering women not Adequate

The constitution and some Acts of Parliament especially the Labour Law 2003, ACT 651 have provisions that protect women in general and women at the workplace. The researcher asked the respondents to agree or otherwise to the statement that the provisions in such legislation were not adequate. 90.0% of the respondents were emphatic in Strongly Agreeing to the statement, as supported by 10.0% who held same view.

Unaware of any Policy, Commitment and Legislation to Promote Career Women

The researcher measured the extent to which the respondents were aware of the policies, commitment of government and legislation to promote the career woman. 66.7% were emphatic in their response saying they were aware of such provisions and were supported by 6.6%. 16.7% indicated they were not aware of such provisions. 16.7% did not respond.

Table 9: Unaware of any Policy, Commitment and Legislation to Promote Career Women

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
1: Strongly Disagree	20	66.7
2: Disagree	3	10.0
3: Agree	2	6.6
4: Strongly Agree	-	-
Non-respondent	5	16.7
Total	30	100

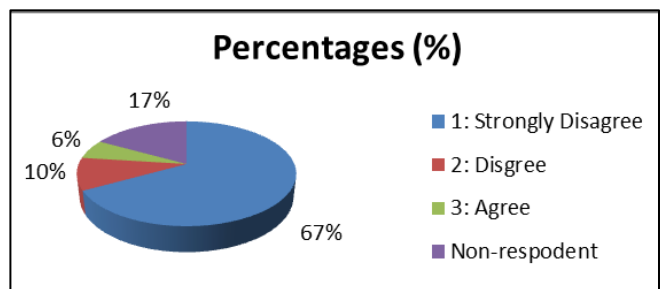


Fig 9: Unaware of any Policy, Commitment and Legislation to Promote Career Women

Source: Field Data June 2014

Are women in Leadership roles Effective

The respondent basically believed that women in Leadership roles in Ghana are very effective, that is, they achieve results. 76.7% Agreed to the statement and were supported by 10.0% only 13.3% indicated that they did not agree to the assertion,

Women lose Focus when they reach the Height of their Career

The response from the participants was a clear 50-50 situation. A total of 50% indicated and agreed with the assertion that women lose focus when the reach the height of their careers and the same 50% argue vice versa. Again, this is a typical debatable area under the concept of women and career women and probably why they must or must not be given leadership opportunities. The figure below depicts the trend:

Table 10: Women lose Focus when they reach the Height of their Career

Scale	Frequency	Percentage %
1: Strongly Disagree	2	6.7
2: Disagree	13	43.3
3: Agree	13	43.3
4: Strongly Agree	2	6.7
Total	30	100

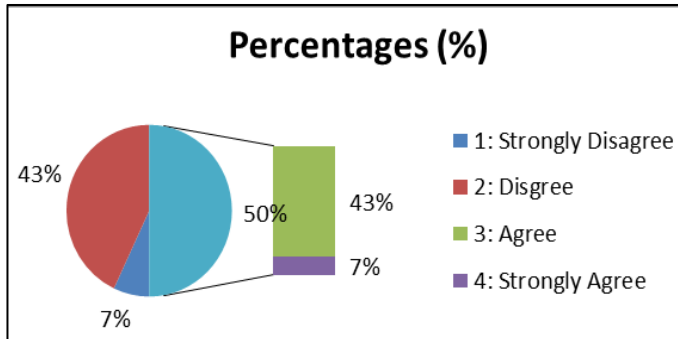


Fig 10: Women lose Focus when they reach the Height of their Career

Source: Field Data June 2014

Promoting Career Woman is important for Poverty Reduction and Nation Building

6.7% of the respondents Disagree that promoting the career woman will help reduce poverty and build the nation. 3.3% did not respond. 60% Strongly Agreed to the statement and supported by 30% of the respondents.

Challenges faced by Career Woman

Respondents indicated the challenges they faced as career women. They were made to list these challenges thus there were multiple entries for the different challenges listed by the respondents. The table below says more:

Table 11: Challenges faced by Career Woman

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage %
Stress	20	30.3
Family Expectation	18	27.2
Societal Expectation	11	16.7
Pregnancy	2	3.0
Discrimination	15	22.7
Total	66	100

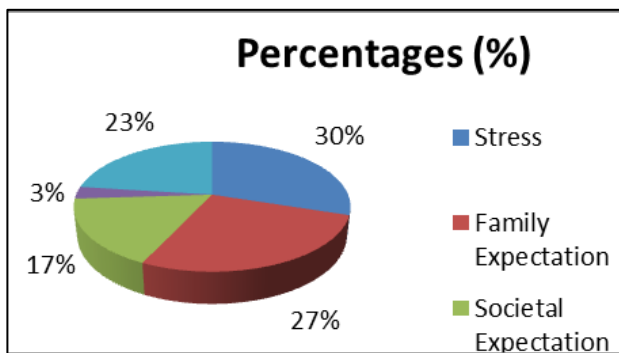


Fig 11: Challenges faced by Career Woman

Source: Field Data June 2014

Discussion

The above represent the analysis of the data collected through the administration of the research instrument for this study. In this section, an attempt is made to synthesize the information that came from data obtained used and attempt to answer the major objectives and research questions originally posed for the study.

❖ **What challenges do career women face?**

The study was able to answer the research question about challenges career women face. The major thematic areas of challenge that came up were related to family and societal expectation, discrimination and pregnancy. Table 9 showed the responses given by the respondents on page 41.

❖ **How do these challenges affect their determination to self-actualize?**

These were mixed response to this question. Some respondents indicated that the challenges served as a motivator that pushes them to want to achieve more while others admitted that it actually reduced their zest to self-actualize. But on the whole, majority indicated that challenges did motivate them to achieve more or become successful. As table 4 fig 4 showed on page 32 above.

❖ **How do women perform in leadership position?**

Only a few of the respondents indicated that women do not perform in the leadership roles. Majority of the respondents indicated that women were very effective leaders.

❖ **Identify what career women in Accra can do to succeed in their chosen career.**

The respondents advised that for the career woman to succeed there was the need to plan very well and to have an understanding partner. They were also to ignore societal expectation in order to be successful.

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents a summary of the study, conclusions drawn from the study, as well as appropriate recommendations that could be adopted to ensure that the career woman is able to achieve greater heights while being a mother, wife and societal counselor at the same time without worrying about what the world will say about her.

Summary

The issue of the career woman is viewed as a very challenging one. In Africa, women are mostly regarded as symbols of motherhood and icons of the home, while the men are regarded as the sole heads and bread winners. But a lot has changed since the 21st Century where women can also work very hard to help make life in the home very comfortable, as well as having an even greater responsibility of nurturing the children to become responsible adults. Women have moved into the labour market working and taking care of the women. Notwithstanding the above, men dominated and still do, in every field of profession, from medicine through to law, marketing, human resource management and politics. There are still pockets of discrimination against women in all aspect of the labour market globally, despite the various for a by international bodies like the United Nations and the World Bank. These discriminations extend to promotions at work and limited opportunities to participate in male dominated fields.

Women are limited when it comes to accessing credit and

education in spite of numerous researches indicating a positive correlation between women and economic productivity as well as social impact. The Ghanaian community also has its share of this discrimination as fewer women have ventured into business and survive, much more succeed. There are fewer business having women as their heads and Chief Executive Officers as well as making major decision for the organisations they work in. Furthermore the Ghanaian political environment is dominated by men with fewer women holding political position. The purpose of this study is therefore to find out strategies that can be adopted to empower career women in Ghana. Based on the above, this research sought to identify the challenges career women face in Ghana; identify how the challenges they face affect their determination to self-actualize; identify what career women in Ghana can do to succeed in their chosen careers; and examine the performance of women in leadership positions.

The study focused on career women in various professions and business in both the public and private sector, by employing the non-probability sampling technique, specifically purposive sampling technique in the administration the research instrument. The research instrument used for this study was the questionnaire which was mostly made up mostly closed ended questions using the four (4) point Likert scale for of questions with one (1) rated as strongly agree and four (4) rated as strongly disagree. In all thirty (30) respondents were used for the study by the researcher.

The summary of the findings of the study shows that most of the respondents were married (60%) 36.7% were single ladies. Majority of the respondents also agreed that discrimination was the worse form of challenge to the women whilst fewer disagreed with the statement (10%). According most male chauvinist agreed that the role of the women is in the home (36.7%). Most respondents disagreed (53.3%) that another challenge faced by women are their demoralizer and weakness to resolve to succeed whilst most (76.7%) indicated that men believe that they are better qualified for bigger responsibilities.

Conclusions

From the literature presented and analysis of data collected from the field, it is clear the issue of career women is a passionate one.

This study confirmed and revealed some very important issues surrounding the career woman. The main results of this study were:

- ✓ Most of the women are married and face challenges in pursuit of their professional dream jobs {career}.
- ✓ There is a general agreement that discrimination was the worse form of challenge to the women
- ✓ The male chauvinist agreed that the role of the women is in the home and not at the workplace.
- ✓ Demoralizer and weakness to resolve to succeed was not the major hindrance to the progress of women.
- ✓ Men still and continue to believe that they are better qualified for bigger responsibilities than women.
- ✓ Planning is strongly agreed to be the key to the success of the career for most women.
- ✓ Partners play a significant role in the success of the career role of their partners.
- ✓ Government and the society play crucial roles in development of career development of women

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the response gathered from the study. They include;

- ✓ The education of male chauvinist of the importance of the role of women in the corporate and labour market in this 21st century. This is to help and enable them not to think that women still have to be home makers.
- ✓ Additionally, men should also be made to appreciate that woman have equal roles as their male counterparts in this dynamic corporate world of work.
- ✓ Government should empower relevant agencies to enforce the provisions in legislation this seek to promote the prospects and dynamic skills of women worldwide.
- ✓ Women with an ambition to achieve greater height in chosen professions should make an attempt to plan adequately towards that profession and to attain the highest level of education.
- ✓ Government should review the present provision protecting the rights of women in order to make it more relevant to current situations prevailing on the job market and among professional working group.

Future Research Area

The following are some areas that could be explored for future research:

- ✓ Governmental policy and programmes that help women progress in the corporate world and the labour market.
- ✓ The role partners play in the career development of their spouse.

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