

**RIGHTS AND EQUITY IN THE CLASSROOM: A CASE
STUDY OF CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS IN BASIC
SCHOOLS IN GHANA**

A STUDY

**Conducted By The Research and Evaluation Unit of the
CURRICULUM RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION(CRDD),
GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

Being a signatory to the most important conventions on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Ghana has the responsibility to ensure that the contents of the conventions are translated into practice. The classroom is one of the important sites for the transmission and the practice of equity and rights and gender inequity and how it affects teaching and learning. The study sought to assess the extent to which gender equity and human rights education is taught and practiced in Ghanaian Basic Schools.

The study covered 48 Basic Schools selected from 3 zones in Ghana, some public and others private schools. Some of these schools were located in urban communities and the rest in rural areas. In all 80 pupils and 111 teachers/head teachers were the main respondents of this study. Other respondents covered included officers from the Ghana Education Service Offices in the regions. Documents on educational policies and research reports on girl child education were consulted.

The main findings of the research revealed no clear-cut policy documents on rights and equity issues exists though gender equity and child rights appear to be the objective of some interventions of the sector. Educational policy documents like the Education Commission Report of 1986 contains the teachings of democracy. The document on fCUBE and the research report on Synthesis of research on Girls Education in Ghana outline strategies and activities to address various forms of inequity between girls and boys in education. The girl child happens to be the main focus and no specific mention is made of the child in general and the boy child in particular.

Specific interventions for the promotion of gender equity mentioned included Science, Technology and Mathematics Education, leading to the establishment of the Girls Education Unit and the Girl Child Education Project.

A national policy on Child Rights and equity education is yet to be operationalised for the education sector. Environmental Studies for primary schools is the only subject area that allows the teaching of rights issues in the Primary Schools.

Level of pupils' educational attainment, age as well as geographical location appeared to be important factors determining pupil's level of awareness of girls right to education. Older pupils and JSS pupils were more likely to agree to the child's right to rest and leisure. Pupils in schools located in the Northern zone have the highest proportion agreeing to the right for rest and leisure.

The majority of pupils did recognise the child's rights to freedom of religion and privacy and freedom of correspondence. The majority also agreed to the fact that children had right to association and freedom of speech and expression so long as it did not disturb others.

Most pupils however found school language policies forbidding the use of local languages appropriate. Most of them also agreed generally that children should not have the right to access all types of information.

The school environment cannot be said to be neutral since boys and girls do not experience the same type of rights violation. Children have no avenues within the school system to seek redress for the violation of their rights. They prefer to talk to parents and friends than to their teachers for fear of being victimised.

Teachers' exposure to rights and equity issues is through the media information they hear or material they read. Their ability to handle equity and rights education is hindered by lack of knowledge and reference materials.

The age of pupils, type and locality of school appeared to be significant factors in determining pupils' response to the right to freedom from economic exploitation.

Public schools have more trained teachers, private school teachers have higher academic background and rural schoolteachers have a longer experience in teaching.

Teachers were more aware of the impact of rights abuse on the child than gender discrimination. More teachers in primary carry out rights education while more JSS teachers cover equity issues in their teaching.

Public and rural schoolteachers react to children's rights and gender discrimination statements more sympathetically. Private school teachers show a higher level of uncertainty in their reactions to statements.

The majority of teachers could not tell correctly the effects of rights violation and discrimination on the growth and development of pupils in Basic Schools. Caning, counselling, suspension and dismissal were the main modes for managing pupils who flout regulations in schools. Caning was most pervasive method and the only offence that was recorded, as calling for dismissal was pregnancy for the girl pupil; the male who causes pregnancy was however suspended.

Private schools tend to provide pupils with more teaching/learning materials better female/male pupil interaction and a wider range of play activities than public schools.

Teachers dominate all classroom activities providing few opportunities for group work and pupil-pupil interaction.

The research findings appear to suggest that teaching and learning activities favour girls in private schools. Pupils in private schools in the central zone had the highest rates of classroom participation while northern Schools had the least.

The main ways for improving Rights and Equity Education in Ghana is through the development of instructional materials and training for teachers in the area.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Background to the Study

Ghana is among first states that signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In fact, Ghana was the first country to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Ghana has also ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) all in her efforts towards promoting gender equity and child rights. In the pursuance of the national objective of enhancing and strengthening democratic culture, interventions have been introduced to promote gender equity in the formal school system in the country. The classroom has been noted as being one of the sites where rights and equity issues are less likely to be enforced. To ensure equity in the classroom, factors that bring about discrimination in schools must be identified to enable the development of programmes to address the inequalities in the education sector.

Gender discrimination in the Ghanaian educational system has been identified for quite a time. This realisation led to the establishment of Science, Technology and Mathematics Education programme (STME) for girls. Programmes are being developed in the revised Junior Secondary School syllabuses to incorporate human rights and gender concepts in school textbooks and teachers' manuals to promote rights and equity education.

Despite the various interventions to include rights and equity education into Basic Schools in Ghana, the actual practice of human rights and gender inequality and its effects in teaching and learning in classrooms are yet to be assessed. Evidence from other African countries such as Tanzania validated by research shows that Basic Schools show little sensitivity to human rights education thereby encouraging gender discrimination and denial of rights (O-Saki, 1999). The general perception is that teachers use teaching/learning strategies and techniques, which perpetuate gender discrimination and abuse of the children's rights in Public and Private Basic schools in Ghana. The extent to which such a situation persists and the forms and the nature in which it persists is not known. To date very little in terms of efforts to unravel the situation and establish through research the situation of equity and rights practices in our basic schools have been undertaken. This study therefore seeks to fill a major gap and provide the first systematic investigation into the promotion or otherwise of rights and equity practice in the Ghanaian classrooms.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The study in the main set out to assess the extent to which gender equity and human rights education is taught and practised in Basic Schools in Ghana. Central to the research was an examination of strategies used by schools to perpetuate gender discrimination and consequently the denial of human rights. The research among others sought to:

- i. Examine the code of discipline of Ghanaian Basic Schools.
- ii. Evaluate pupils and teachers' awareness of child rights and gender issues in Ghanaian Basic Schools.
- iii. Assess the perceptions of teachers on the effects of the abuse of the rights of the child and gender discrimination on the development of children.
- iv. Examine the practice of human rights and gender equity in classroom interactions in Public and Private Basic Schools in Ghana.
- v. Solicit from Teachers of sampled schools, structures that can be put in place to ensure gender equity and human rights teaching/learning and practice in schools.
- vi. Suggest strategies for promoting human rights and gender equity education in Basic Schools in Ghana.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The study provides information and insight on rights and gender equity and identifies the basis for improving teaching and learning of gender and human rights education in schools in Ghana. The findings provide inputs for initial teacher and in-service training on children's rights and gender equity in the classroom. Finally, the findings throw light on the structures in Ghana that perpetuate gender discrimination and denial of human rights in schools.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

2.0 Introduction

Theories enable the researcher to organise and interpret data. Enhance the ability of the researcher to see the relationship(s) between one event and others. Theories therefore do not only constitute tools for reflection but also guide the collection and interpretation of data. In the previous chapter, a background to the study and the research method were discussed. This chapter examines the theoretical perspectives or framework upon which the present research is based. *Cultural Reproduction and Structural Violence* provides useful frames for an analysis of equity and rights in basic schools in Ghana.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

According to the *Reproduction and Structural Violence Theory* Teachers as members of society carry societal perceptions of human rights and gender role socialisation in their interactions with pupils. Gender equity and human rights issues are hegemonic and power holders in society would maintain the *status quo* in order to cling to power.

Therefore introducing equity and rights of the child in schools involves an annihilation of oppressive structures that limit the life chances of children, which in effect reduces the amount of power held by oppressive groups. This gives rise to conflict between two opposing groups; the conservative and the progressive in society. As observed by Marx and Cuff, *et al.*, 1992:88-89), in every society there is always a group having strong interest in maintaining an existing system and another group with a strong interest in changing it. The progressive group on one hand questions the *status quo* while the conservative on the other works to maintain it, thereby reproducing social and economic structures, decision making processes, etc. created by society to limit the life chances of a group.

A study of human rights and gender equity in basic schools in Ghana is an indirect study of the Ghanaian society on their perceptions of human rights and gender equity. This research is centred on the relationship between the school and society. It examines critically, the extent to which structures, which limit the rights of children in the larger community, are reproduced in schools. The school can be viewed as a microcosm of the macrocosm. In other words the school is a miniature society.

Teaching and learning do not operate in a vacuum but within social setting.

Rights and gender equity in the classroom are greatly influenced by the structure of the community. Writing on *The Culture of Education* Bruner (1996:4), observes that learning and thinking are always situated in a cultural setting. Rights and equity in the classroom can therefore be observed by an analysis of the tools provided by the educational system namely teachers, educational materials, syllabuses, etc. Teachers are from diverse backgrounds in society with varied perceptions on gender relations. This consciously or unconsciously affects teaching methods, prescriptions of punishment, assignment of leadership tasks to pupils, the use of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, school and counselling, etc. in a gender sensitive manner. Bourdieu and Passeron's view as stated above draws the attention to the fact that one way of instilling rights and equity in schools is to examine teacher education as well as the content of education in basic schools.

The suggestion drawn from such a position is that the way teachers and pupils think and act on gender and equity issues are, to a large extent, culturally determined. O-Saki observes that teachers maintained traditional gender roles and the few that attempted to modify these roles met opposition from both parents and pupils. According to O-Saki the view was that:

The whole society including the children themselves, know that cooking, fetching water serving visitors and the like are girls' tasks. If you assign boys you face a lot of resistance from both the children and their parents (1999:21)

Schools are therefore compelled to reproduce existing culture since stakeholders comprising parents; government, employers etc. have a major influence in education. *Cultural reproduction* by schools can equally be the cause of low level of practice of human rights and gender equity in Ghanaian schools. Cultural reproduction is defined as the ways in which schools in conjunction with other social institutions help to perpetuate social and economic inequalities across generations (Giddens, 1994:483). The educational system plays a major role in cultural reproduction. As observed by Bourdeau and Passeron, schooling and the educational system

... tends to equip agents ... to inculcate ... a standard of training. The teaching tools which (the educational system) makes available to its agents (manuals, commentaries, abstracts, teachers, syllabuses, set books, teaching instructions, etc.) must be seen not simply as aids to inculcation but also instruments of control tending to safeguard orthodoxy... (1990:58)

Such instruments of control have built into them structural violence that are used to perpetuate the status quo. The school through its socialisation process, like other social institutions, has structural violence built in it to limit the chances of children, especially the girl child and other minority groups. Structural violence can be said to be in operation when force is not exerted wilfully by one person to another but through a *structure created* and perpetuated by a custom or law. The structure could be a tradition (*e.g. educational apartheid*), cultural (*e.g. girls are supposed to be submissive, children must obey all those older than them*), economic (*e.g. girls and boys socialised to accept certain vocations*) religious (*justifying how children should be treated from religious point of view*). Johan Galtung credited with this theory notes that when human beings are influenced in society through such structures their somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisations.

The position then is that any form of oppression, exploitation, marginalisation inbuilt into structures that do not give pupil equal life chances and therefore an infringement on human rights can be described as structural violence. Unfortunately, except with a trained eye, the only visible violence in schools is physical violence. Physical violence is an *event* and takes place within a particular time and place and therefore easy to notice (e.g. corporal punishment in schools and homes) while structural violence is a *process* perpetuated by the socialisation process through very subtle and covert ways. The essence of violence is to inflict pain, in order to ensure compliance, which could be physical or psychological with the latter having a more lasting effect.

Equality is withheld from citizens through the manipulation of structures in society by the creation of structures (barriers) to limit the life chances of a group of people in order to maintain their subordinate positions in society. Structural violence can manifest itself in various forms at the basic school level:

* selective development of one gender e.g. emphasis on boys education to the neglect of girls, encouragement of girls to take certain subjects on the grounds that *they can only perform well in those subjects*. e.g. life skills, home economics, etc. This is a form of *educational apartheid*.

* assigning girls more domestic chores at school while boys have more freedom to rest after classes. e.g. buying food and fetching water for teachers. This hinders good performance at school and serves to keep girls as underdogs= compared with boys who are >top dogs.= The consequence of this is a creation of a vicious cycle of dependence.

* violence of the *status quo*; the routine oppression and systematic exploitation and marginalisation of the sexes. What leadership tasks, assignment of responsibilities, etc. exists in basic schools?

* economic exploitation. This takes the form over using pupils either during or after schooling hours. The structure put in place may be termed *extra-curricula activities, school agricultural days*- all in the *good* name of making the pupil learn practical work.

Gender inequality can be observed in the school system in several other ways as discussed by Paechter (1998). Citing the studies of other researchers in the US and UK Paechter indicated the following:

- Teachers spend more time and attention to control boys' boisterousness (classroom disruptions) in school.
- Boys dominate more space in recreational activities for example boys play football which takes up more space than games engaged in by girls (Shilling, 1991).
- Boys comment on the looks of girls and dresses they wore (Lees, 1993; Draper, 1991)
- Girls suffer from verbal and physical bullying from boys.
- Sexual harassment suffered by girls in schools (sexual aggression by boys and male teachers).
- Use of foul language on girls.
- Boys out-talk girls in classroom teaching /learning (Luke, 1994)
- Girl's contribution in class are less praised than those of boys by teachers (Swann, 1992).
- Girls participate less in teacher-student interactions than boys (Swann and Garddol, 1994).
- Teachers discriminate against girls in calling pupils to participate in classroom teaching/learning activities. This marginalizes girls from benefiting from collaborative learning and denies them opportunities to work with their ideas and have them valued, to build confidence for adult discussion in public life.
- When girls show boisterousness, competitiveness, unruliness and assertiveness it is considered a deviant behaviour but if it comes from boys it is normal academic brilliance (Robinson, 1992).
- When girls challenge a male teacher's knowledge and the relevance of a topic, it can be considered an affront to the masculinity of the teacher (Robinson, 1992).

Peaceful laws and practices, which help to maintain order in schools, may be *instruments, masks* or *guises* of violence. Structural violence works by changing the *moral colour* of an act by the school from wrong to right or to some other immediate meaning acceptable to the *status quo*. For instance, over burdening girls with menial chores is interpreted by society as lessons meant to prepare the girl for adulthood and not rather from a perspective of denial of rights to leisure.

Another way structural violence works is by *making reality opaque* (Odora, 1998). Partial explanations or in some cases no explanations at all are given to issues that border on rights. Important information may be withheld from pupils under the cover that they are too young to know. One does not see an act as violent even though it is. Brock-Utne (1985), a feminist researcher, observes that through cultural violence, society has been socialised into routinising violence to the extent that its inclusion in structures/institutions is so hard to challenge (Odora, 1998:43).

Brock-Utne's statement draws the attention of researchers on rights and equity to investigate the awareness level of both teachers and pupils on rights and equity in schools. An informal observation in society suggests that there is oppression, marginalisation and exploitation of children be it at school or home. However, most oppressed (children) have internalised the norms of the oppressor (teachers and parents) to the extent that conflicts are bound to occur in the process of getting the oppressed to understand their predicament and how to break loose from it. This emanates from the fact that the perception of the oppressed as the opposite of the oppressor has not been awakened to the level of engaging in a struggle for liberation. It is not therefore surprising that even children in schools as cited by O-Saki oppose changes in traditional gender roles.

2.1.1 Human Rights And Human Rights Education

Owing to the fact that structural violence perpetuates inequalities between men, women, girls, vulnerable groups, minorities and those without power under the guise of culture and traditions, legal instruments have been developed at international, regional and national levels to protect adults and children from abuses. These legal instruments, which seek to protect people from abuses and oppression, cover the rights of humans that must be upheld.

According to Nick Wilson and Branka Emeri (1996),

“human rights can be defined as those standards without which people cannot live as human beings. Human rights are the foundation of freedom, justice and peace. Their respect allows the individual and the community to fully develop”.

Human rights have been proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR), which was unanimously adopted on 10th December 1948. Human Rights are contained in documents such as the International Covenants of Human Rights, which sets out what governments must do or must not do and also what they must not do to respect the rights of their citizens.

2.1.2 Tenets Of Human Rights

Nick Wilson and Branka Emeri outlined the tenets of human rights as follows:

- Human rights do not have to be bought, earned or inherited, they belong to people simply because they are human- human rights are inherent to each individual.
- Human rights are the same for all human beings regardless of race, sex, religion, and political or other opinion, national or social origin. We are all born free, and equal in dignity and rights-human rights are universal.
- Human rights cannot be taken away, no one has the right to deprive another person of them for any reason. People still have human rights even when the laws of their countries do not recognize them, or when they violate them – for example, when slavery is practised, slaves have rights even though these rights are being violated. Human rights are inalienable.
- To live in dignity, all human beings are entitled to freedom, security and decent standards of living concurrently. Human rights are indivisible.

Human Rights have been classified into three main categories, namely; civil and political rights, economic and social rights as well as environmental, cultural and developmental rights.

2.1.3 The Declaration On The Rights Of The Child

After the creation of UNICEF by the United Nations, there was an international realisation that children require special attention, special needs and rights (Marrion, 1989). These rights are similar but also different from that of adults. These rights are enshrined in the 1989 UN Convention On The Rights Of The Child. Interestingly, Ghana was the first country to ratify the legislation instrument on the rights of the child in 1990. To operationalise the implementation of the rights of the child, national legal instruments have been developed to support enforcement of the tenets of the UN Convention On The Rights Of The Child. In Ghana, the legal documents include the 1992 Constitution of the

Republic of Ghana, The Children's Act of 1998 and the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act of 1998.

2.1.4 Human Rights Education

According to Nick Wilson and Branka Emeri (1996), human rights education “is education about, but also for human rights”. It is that education which helps people to develop to the extent of understanding, respecting, protecting and defending human rights. Human rights education provides knowledge on human rights to enable people to identify and claim the type of rights they have. It also provides skills for protecting and defending their rights. Human rights education also enables people to develop attitudes for respecting the rights of other people and to ensure peaceful coexistence.

The methodology suitable for human rights education is the participative and interactive methods. These methods make learners become active and explore the world around in contrast to teacher centred method, which make learners passive recipients of knowledge from teachers (Ibid).

2.1.5 Child Abuse

When other people infringe upon the rights of a child, that child has been abused. There are many forms of abuses suffered by children in Ghana. Some of these include, physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, defilement, sexual harassment, rape, caning, bullying and silencing (CRDD, 2001).

Richard Reid, quoted in Children of the World (1994) said

“The law on children's rights has three parts: **provision**(food, medical care, education, etc.), **protection** (from child labour, adult abuse, under the law, etc.) and **participation** by children. Few governments have any philosophic problem with the first two. It's the third part that worries them”.

When pupils have acquired knowledge of their rights, skills to defend their rights and attitudinal change to observe, protect and defend their rights and the rights of others, conditions can be created in the schools to prevent the exercise of these abilities acquired by students. Punishment is one tool used to silence (silencing) children or pupils in a school setting. If pupils are silenced they fear to speak out about abuses they suffer in school. However, when silencing obstacles are removed then pupils have a voice (Voicing). Voicing gives opportunities to children to speak out and defend their rights. School authorities need to listen to them and act responsibly. This type of conditions leads to participation of children in human rights.

In conclusion then, cultural reproduction and structural violence are foundations upon which an analysis of human rights and gender equity in basic schools are based in this research. These concepts have been adopted due to the fact that the school is a miniature society and for that matter structures that limit the life chances of children, women, minority groups, etc. in the society are reproduced and reinforced by the school. Challenging the *status quo* (oppressive structures) is the way by which gender equity and human rights can be ensured in schools. This will require raising the consciousness levels of both teachers and pupils on equity and human rights. Consciousness raising can only be effective if the exact nature and of the practice of human rights and gender equity in the Basic Schools are well understood.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

In this work the term research method is used to refer to the range of approaches that have been employed for gathering data, used as basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction (Cohen and Manion, 1994:38). The study was conducted from March to June 2001.

Triangulation

The choice of triangulation is usually to ensure that responses from different data gathering instruments on the same research subjects on the issue are consistent (Nachmias and Nachmias 1993, Smith, 1991 & Cohen and Manion, 1994). This is to avoid running into hasty conclusions thereby marring the external validity of the findings. Of the six different forms of triangulation as suggested by Denzin (cited in Cohen and Manion, 1994:236), methodological triangulation was employed in this research and involved the use of different data gathering methods on research subjects.

3.1 The Sample and Sampling

The target population of the study comprised head teachers, teachers and pupils of public and private Primary and Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) in Ghana. The sample was carefully selected to cater for the heterogeneous characteristics of the target population. Sampling occurred at various levels. In the first place, the country was divided into three zones namely, the Northern, Central and the Southern zones as presented as below:

ZONE	REGION
Northern	Northern, Upper East and Upper West
Central	Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Eastern
Southern	Greater Accra, Central, Western and Volta.

In each zone a district was selected and further divided up into its urban and rural settlements. The selection of specific districts was determined by factors like accessibility and the presence or otherwise of public and private basic schools. In the Northern zone, Bolgatanga and Tamale Municipal Districts were selected because it was not possible to obtain two Private JSS in the Bolgatanga District. One Private JSS was added to the sample from Tamale Municipality.

The New Juaben Municipality was sampled for the study in the Central zone since it was easily accessible and had the required complements of Public, Private and rural and urban schools. Accra Metropolis (Ablekuma South Sub-Metro) and Ga Districts were selected as study sites in the Southern zone. Ga District was selected because of the availability of schools located in rural areas in the district.

In all 8 primary schools and JSS were selected from each zone making a total of 48 schools. Half the total number of schools (24) was private and the other public. The selection of schools also took account of rural/urban location of the schools and an equal number was drawn from each location. In every Primary school, two P3 and P6 pupils each were selected for interview. As transitional classes in the primary schools pupils were in a better position to present a more balanced perspective of their lives in school. In the JSS however, pupils were selected from JSS1 and JSS2 because JSS3 was preparing for their final Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) at the time of the study.

The number of schools and classes sampled for the study in the various zone of the country are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Sample Structure Showing Number of Schools and Classes Observed

Schools Observed	Regions/Zones			No. of classes
	Northern	Central	Southern	
PRIMARY SCHOOLS				
Public Primary (rural)	1	1	1	1P3, 1P6. = 6
Public Primary (urban)	1	1	1	1P3, 1P6. = 6
Private Primary (rural)	1	1	1	1P3, 1P6 = 6
Private Primary (urban)	1	1	1	1P3, 1P6 = 6
Total	4	4	4	24
JUNIOR SEC. SCH. (JSS)				
Public JSS (rural)	1	1	1	1JSS1, 1JSS2 = 6
Public JSS (urban)	1	1	1	1JSS1, 1JSS2 = 6
Private JSS (rural)	1	1	1	1JSS1, 1JSS2 = 6
Private JSS (urban)	1	1	1	1JSS1, 1JSS2 = 6
Total	4	4	4	24
Grand total Number of schools visited	(8)	(8)	(8)	

Source: Field Survey 2001

Also, included in the sample are nine Heads of Primary Schools, 54 Primary School Teachers, eight Heads of JSS and 40 Junior Secondary School Teachers. Besides the teachers, 80 school pupils made up of 41 boys and 39 girls were selected for the study.

3.2.1 Data Gathering Instruments and Processes

The data gathering instruments used included questionnaire for teachers and Head teachers, interview schedule for pupils and unstructured interview schedules for teachers/

head teachers after lesson observation. Unstructured interviews were also conducted with Circuit Supervisors and Educational authorities in the Ghana Education Service. Other methods used included observation of classroom teaching and learning processes, pupils' outdoor activities and analysis of educational policy documents and syllabuses. The study also intended to sample members of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) of the schools visited but they were not available at the time of the visits.

3.2.2 Selection of Schools

In every District visited, the research team called at the District Education office and met the District Director of Education or the deputy. After introduction, the objectives of the research was outlined to the education authorities. The education authorities then detailed an officer to lead the team. The list of schools in the district was provided and stratified into Public, Private, Primary, JSS, Rural and Urban schools. In the districts where Private Junior Secondary schools were scarce, the only available ones were selected for the study. Random sampling was done for all other schools based on the stratified list.

3.2.3 Selection Of Respondents From Schools

The officer from the District Education Office led the research team to the selected schools. In every school visited, the research team called at the office of the head teacher and explained the objectives of the study to him/her. The staff of the school was called in for short meeting and the objectives of the study was made known to them. Their cooperation was solicited for a smooth study. The number of teachers on duty was determined and the requisite number of questionnaires was given out to the head teacher who in turn distributed them to the teachers. The teachers were given time to fill-in the questionnaires which were collected later in the day.

3.2.4 Interviewing Pupils

The teachers of the selected classes were asked to provide two pupils (one boy and one girl) from each selected class for the interview. At least four persons were present at a time during the interview. In the interview process, the researchers (interviewers) gave the interview schedule for the pupils to read silently. After reading through, the researchers read the questions out to the pupils, and then asked for their responses. The pupils were told to ask for clarifications whenever they were not clear with questions they were to respond to. Clarifications and explanations were freely offered by the interviewers when requested by the interviewees. Their responses to every question were recorded against

the respective items. In almost all cases, the pupils were very enthusiastic and cooperated well with the interviewers.

3.2.5 Classroom observation

In the classroom, the researchers explained the objectives of the study to the teacher and pupils. This is to assure them of anonymity of findings. The class was told to be free and take part in the lesson as they have been doing normally.

An observation guide directed the actual observation. Two researchers observed the same lesson at the same time from start to end of the lesson. Two researchers observed once or twice each selected class (grade level) concurrently. The small number of observations made per class was due to interruption of classes as a result of rainfall and other school events. Using the observation guide, each time a boy or girl took part in a teaching/learning activity the observer recorded it on the guide by tallying under the activity performed in the column of the corresponding sex.

3.2.6 Outdoor Observation

Outdoor activities performed by pupils at playtime were observed using an observation guide. It must be explained that outdoor observation was disrupted by rainfall at some of the schools during the study. However, some differences were observed in the activities boys and girls engaged in during break-time when not under direct supervision of teachers.

3.3 Analysis of Results

Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analyses were employed in this research. The two major forms of data presented, analysed and discussed are mainly from interviews and a questionnaire for classroom teachers and head teachers and the observation guide. Quantitative data and information gathered from the study was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Scientist (SPSS). Percentages were used to compare differences shown by teachers and pupils in dealing with boys and girls in schools.

The trends as revealed by background of respondents in terms of locality of their schools type of schools, age of respondents was investigated. It also became necessary to evolve quantitative indices to assess classroom participation and the extent of gender bias in the classroom interaction. Below is an explanation of how the indices were arrived at.

At the end of the lesson, the total number of times each sex participated in each teaching/learning activity was determined. The mean total number of times each sex performed the teaching/learning activities included in the lessons was calculated for the number of lessons observed for a class by adding up the numbers and dividing by the total number of lessons observed. This formed the mean frequency of participation in a lesson for a grade level.

The mean frequency of participation in a lesson for a grade level for boys and girls were determined and divided by the mean number of girls or boys in each grade level for the lessons observed. The figure obtained is called Lesson Participation Index (LPI). When the mean number of pupils participating in lessons has a decimal place, the number is calculated to the nearest whole number.

For an illustration:

1. Let the mean total frequency of participation in lessons for boys for a class = X.
2. Let the average number of boys in the classes observed = Y.
3. Then, the Lesson Participation Index for boys (LPIb) = X/Y frequencies per pupil (boy).
4. The LPIs were calculated up to two decimal places to reduce approximations.
5. Similarly, the Lesson Participation Index for Girls (LPIg) was calculated as explained for boys.
6. To calculate the LPI for the lesson, the mean of LPIb and LPIg was determined.

Interpretation of Lesson Participation Index

- LPI measures the (frequency) number of times each pupil in a class performs an activity during a teaching learning process.
- It also measures the extent to which a lesson is teacher centred or learner centred. A high LPI indicates a learner-centred lesson while a low LPI shows a teacher centred lesson delivery.
- LPI is prone to the ‘‘Hawthorn Effect’’ – behaviour change in human subjects who are aware that they are being observed.
- LPIg measures the number of times each girl in a class performs a teaching/learning activity during a lesson.
- LPIb measures the number of times each boy in class performs a teaching/learning activity during a lesson.

Quantitative Estimation of Gender Bias in Classroom Instruction

- The difference between LPIg and LPIb provides an estimate of the bias in a lesson towards girls. When LPIg is greater than LPIb, i.e. ($LPIg > LPIb$), then the lesson is biased towards girls. However, when LPIb is greater than LPIg (i.e. $LPIb > LPIg$) then the lesson is biased towards boys.
- When LPIg is equal to LPIb then the lesson is gender neutral.

3.3 Limitations

A study such as this could have benefited immensely if a large number of schools had been covered in several more communities. The number of respondents would have been larger and thus more varied but resource constraints did not make such coverage possible. The small size of respondents notwithstanding the care that went into the selection of respondents to represent the different categories of basic schools in Ghana should yield study findings that can be used as pointers for future research and also give hints for possible direction for educational policy direction.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and findings of the study. Human rights education policy issues are first presented, followed by pupils' awareness of their rights and rights violations occurring in schools. The discussions that follow are based on information collected from teachers on the status of human rights education in the schools, teachers' levels of awareness and training as well as human rights practices in schools. The chapter also examines responses provided on suggestions for improving rights and equity education in schools in Ghana.

4.1 Policy On Human Rights And Equity Education

In search for a policy on Human Rights and Equity Education for Ghana, some educational authorities were interviewed and educational policy documents analysed. The educational documents consulted included: The New Structure and Content of Education For Ghana (1974), Report of the Education Commission on Basic Education of 1986 (Dr. Evans Anform, Chairperson), Free, Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) (1994) and Synthesis of Research on Girls Education in Ghana, (1997). The results of the search show that the Education Commission Report of 1986 contained the teaching of democracy. The fCUBE document and Synthesis of Research on Girls Education in Ghana identified gender discrimination and outlined strategies and activities to address the various forms of inequality between boys and girls in the education and social systems in Ghana. The main focus of these later two policy documents is the girl-child. The rights of the child including those of boys are not specifically mentioned in these documents.

Educational authorities did show more knowledge of interventions put in place for the promotion of gender equity in education. Some of the interventions they outlined included Science, Technology and Mathematics Education (STME) programme for girls, which has culminated into the establishment of Girls Education Unit (GEU) of the Ghana Education Service. The Girl Child Education Project under the auspices of Childscope Programme of UNICEF, which is funded by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), was another component of the interventions for gender equity education in Ghana. In addition, the Population and Family Life Education Project under the Curriculum Research and Development Division also features Rights and Equity Education. Other

interventions for Gender Equity Education are undertaken by Non Governmental Organisations such as Federation of African Women in Education (FAWE), Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana and Ghana National Commission on Children (GNCC).

No specific educational policy document can be said to have addressed the issue of the Rights of the Child in absolute terms for the formal education sector. The subject however features in Environmental Studies syllabus for Primary Schools. Since the subject is taught by all teachers in Primary school, it means all teachers have access to the teaching of human rights.

The Social Studies syllabus of 1987, which was in use at the time of this study did not feature Children's Rights as such. However, the revised Social Studies syllabus for Junior Secondary Schools covers Human Rights. The implementation of this syllabus in JSS 1 will commence in the 2001/2002 academic year. The limitation here is that only teachers who teach Social Studies have opportunity to teach human rights. This implies that teachers who do not teach social studies do not have access to human rights knowledge and teaching skills at that level.

Since the practice of human rights goes over subject boundaries other teachers who do not teach social studies do not get the knowledge and skills for practising it in schools.

It can be concluded that no comprehensive policy exists on Rights and Equity Education for the formal education sector per se although gender equity is the objective of some of the interventions in the sector. The national policy documents on the Rights of the Child include The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, The Children's Act of 1998, Criminal Code (Amendment) Act of 1998 and The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These policy documents are yet to be operationalised for the education sector.

4.2 Pupils' Awareness Of Their Human Rights

This section of the report provides findings on the level of the awareness pupils have of their rights in schools. Pupils were asked to react to some articles on the Rights of the Child as enshrined in the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. These articles were not direct quotations from the policy documents but rather scenarios depicting the experiences of children showing the forms, in which some of the articles were operationalised at home, school or in the community. The pupils were given statements, which portrayed a scenario depicting an

article on Children’s Rights. The pupils were then asked to indicate their views on the statement by selecting agree, disagree or not sure. They were asked further to explain their selection of responses. The responses selected by the pupils to the various articles are shown in the Tables below.

4.2.1 Right of the Girl Child to Education

STATEMENT 1:

Kojo and Ama took an exam. Ama performed better than Kojo, but their parents cannot afford to pay fees for both of them. It would be wiser for the parents to send Kojo to school.

Table 4.1: Pupils levels of awareness of the Girl Child’s Rights to Education (%).

Pupils Background	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
1.Level of Education			
Primary pupils	48.8	39.0	12.2
JSS Pupils	-	-	100
2.Age			
Pupils aged 8-10 years	32.3	22.6	22.6
Pupils aged 10+	11.7	26.7	33.3
3.Type of School			
Public school pupils	92.3	-	7.7
Private school pupils	22.7	20.5	34.1
4.Zone			
Southern zone pupils	29.4	35.3	17.6
Central zone pupils	22.2	14.8	33.3
Northern zone pupils	29.0	19.4	32.2
5.Sex			
Female	25.6	15.4	59.0
Male	24.4	24.4	51.2
6.Locality			
Rural	25.0	21.4	53.6
Urban	25.05	9.2	55.8

Source: Field Survey 2001

The majority of primary pupils, public school pupils, younger pupils and pupils from the Southern zone felt that it would be more profitable, given limited resources, to give preference to the boy child over the girl child in terms of education. Many pupils felt that the boy child had an innate intellectual advantage over the girl child, which would eventually override any superior academic performance that she had exhibited so far.

Pupils also cited the gender division of labour as an important reason why the boy child should be given preference in terms of education. Many pupils felt that the boy child would need more education because of his prescribed future role as breadwinner of the family. Moreover, pupils felt that the girl child could sell or help her mother with domestic tasks if she was not able to pursue her education. On the other hand, it was felt

that the boy child would only stay at home and become idle if he did not go to school. Education level of the pupil, age of the pupil, type of school, and geographical zone of the school appeared to be major factors in determining pupils' awareness of their right to education.

The majority of JSS pupils, private school pupils, older pupils and pupils from the Central and Northern zones recognised the equal right of the girl child to education. Sex of the pupil and urban or rural locality of the school did not prove to be significant variables in the pupils' awareness of their right to education.

Many pupils in this category felt that the girl child should continue with her education if her academic performance had so far proven to be superior to that of the boy child. These pupils felt that "a girl can do what a boy can do" and that bright girls need to be supported and given the chance to compete with boys. Some pupils also felt that girls would be more diligent in their studies, while boys might waste their time or misbehave at school.

Many pupils recognised the wider benefits of girls' education. These pupils felt that, in future, the educated girl child would be more likely to care for her family well and raise her children to be high achievers. Many pupils also recognised that education of the girl child was the key to national development and quoted Dr. Kwagir Aggrey: "To educate a boy is to educate an individual, but to educate a girl is to educate the whole nation."

Some pupils cited the gender division of labour as a reason why girls should be given the chance to go to school. These students felt that the boy child could find employment more easily than the girl child if he were not in school. Moreover, some pupils felt that education was important for the girl child because it would help her to find a good husband in the future.

The high percentage of pupils who selected the category 'Unsure' as a response may indicate that pupils are generally confused about the importance of girl child education or that they do not have particularly strong feelings about the issue. The awareness of girls' rights to education exhibited by pupils from the Northern zone may partially reflect the strong NGO and government intervention in the northern regions of the country to promote girl child education.

4.2.2 Right To Rest And Leisure

STATEMENT 2:

There are many chores to be done at home, such as cleaning, cooking, fetching water and sweeping. It is O.K. for Amina to be given these chores while Amadu is given time to rest and play.

Table 4.2: Pupils Levels of awareness of the Girl-Child's Rights to Rest and Leisure (%).

Pupils Background	Agree	Disagree
Level of Education		
Primary	22.0	78.0
JSS pupils	5.1	94.9
Type of School		
Public	14.3	85.7
Private school pupils	13.3	86.7
Sex		
Male	17.1	82.9
Female pupils	10.3	89.7
Locality		
Rural	10.7	89.3
Urban school pupils	15.4	84.6
Age		
Pupils aged 8-10 years	21.4	78.6
Pupils aged 10+ years	12.5	87.5
Zone		
Southern	35.0	65.0
Central	10.3	89.7
Northern zone pupils	3.2	96.8

Source: Field Survey 2001

A large majority of pupils felt that domestic tasks should be shared equally between the boy and the girl child. Many pupils acknowledged the equality of all human beings and the right of the girl child to rest and leisure. Such pupils felt that it was unjust for the girl child to become so overburdened that she would become tired and fall asleep in school or not have time to do her homework properly. Others felt that “many hands make light work” and that it was simply logical and practical for all children to help out with domestic chores.

Although the majority of pupils agreed that domestic labour should be shared between boys and girls, many pupils felt that gender should be the factor determining how labour is assigned. Pupils felt for example that it was the girl's ‘duty’ to cook while the boy swept the compound. Many pupils felt that it was the woman's ‘natural’ role to perform domestic duties in the home. However, others felt that all males also had to learn how to perform such tasks in case their wives became sick or incapacitated or they were temporarily forced to live as bachelors as university students. Some pupils felt that boys

who did not perform household tasks would become lazy in the future which would hinder them in their role as family heads.

The small minority of pupils who felt that it was right for the girl child to engage in domestic labour while the boy child rested and played cited the gender division of labour as the rationale. These pupils felt that the girl's 'role' was to help her mother perform housework and execute tasks such as fetching water. Some pupils felt that the girl child's duty was to alleviate the load of domestic labour from the boy child so that he could "have time to study and become a great man in the future". Others felt that girls would naturally grow up to marry and that they would need to learn how to perform these domestic tasks as wives and mothers in the future.

There was general agreement amongst pupils on the right to rest and leisure. However, it appears that factors such as age and level of education of the pupil and the geographical location of the school tended to influence positively pupils awareness. Pupils' awareness of this right seemed to increase as they aged and acquired more knowledge and education. Again, the fact that pupils from the Northern zone recognised the child's right to rest and leisure may be indicative of the positive impact that NGO and governmental intervention programs have had on the northern regions of the country.

Most pupils recognised the child's right to his/her own religious beliefs and freedom of religious expression. For example, pupils felt that Moslems should not be forced to attend Christian worship services in schools, or vice versa. These pupils felt that freedom of religion was to be respected in order to prevent division or confusion amongst the students in the school.

An equal number of pupils saw complete segregation of religious communities as the solution to the challenge of religious pluralism in the school. These pupils felt that Moslem students should not attend public school at all. Instead, it was felt that Moslem pupils should attend Qu'ranic School so that they could learn the Qu'ran and worship freely according to Islamic traditions.

Of the few pupils who felt that Moslem students must be forced to attend Christian worship, most felt that the religious minority should adapt themselves to the culture of the religious majority in the interest of maintaining unity and cohesion in the school. Moreover, these pupils felt that since congregational worship was a school regulation, it

had to be obeyed by all the students. Pupils could however still be allowed to worship according to their own religious traditions at home.

4.2.3 Right to Freedom of Religion

STATEMENT 3:

Ahmed, Fatima and Samira attend a public primary school in Accra. They are Moslems, but most of the children in their class are Christian. Therefore, the three students must attend the morning Christian worship.

Table 4.3: Pupils awareness of the Child's Rights to Freedom of Religion (%).

Pupils Background	Agree	Disagree
Level of Education		
Primary pupils	7.3	92.7
JSS pupils	7.7	92.3
Type of School		
Public school	5.7	94.3
Private school	8.9	91.1
Sex		
Male	4.9	95.1
Female pupils	10.3	89.7
Locality		
Rural school pupils	10.7	89.35
Urban school pupils	5.8	94.2
Age		
Pupils aged 8-10 years	-	100
Pupils aged 10+ years	7.8	92.2
Zone		
Southern	5.0	95.0
Central	13.8	86.2
Northern	3.2	96.8

Source: Field Survey 2001

While some pupils felt that congregational worship provided the students with an opportunity to learn from one another, a few pupils felt that Moslems should attend Christian worship because of the 'superiority' of the Christian religion.

Agreement about the right to freedom of religion was almost unanimous. The sex of the pupil and the rural/urban locality and geographical location of the school appeared to be the most significant factors influencing level of awareness. Female pupils and pupils from schools located in rural areas or in the Central zone appeared to be the most compliant with school regulations concerning religion. Pupils from the Northern zone of the country where the presence of Islam is the most prevalent and religious pluralism is a critical issue expressed an almost unanimous opposition to religious coercion (Table 4.3).

4.2.4 Right to Freedom of Thought

STATEMENT 4:

Parents and teachers can never be wrong in their thinking. They are always right and their opinions must be taken.

Table 4.4: Pupils Levels of Awareness of the Child's Rights to Freedom of Thought (%)

Pupils Background	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Level of Education			
JSS pupils	56.4	2.6	41.0
Primary pupils	39.0	-	61.0
Type of School			
Private school pupils	53.3	2.2	44.4
Public school pupils	40.0	-	60.0
Sex			
Female pupils	51.3	2.6	46.2
Male pupils	43.9	-	56.1
Locality			
Rural school pupils	53.6	-	46.4
Urban school pupils	44.2	1.9	53.8
Zone			
Northern zone pupils	54.8	-	45.2
Southern zone pupils	35.0	-	65.0
Age			
Pupils aged 10+ years	46.9	1.6	51.6

Source: Field Survey 2001

The majority of JSS pupils, private school pupils, female pupils and pupils from the rural and northern areas felt that parents and teachers are infallible and they must be obeyed (Table 4.4). The pupils felt that the advanced age of parents and teachers meant that they had acquired more knowledge and experience and as a result their advice was perceived to be always correct and in the best interest of the child. Others felt that it was a Biblical commandment for them to obey their mother and father and that God would bless them if they did so.

On the other hand, the majority of primary pupils, public school pupils, male pupils older pupils and pupils from urban and southern zone felt that teachers and parents could make mistakes because "age doesn't equal wisdom", and all human beings are fallible (Table 4.4). Some pupils felt that their parents and teachers did not necessarily know children as individuals, nor could they recognise their own unique talents and abilities. It was felt that parents and teachers could not always be in a position to give good instruction, guidance or advice to the children in their care.

Many pupils acknowledged their right to think independently. These pupils felt that children have their own opinions and ways of doing things and parents and teachers

should not think or act on their behalf. Instead, they felt that adults should listen to children and respect their feelings. One pupil however felt that it was important to obey God before parents and teachers.

In general, pupils appeared to be fairly evenly divided in their opinions on the right to freedom of thought (Table 4.4). Primary pupils, public school pupils and pupils from schools in the Southern zone exhibited the strongest awareness of their right to freedom of thought. The enhanced awareness of public primary school students may be due to specific Human Rights related objectives contained in the new Environmental Studies syllabus, which is presently being used in public schools. Pupils currently enrolled at the JSS level would not have had exposure to this information during their primary school years. Pupils in the Southern zone have perhaps had more access and exposure to political and social debate than pupils from other geographical zones.

4.2.5 Right to Freedom from Sexual Coercion

STATEMENT 5:

Mr. Boateng has asked Akua to come to his house on Saturday night. Akua doesn't feel comfortable about this, but because he is her teacher, she should obey him.

Table 4.5: Pupils Levels of Awareness of the Child's Rights to Freedom from Sexual Coercion (%).

Pupils Background	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Type of School			
Public school pupils	48.6	5.7	45.7
Private school pupils	17.8	4.4	75.6
Level of Education			
Primary pupils	46.3	4.9	48.8
JSS pupils	15.4	5.1	76.9
Sex			
Male pupils	34.1	4.9	61.0
Female pupils	28.2	5.1	66.7
Age			
Pupils aged 10+ years	25.0	6.3	67.2
Locality			
Rural	42.9	7.1	50.0
Urban	25.0	3.8	71.2
Zone			
Southern	25.0	-	75.0
Central	37.9	-	62.1
Northern	29.0	12.95	54.8

Source: Field Survey 2001

The majority of pupils recognised the child's right to freedom from sexual coercion regardless of the variables of age, sex or education level of the pupil or the locality of the school. However, public school pupils showed a slight inclination to accept the situation,

whereas the larger proportion of private school pupils disagreed (Table 4.5). The sex and educational level of the pupil and the urban/rural locality and geographical location of the school did not prove to be significant factors in determining pupils' awareness of their right to freedom from sexual coercion.

Most pupils recognised the dangers of a child being asked to go alone to a teacher's house after school hours. They felt that the girl child was particularly vulnerable in such situations because she could easily fall victim to sexual abuse, which could result in pregnancy, STD/HIV/AIDS infection or her withdrawal from school. These pupils felt that the authority of the teacher was limited to school hours and that children were under no obligation to obey the teacher after school time.

Many pupils also felt that it was inappropriate for the teacher to ask the girl to come to his house after school hours because it would infringe on the use of her own private time. These pupils felt that going to the teacher's house after school hours would reduce the girl's time to rest and play and would ultimately have a negative effect on her health and ability to achieve in school.

A minority of pupils felt that the teacher must be obeyed unconditionally because of his position within the school and community. They felt that the teacher's intentions would naturally be in the best interest of the girl and that he might want to advise her about school matters. Others felt that the girl should obey her teacher but proceed to his house in the company of other students or her parents as protection from possible sexual abuse.

Pupils appeared in general to be agreement on the right to of the child to freedom from sexual coercion. However, the most significant variables in terms of children's awareness of this right proved to be the level of education of the pupil and the type, and the geographical location of the school. JSS pupils, private school pupils, urban school pupils and pupils from schools in the Southern zone expressed the strongest awareness of their right to freedom from sexual coercion (Table 4.5). It is possible that these pupils have had more access and exposure to information on sexual abuse through mass media campaigns and the implementation of the national Population and Family life curriculum. They are, therefore, more aware of issues and better prepared to recognise situations that might predispose them to unwanted sexual advances from adults.

4.2.6 Right to Privacy and Freedom of Correspondence

STATEMENT 6:

Mr. Koranteng found an envelope in Akua's schoolbook. After reading it, he discovered that it was a letter written by a boy in the class professing love to her. It is O.K. for Mr. Koranteng to read the letter in front of the other students to embarrass both Akua and the boy.

Table 4.6 Pupils Levels of Awareness of the Child's Rights to Privacy and Freedom of Correspondence (%).

Pupils Background	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Level of Education			
Primary pupils	22.0	-	78.0
JSS pupils	5.1	2.6	92.3
Type of School			
Public school	22.9	2.9	74.3
Private school pupils	6.7	-	93.3
Age			
Pupils aged 8-10 years	7.1	-	92.9
Pupils aged 10+ years	14.1	1.6	84.4
Sex			
Male	14.6	-	85.4
Female pupils	12.8	2.6	84.6
Locality			
Rural Pupils	14.3	-	85.7
Urban pupils	13.5	1.9	84.6
Zone			
Southern	30.0	5.0	65.0
Central	-	-	100.0
Northern zone	16.1	-	83.9

Source: Field Survey 2001

The majority of pupils recognised the child's right to privacy and freedom of correspondence (Table 4.6). Many pupils felt that the child's right to privacy should have been respected and the teacher without her permission should not have read the girl's letter. Some pupils felt that it was inappropriate for the teacher to have read the letter but that it was appropriate for the parents to have read it. Some pupils felt that the teacher had the right to read the letter but should not have done so to the class. They felt that the embarrassment caused by the situation would negatively affect the girl's learning and self esteem and might prevent her from returning to school. One pupil felt that the child's right to privacy of correspondence depended on the contents of the letter: "Children have the right to privacy, but not in matters of love because love is for adults."

The pupils generally felt that the teacher should have counselled the girl and boy in private rather than reading the letter aloud to the other students. One pupil worried that if there was any bad content in the letter then all the other students would learn about it. Another pupil felt that the teacher should have called the boy to task for writing the letter because the girl might not necessarily have known its contents.

The minority of students in agreement with the teacher's actions felt that the teacher had the right to read the pupil's correspondence without her permission because "children do not have the right to private life". Moreover, some of the pupils felt that after reading the girl's letter, the teacher should have informed the Head teacher about the incident.

The pupils who agreed with the teacher's actions generally felt that the boy and the girl misbehaved and that reading the letter and shaming them in front of the class was a justifiable punitive action. Moreover, these pupils felt that reading the letter in front of the class would act as a good deterrent to prevent the situation from occurring again in future. Most pupils blamed the girl for keeping the love letter in her schoolbook rather than the boy for writing it in the first place.

There was general agreement amongst pupils on the right to privacy and freedom of correspondence. JSS pupils, private school pupils and pupils from the Northern zone exhibited the strongest awareness of their right to privacy and freedom of correspondence.

4.2.7 Right to Freedom from Economic Exploitation

STATEMENT 7:

Akosua sells ice water for Mrs. Otu. Mrs. Otu has asked Akosua to sell ice water during school hours and long into the night. Akosua wants to attend school and doesn't feel safe selling at night. However, Mrs. Otu is her employer and Akosua must obey her.

Table 4.7a: Pupils Levels of Awareness of the Child's Rights to Freedom from Economic Exploitation (%).

Pupils Background	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Type of School			
Public school pupils	54.3	5.7	40.0
Private school pupils	29.5	-	68.2
Age			
Pupils aged 8-10 years	61.5	-	38.5
Pupils aged 10+ years	34.4	3.1	60.9
Locality			
Rural school pupils	70.4	-	29.6
Urban school pupils	26.9	3.8	69.2
Level of Education			
Primary	42.5	5.0	50.0
JSS pupils	38.5	-	61.5
Sex			
Male pupils	37.5	2.5	60.0
Female Pupils	46.2	2.6	51.3
Zone			
Southern	36.8	10.5	52.6
Central	41.45	-	58.6
Northern	45.2	-	54.8

Source: Field Survey 2001

The majority of public school pupils, younger pupils and pupils from rural schools have low level of awareness of the right of the child to freedom from economic exploitation (Table 4.7). These categories of pupils felt that children should obey their employers even if it means working during school hours or at night. These pupils felt that employers must always be obeyed because of their advanced age and status. Pupils also expressed concern that children's disobedience to their employers could result in their dismissal from employment and ultimately lead to financial peril for children employees and their families. These pupils saw therefore that a refusal to obey an employer's directives was the most logical and practical course of action.

Conversely, most other pupils saw Mrs. Otu's insistence that Akosua sell during school hours as an infringement on the girl's right to education. They identified the employer's actions as a form of economic exploitation and a contravention of Ghanaian law. These pupils felt that Akosua could just as easily sell after school hours and that she should not deny herself an education just to earn "small money".

Many pupils also identified education as the key to national development and recognised the importance of schooling to help children develop into important citizens in the future. These pupils felt that children's education was important because of the positive impact that it would have on others in the community. For example, they felt that the knowledge that Akosua would gain through education could be of benefit to Mrs. Otu and actually expand her business and increase her profits.

Some pupils objected to the employment scenario because they felt that selling at night could be perilous for the girl. They felt that she could either be robbed or sexually assaulted if she was left to work alone at night. These pupils felt that the girl should either find a respected elderly person to reason with her employer or she should find another employer who respected her rights and viewed her safety as a priority.

The factors that appeared to determine pupils perceptions about their right to freedom from economic exploitation proved to be the age of the pupil and the type of school and urban/rural locality of the school. Younger pupils, public school pupils and pupils from rural schools were more likely to comply with the requests made by their employers (see table 4.7). It is probable that younger pupils have difficulty envisioning the long-term benefits of education and is more easily enticed by immediate economic gratification.

The economic hardship and ‘hand to mouth existence’ often found in rural areas may explain why pupils from rural schools placed more value on income generation than on education.

4.2.8 Right to Minority Language

STATEMENT 8:

There are three Dagomba students at Opukuware JSS in Kumasi. These students have been told by their teacher not to speak Dagbani because they are few in the school. It is O.K. for a teacher to forbid a student from speaking his/her own language.

Table 4.8: Pupils Levels of Awareness of the Child’s Rights to Minority Language (%).

Pupils Background	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Level of Education			
Primary Pupils	65.9	-	34.1
JSS Pupils	56.4	5.1	38.5
Type of School			
Public school pupils	62.9	2.9	34.3
Private school pupils	60.0	2.2	37.8
Age			
Pupils age 8-10 years	57.1	-	42.9
Pupils age 10+ years	60.9	3.1	35.9
Sex			
Male pupils	68.3	2.4	29.3
Female pupils	53.8	2.6	43.6
Locality			
Rural	60.7	3.6	35.7
Urban pupils	61.5	1.9	36.5
Zone			
Southern	55.0	-	45.0
Central	62.1	3.4	34.5
Northern	64.5	3.2	32.3

Source: Field Survey 2001

There was general agreement amongst pupils that children do not have the right to speak their minority language at school. The majority of pupils did not recognise the child’s right to speak a minority language. The majority of pupils felt that school language policies forbidding the use of local languages were appropriate and must be obeyed. These pupils felt that local languages were to be spoken at home but were inappropriate at school because they would bring confusion and division amongst the pupils.

Many pupils spoke of the ‘superiority’ of the English language and justified its position as the language of instruction in schools by stating that it would help pupils to travel, get a good job and learn other “big languages” in the future.

The pupils who felt that local languages had a place in schools stated that children had the right to speak their own language in order to express themselves properly. Moreover, some pupils felt that it was the role of the school to instil pride in one’s own language and

culture. They felt that the use of indigenous language helped each tribe to form and maintain a cohesive identity.

Primary school pupils, male pupils and pupils from the Northern zone exhibited the least level of awareness of their right to speak their minority language (Table 4.8). Moreover, since the gender division of labour requires males to become the breadwinners of the family, male pupils may be more inclined to accept English as the language of instruction in schools if they feel that it will ultimately lead to better career prospects in the future. Pupils from the Northern zone may also be more inclined to accept English as the language of instruction in schools rather than give prominence to another Ghanaian language from the southern part of the country such as Twi.

4.2.9 Right To Freedom Of Association And Freedom Of Speech

STATEMENT 9:

A group of boys were playing football on the school compound. Seidu kicked the ball and accidentally hit Mr. Mensa, the Head Teacher, in the face. Seidu was subsequently dismissed from school for this action. Other students believing that Seidu was unfairly dismissed rallied to his aid and held a peaceful demonstration at the school. However, the Head Teacher quickly suspended the demonstration. The Head Teacher has the right to forbid students from peacefully associating with each other or meeting together.

Table 4.9: Pupils Levels of Awareness of the Child's Rights to Freedom Of Association And Freedom Of Speech (%)

Pupils Background	Agree	Disagree
1. Level of Education		
Primary	31.7	68.3
JSS pupils	25.6	74.4
2. Type of School		
Public school pupils	25.7	74.3
Private school pupils	31.1	68.9
3. Age		
Pupils aged 8-10 years	21.4	78.6
Pupils aged 10+ years	29.7	70.3
4. Sex		
Male pupils	31.7	68.3
Female pupils	25.6	74.4
5. Locality		
Rural pupils	35.7	64.3
Urban pupils	25.0	75.0
6. Zone		
Southern	30.0	70.0
Central	27.6	72.4
Northern pupils	29.0	71.0

Source: Field Survey 2001

The majority of pupils recognised the child's right to freedom of association and freedom of speech (see Table 4.9). The majority of pupils felt that children had the right to association and the right to freedom of speech and expression as long as it did not disturb others. These pupils felt that children must be encouraged to disclose problems in the school and to peacefully protest against anything they felt was wrong. They felt that demonstrations were a healthy forum through which ideas could be exchanged and grievances could be voiced to the authorities of the school with the objective of school improvement. These pupils also felt that freedom of association and freedom of speech would increase pupil motivation to attend school.

Conversely, a minority of pupils felt that the Head Teacher must be respected and obeyed at all times because of his age and status within the school. The pupils believed the Head Teacher would have a genuine interest in the welfare of all students and would, therefore, always act in their best interests. These pupils felt that 'martial law' at the school was sometimes necessary for the Head Teacher to maintain peace, order and control.

Some pupils feared that the right to freedom of association and freedom of speech would lead children to learn inappropriate behaviour from one another and encourage the spread of discontentment and dissension throughout the student body. Therefore, they felt that pupils should search for ways other than holding demonstrations to voice their grievances to the authorities of the school.

Pupils generally agreed that children have the right to freedom of association and freedom of speech. Younger pupils and pupils from urban schools tended to be more aware of their right to freedom of association and freedom of speech than older pupils or pupils from rural schools (Table 4.9).

4.2.10 Right to Information

STATEMENT 10:

Zainabu, a student in JSS, wanted to know about contraceptive use. When she asked her teacher about it, she was told that contraceptive use was not something that a young girl should know about. It is O.K. for a teacher to withhold information from students if they ask for it.

Table 4.10: Pupils Levels of Awareness of the Child's Rights to Information (%).

Pupils Background	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
1. Level of Education			
Primary pupils	65.0	-	35.0
JSS pupils	56.4	5.1	38.5
2. Type of School			
Public	62.9	-	37.1
Private school pupils	59.1	4.5	36.4
3. Age			
Pupils aged 8-10 years	57.1	-	42.9
Pupils aged 10+ years	60.9	3.1	35.9
4. Sex			
Male	61.0	4.9	34.1
Female pupils	60.5	-	39.5
5. Locality			
Rural	66.7	-	33.3
Urban pupils	57.7	3.8	38.5
6. Zone			
Southern	50.0	-	50.0
Central	60.7	3.6	35.7
Northern pupils	67.7	3.2	29.0

Source: Field Survey 2001

Most pupils felt that sensitive information should be withheld from young children for their own protection (Table 4.10). Some pupils viewed the nature of the information itself to be bad, while others felt that the information would negatively affect the behaviour of the children. For example, most pupils felt that knowledge of contraception would lead children to engage in pre-marital sex even if they had not been inclined to do so before. Some pupils felt that information on sexual matters must be given to children but that it must come from the parents rather than the school.

On the other hand, a minority of pupils felt that children had the right to access all information and quoted the old adage: "If a child is old enough to ask the question, she is old enough to know the answer". These pupils felt that it was the teacher's responsibility to educate pupils on all matters concerning them and give them guidance to help them make wise choices in their lives. For example, they felt that children must be given adequate information on contraception so that they could make informed choices about whether or not to engage in pre-marital sex. They cautioned that if children were not given adequate information, they would learn from their peers and engage in high-risk sexual behaviour that could lead to pregnancy or the contraction of STDs/AIDS.

Pupils generally agreed that children do not have the right to access all types of information. However, the most significant factors influencing pupils' awareness of this

right were the level of education of the pupil and the rural/urban and geographical locations of the school (Table 4.10). Primary pupils and pupils from rural and northern schools tended to be less aware of their right to access all types of information. This is most probably explained by the sensitive nature of sex education and the fact that these groups of pupils are more likely to come from conservative families and communities where sexual matters are not openly discussed.

4.3 Children's Rights Violation in Basic Schools

The study also assessed the rights violations suffered by pupils in basic schools in Ghana. The types of rights violation suffered by pupils was categorised into those suffered from teachers and those suffered from peers. The violations were further categorised into those suffered by girls and those suffered by boys.

The categorisation of rights violations suffered by pupils according to sex did reveal a marked difference in terms of the types of violations suffered. Out of two lists of eleven types each of violations suffered by girls and boys from teachers only two types were common. In the same way also only one peer rights violation was common to both girls and boys. The range of rights violations suffered cover physical, emotional as well as the refusal of teachers to perform their duty towards the pupils. Pupils also reported rights abuse in the form of having to perform manual work, which they otherwise should not have been made to undertake (see Tables 4.11a and 4.11b below). The picture emerging here is either boys and girls are treated differently or have different perceptions of what constitutes rights violation. What is of importance here is the difference in experiences of girls and boys in schools and the fact that the school environment cannot be said to be neutral.

Table 4.11a Pupils Human Rights Violation Inflicted by Teachers

Type of Violation	Violations Suffered By Girls	Violations Suffered By Boys
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indiscriminate use of the cane • Throw duster at you when you are unable to answer a question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indiscriminate use of the cane • Inflicting pain by being made to kneel in the sun or in a room
Manual Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Litter compound and later ask you to tidy it up • Asking girls to sweep • Running errands to buy food during class period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farming during class time • Being forced to use bare hands to collect rubbish • Going to clean teachers' house • Being made to run round the school compound as punishment
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disgracing pupils before the whole class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of insulting language • Some teachers show favouritism towards pupils from certain ethnic

Teachers Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irregular school attendance by teachers Teachers speak their own language but punish pupils when they do same Teachers give assignments on topics they have not taught Teachers sleep in class 	<p>groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irregular school attendance by teachers Teachers refuse to investigate an offence before blaming you for having committed it
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher gives group punishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Punishing the whole for the wrong of one pupil

Source: Field Data 2001

Table 4.11b. Pupils Human Rights Violation Inflicted by Peers

Types of Violation	Violations Suffered By Girls	Violations Suffered By Boys
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bigger boys beat us up when we refuse to join them in play 	
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They laugh at me when I give wrong answers in class Laughing and gossiping They call me a witch Giving nicknames Teasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting teased when you play with girls other than boys
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stealing pen, books etc Girls sweep classroom whilst boys clean the board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stealing pen, books etc Unnecessary generation of noise when teacher is not in the class room Talking whilst teaching is going on

Source: Field Data 2001

Girls tend to suffer a wider range of rights violations from their peers than boys (Table 4.14b). Girls more than boys suffer physical violation from other boys. Girls also suffer more emotional violation in the form of teasing and name-calling and verbal abuse. Boys get teased as sanctions for talking to girls on the assumption they may have some immoral intentions for playing with girls. Here again it will be interesting to investigate further the extent to which violations reported has to do with the actual types of violation suffered or more to do with differences in female/male pupils' perceptions of what constitutes a violation.

Coping Strategies

Strategies adopted by pupils both girls and boys to cope with the impact of violations are to suffer in silence. They reported reactions such as keeping quiet and doing nothing. Those who do something will only report their experience to their parents and friends. One pupil gave a response that will probably explain the reaction of the other pupils, the fear that if one should report such violations to the head teacher, the class teacher "will

hate you and make your life miserable in the school". There obviously exist in the schools no avenues for pupils to seek redress when they feel that their rights have been violated. They also do not have sufficient confidence in the administration of their schools to give them protection should their complaints incur the displeasure of their teachers.

4.4 Profile of Teachers

This section of the report presents the teaching and practice of human rights in Basic Schools by teachers. The social characteristics that were used to assess teachers' methods and practice included their sex, academic qualification, and years of experience in teaching as well as the type of schools teachers taught in i.e. public or private. Rural and Urban location of Schools in which teachers were teaching were additional characteristics used in the assessment. This was in an attempt to examine the extent to which these factors may influence their knowledge and skills in Rights and Equity Education. The demographic characteristics of teacher respondents are shown in Tables 4.12 and 4.13 below.

Table 4.12: Percentage Frequency distribution of Teachers by Sex

Type of Teacher	Sex of Teacher					
	Male		Female		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Primary Head Teachers	4	44.4	5	55.6	9	100.0
Primary Teachers	27	50.0	27	50.0	54	100.0
Junior Secondary Head Teachers	6	75.0	2	25.0	8	100.0
Junior Secondary Teachers	29	72.5	11	27.5	40	100.0
Total	66	59.5	45	40.5	111	100

Source: Field Survey 2001

There were more female head teachers in Primary schools than males. At the JSS however, males dominated the leadership of the schools. Similarly, male teachers outnumbered females in the JSS visited in the study. The picture emerging here corresponds to vertical levels of occupational sex segregation that has been identified as operating on the Ghanaian labour market. It is a situation where women tend to cluster in lower levels of the occupational ladder leaving men in top ranking positions. The danger

here is that, the visual images pupils carried in the JSS has the likelihood to be impacted on females by male dominance in leadership and classroom teaching and learning.

Public School teachers have more trained teachers (89.7%) than Private schools (38.5%) sampled for the study. But it is interesting to know that teachers in Private schools have higher academic qualifications than Public School teachers. It is not clear if higher qualification can compensate for the absence of professional training in teachers. Schools located in urban areas have more trained teachers (67.0%) than Rural schools (59.1%).

Table 4.13a: Percentage distribution of Basic School Teachers by Years of teaching and Type of School.

Type of School	Years of Teaching						Total	
	0-2 Years		2-5 Years		5+ Years			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Public	7	6.3	13	11.7	39	35.1	59	53.1
Private	8	7.2	15	13.5	29	26.1	52	46.8
Total	15	13.5	28	25.2	68	61.2	111	99.9

Source: Field Survey 2001

Table 4.13b: Percentage distribution of Basic School Teachers by Years of Teaching and Locality of School.

Locality of School	Years of Teaching						Total	
	0-2 Years		2-5 Years		5+ Years			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Rural	3	2.7	5	4.5	15	13.5	23	20.7
Urban	12	10.8	23	20.7	53	47.7	88	79.3
Total	15	13.5	28	25.2	68	61.2	111	100

Source: Field Survey 2001

The majority of teachers in Public and rural schools have had more experience in teaching than Private and Urban School teachers. These two categories of teachers have more than five years teaching experience (see Tables 4.13a and 4.13b). Thus despite the lower levels of professional and academic background public and rural schools do not have teachers who have stayed on the job longer. What benefits long service gives to teaching skills of teachers will require further investigation.

4.5 Teachers' Knowledge and Training in Human Rights and Gender

Equity Education

Teachers' level of awareness of Children Rights and Gender Equity Education was assessed by asking them to indicate whether they have information on Rights and Gender Equity Education or not. The teachers were also asked to indicate the sources from which

they obtained information on rights and equity issues. The results are summarised in Tables 4.14 and 4.15 below.

Table 4.14a: Teachers' level of Awareness of Rights Education.

Educational Level	Aware of Rights Education					
	Aware		Not Aware		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Primary	50	80.6	12	19.4	62	100
JSS	42	85.7	7	14.3	49	100
Total	92	82.9	19	17.1	111	100

Source: Field Survey 2001

Table 4.14b: Teachers' level of Awareness of Gender Equity Education.

Educational Level	Aware of Gender Equity Education					
	Aware		Not Aware		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Primary	34	54.8	28	45.2	62	100
JSS	38	77.6	11	22.4	49	100
Total	72	64.9	39	35.1	111	100

Source: Field Survey 2001

Most teacher respondents reported being aware of Rights Education (82.9%). Similarly 64.4% are also aware of Gender Equity Education (Table 4.14b). A greater number of JSS teachers report being aware of gender equity than primary school teachers. The proportion of teacher respondents who report being aware of rights education (82.9%) is higher than those aware of gender Equity Education, (64.9%) (See Tables 4.14a and 4.14b).

Table 4.15a: Teachers' Sources of Information on Rights Education (%)

Type of School	Rights Information						Total	
	Training		Reading		Media		No	%
	No	%	No	%	No	%		
Primary	9	18.0	14	28.0	27	54.0	50	100
JSS	7	16.7	11	26.2	24	57.1	42	100
Total	16	17.4	25	27.1	51	55.6	92	100

Source: Field Survey 2001

Table 4.15b: Teachers' Sources of Information on Gender Equity Education (%)

Type of School	Rights Information						Total	
	Training		Reading		Media			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Primary	7	20.6	8	23.5	19	55.9	34	100
JSS	7	18.4	7	18.4	24	63.2	38	100
Total	14	19.4	15	20.8	43	59.7	72	100

Source: Field Survey 2001

Most teacher respondents get information on rights and equity education from sources such as radio and Television. The proportion of teacher respondents who have had specialised training are on the low side 17.4% for rights education and 19.4% for gender equity education. The media appeared to be the main source of information on Children's Rights and Gender Equity Education for Basic School Teacher respondents. Teachers exposure to equity and rights information is through individual effort what readings materials they are exposed to or media reports they chance to see. There is very little by way of a systematic effort to train teachers to handle effectively rights and equity education in the schools.

4.6 Teaching Programme On Rights And Equity Education

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they teach Children's Rights and Gender Equity in their school or not. The responses to the questions are presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.16: Percentage distribution of Teachers who Teach Children's Rights Equity

Educational Level	Children's Rights		Gender Equity	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Primary (N = 62)	50.0	50.0	38.7	61.3
JSS (N = 49)	59.2	40.8	67.3	32.7
Mean Total	54.6	45.4	53.0	47.0

Source: Field Survey 2001

Table 4.16 indicates that 54.6% of all the teacher respondents reported teaching children's Rights while 53.0 % teach Gender Equity in Basic schools. Although there is no nationally approved teaching programme in the schools some teachers do teach Rights and Gender Equity in the schools by their own effort. About 45% of teachers in the sample do not teach Children's Rights and Gender Equity in the schools.

Half the number of Primary School Teachers reported teaching rights whereas the proportion that reported teaching gender equity was lower (38.7%). More teacher

respondents in the JSS reported teaching Gender Equity than child rights. The proportion of JSS teachers who teach children's rights issues is higher than that of primary school teachers.

Table 4.17a: Reference Materials used for Rights Education and Equity.

Educational Level	Reference Material on Rights		
	None	1992 Constitution	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
Primary (N=31)	12.9	9.7	77.4
JSS (N = 29)	24.1	0.0	75.5
Mean Total	18.5	4.7	76.7

Source: Field Survey 2001

Table 4.17b: Reference Materials used for Equity Education

Educational Level	Reference Material on Gender Equity		
	None	1992 Constitution	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
Primary (N = 24)	25.0	12.5	62.5
JSS (N = 33)	3.0	0.0	97.0
Mean Total	14.0	6.3	79.8

Source: Field Survey 2001

Teacher respondents who reported teaching child rights and gender equity issues were asked to indicate the types of reference materials that they used to assist their teaching, their responses were summarised in Tables 4.17a and 4.17b. Less than 7% of the teachers sampled use the 1992 Republic of Ghana Constitution as reference material for teaching Rights and Gender Equity in the classroom. More teachers have access to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child than other documents such as Children Act of 1998 and Criminal Code Amendment Law of 1998.

Respondents who were not teaching Rights and Gender Equity cited two main reasons that they lacked relevant materials for teaching or that they had no knowledge of the subject area at all.

Table 4.18a: Distribution of Teachers by Reasons for not Teaching Rights Education (%)

Educational Level	Reasons for Not Teaching Rights Education	
	Lack of T/L Material	Lack of Knowledge
Primary (N = 31)	48.4	51.6
JSS (N = 20)	20.0	80.0
Mean Total	34.2	65.8

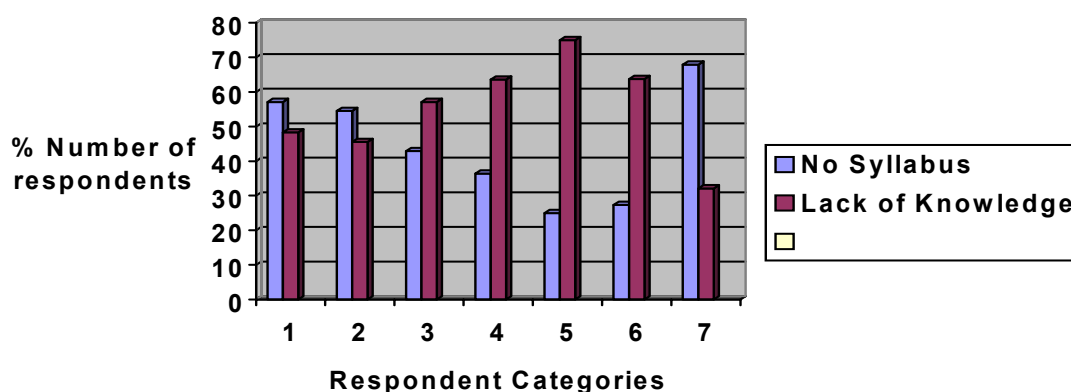
Source: Field Survey 2001

Table 4.18b Distribution of Teachers by Reasons for not Teaching Gender Equity (%)

Educational Level	Reasons for Not Teaching Equity	
	Lack of T/L Material	Lack of Knowledge
Primary (N = 38)	60.5	39.5
JSS (N = 16)	25.0	75.0
Mean Total	42.8	57.3

Source: Field Survey 2001

The mean totals from Tables 4.18a and 4.18b show that more JSS teachers cite lack of knowledge as the main reason for not teaching Rights and Gender Equity in the schools at 65.8% and 57.3% respectively. The reasons for not teaching Rights and Gender Equity was disaggregated on the basis of public and private schools, rural urban and zones of the country. The scenario that emerged has been captured in Figure 4.1 below.



LEGEND:

- 1 = Teachers in Public Schools
- 2 = Teachers in Private Schools
- 3 = Teachers in Schools in Rural areas.
- 4 = Teachers in Schools in Urban areas
- 5 = Teachers in Schools in Southern zone.
- 6 = Teachers in Schools in Central zone
- 7 = Teachers in Schools in Northern zone.

Figure 4.1: Bar Chart Percentage distribution of Public, Private, Rural, Urban, Southern, Central and Northern Teachers by reasons for not teaching Rights and Gender Equity in schools.

Figure 4.1 above shows that almost an equal number of both Public and Private school teachers indicate absence of instructional materials for not teaching Rights and Gender Equity in the schools. On the basis of rural and urban areas, the two respondent categories cite lack of knowledge more than absence of instructional materials. Considering the zone of the country however, whereas Southern and Central zones cite lack of knowledge, the Northern zone teachers cite lack of instructional materials as the major reason for not teaching Rights and equity. This may be due to the fact that courses in gender issues are often organised for teachers in the Northern zone more than those in the Southern and Central zones of the country.

It can be concluded that lack of specified instructional materials coupled with lack of knowledge hinder the efforts of Basic School Teachers in teaching Children’s Rights and Gender Equity in the schools. Those who teach the concepts depend more on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a document that is mostly supplied to schools by Non Governmental Organisations.

4.7.1 Interpreting Children’s Rights and Gender Issues in Basic Schools

In the study, teachers were presented with statements depicting various articles on Children’s Rights and Gender Equity. The teachers were asked to indicate their opinions to by ticking agree, disagree or not sure as an expression of their opinions on the scenarios depicted by the statements. A summary of their responses are shown in Table 4.19:

Table 4.19: Teachers’ Interpretation of Children’s Rights and Gender Discrimination Statements

STATEMENTS	Respondent Categories and responses (%)								
	Primary (N = 62)			JSS (N = 49)			All Teachers (N=111)		
	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
1. Gender deals with issues concerning females mainly.	21.0	69.4	9.6	16.3	83.7	0.0	18.9	75.7	5.4
2. Whatever activities boys perform should be performed by girls as well	80.6	19.4	0.0	77.6	22.4	0.0	79.2	20.7	0
3. It is an abuse for Muslim pupils in a non-denominational school to be forced to attend Christian Worship.	62.9	35.5	1.6	59.2	36.7	4.1	61.3	36.0	2.7
4. It is an abuse for Christian pupils in a non-denominational school to be forced to attend Muslim Worship.	59.7	38.7	1.6	53.1	42.9	4.1	56.7	40.5	2.7
5. It is shameful for a male to weep, but females can weep.	4.8	90.3	4.8	8.2	89.8	2.0	6.3	90.0	3.6
6. It is unfair to call a girl to kill a scorpion in a class where there are both boys and girls.	25.8	72.6	1.6	24.5	71.4	4.1	25.2	72.0	2.7
7. It is an abuse to send pupils to fetch water for Teachers	40.3	50.0	9.7	44.9	51.0	4.1	42.3	50.5	7.2
8. A Child who makes comments during the conversation of the parents / teachers should be reprimanded.	53.2	41.9	4.8	40.8	53.1	6.1	46.8	46.8	6.3
9. It is better to select School Prefects for Basic Schools instead of pupils electing them.	32.3	66.1	1.6	12.2	66.3	22.4	23.4	65.8	10.8
10. This school’s Code of Discipline is written by School Authorities only.	30.6	53.2	16.1	36.7	63.3	0.0	33.3	57.7	9.0

Source: Field Survey 2001

The majority of teachers (75.7%) disagreed with the statement that gender deals mainly with females, a situation indicating some level of teachers’ awareness of what gender refers to. The proportion of JSS teacher respondents who disagreed to the statement is slightly higher (83.7%) than primary school teachers’ respondent (69.4%). All teacher

respondents were very clear about whether girls and boys should perform the same activity or not. The proportion of teacher respondents who felt that there should be no differentiation in terms of activities girls and boys performed was (79.2%). Around one fifth believed however that there should be differentiation and girls and boys should not be assigned same activities to perform (Table 4.19)

The third and fourth statements were designed to test teachers' levels of sensitivity to the rights to freedom of worship. The first statement depicts a situation that favoured Christian and the second the Moslems. The type of religion favoured did not influence teachers' reactions despite the slight differences in terms of the proportion that agreed 62.9% and 59.7%. Those who did not agree even though constituted a minority were still substantial 36.0% and 40.5% respectively.

The fifth and sixth statements were meant to assess the extent to which teachers' favoured female and males known stereotypes. Most teachers did not support the accepted stereotypes the proportions that agreed to both statements were higher than those who did not. As many as 90% of the teacher respondents disagreed to the statement that females can weep but it is shameful for boys to weep. The proportion that agreed that girls should be called to kill a scorpion in a class where there are boys was lower 72.0%.

Half the number of teacher respondents did disagree to the fact that it is an offence to send pupils to fetch water for teachers. Such teachers did not see this as an infringement of the rights of the child. The proportion of Primary teachers who agreed to the statement was 40.3% and for JSS 44.0%. It is clear that the proportion of teachers who do not see sending a child as an infringement on the rights of the child do not differ markedly from those who did not. The next statement was related to freedom of expression. The expectation was that teachers who defend the Rights of pupils on freedom of expression should disagree to the statement. However, Table 4.19 shows that 53.2% and 40.8% of Primary and JSS teachers respectively agreed to the statement. It suggests that the rights of the child to freedom of expression are not likely to be observed by majority of the Primary teachers in the sample.

The opportunity offered children to select their own representatives is seen as an important component in promoting and defending the democratic rights of pupils. By selecting disagree teachers show a high propensity to promote the democratic rights of the pupils they teach. Table 4.19 shows that 32.3% of Primary school teachers and 12.2% of

JSS teachers agreed to the statement. This finding suggested that more Primary teachers are likely to infringe on the democratic rights of their pupils than JSS teachers.

Teachers who involve their pupils in writing the Code of Discipline of their schools are expected to select disagree. But 30.6% and 36.2% of Primary and JSS teachers agreed to the statement. This suggests that almost a third of the teachers in both Primary and Junior Secondary Schools do not involve their pupils in the development of the Schools' Code of Discipline. As much as 16.1% of Primary School teachers said they were not sure of the statement which implies that they do not even know whether a code of discipline exists for their school or not.

Further inquiry shows that both Public and Private schools depend on the Ghana Education Service Code of Discipline as found in the Head teachers Handbook. The extent to which this document is likely to affect teachers' attitudes and level of awareness is not clear. As an official document that guides teachers it can be said to influence the perspective of teachers and will therefore require some attention to ensure that the provisions in this document is in consonance with the spirit and letter of the rights and equity conventions and constitutional provisions that Ghana is obliged to observe.

There is no consistency in the responses of all the teachers on all the Rights abuse and gender discrimination situations depicted by the various statements. This finding suggests that all the teachers do not have the same level of understanding of gender and rights issues. This is likely to affect the intensity with which they teach or handle child abuse and gender discrimination situations that emerge in the schools sampled for the study.

The teachers vary in interpreting situations and conditions in the lives of children, which can be adjudged as abuses or gender discrimination. In all, teachers have different opinions on situations, which depict abuse of Children's Rights and gender discrimination.

The data was analysed on the basis of Public, Private, Rural and Urban Basic Schools however, the scenarios that emerged are shown in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20: Teachers Interpretation of Children's Rights and Gender Discrimination statements by Locality and Type of school.

STATEMENTS	Respondent Categories and responses (%)					
	Public Schools (N = 59)			Rural Schools (N = 23)		
	Private Schools (N = 52)			Urban Schools (N = 88)		
	Agree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
1. Gender deals with issues concerning females mainly	18.6 19.2	71.2 80.8	10.2 0.0	17.4 19.3	82.6 73.9	0.0 6.8
2. Whatever activities boys perform should be performed by girls as well	15.3 36.5	81.4 61.5	3.4 1.9	82.6 78.4	17.4 21.6	0.0 0.0
3. It is an abuse for Muslim pupils in a non-denominational school to be forced to attend Christian Worship.	61.0 61.5	35.6 36.5	3.4 1.9	82.6 55.7	17.4 40.9	0.0 3.4
4. It is an abuse for Christian pupils in a non-denominational school to be forced to attend Muslim Worship.	55.9 51.7	40.7 40.4	3.4 1.9	69.6 53.4	30.4 43.2	0.0 3.4
5. It is shameful for a male to weep, but females can weep.	3.4 9.6	89.8 90.4	6.8 0.0	13.0 4.5	87.0 90.9	0.0 4.5
6. It is unfair to call a girl to kill a scorpion in a class where there are both boys and girls.	86.4 71.2	13.6 28.8	0.0 0.0	30.4 23.9	69.6 72.7	0.0 3.4
7. It is an abuse to send pupils to fetch water for Teachers	44.1 40.4	47.5 53.8	8.5 5.8	56.5 38.6	43.5 52.3	0.0 9.1
8. A Child who makes comments during the conversation of the parents / teachers should be reprimanded.	40.7 55.8	49.2 44.2	10.2 0.0	52.2 46.6	47.8 46.6	0.0 6.8
9. It is better to select School Prefects for Basic Schools instead of pupils electing them.	13.7 34.6	74.6 55.8	11.9 9.6	30.4 21.6	69.6 64.8	0.0 13.6
10. This school's Code of Discipline is written by School Authorities only.	30.5 36.5	55.9 59.6	13.6 3.8	34.8 33.0	56.5 58.0	8.7 9.0

Source: Field Survey

Teachers in Public and Private Basic School show no differences in terms of their responses to statements three, four and five which deal with religious rights of Muslim and Christian pupils and freedom of expression of emotion by male and female school pupils. Public Basic School teachers show a higher level of understanding on statement six, seven, eight and nine than Private Basic School teachers. Private Basic School teachers on the other hand show a higher level of understanding of the concept of gender (statement 1) and offer greater levels of opportunity for pupils to develop their school code of discipline (statement 10) than Public Basic School teachers.

Public school teachers interpret the children's rights and gender discrimination statements more favourably than Private School teachers. Private school teachers show a higher level of uncertainty in their answers than public school teachers. Rural Basic School teachers tended to react more favourably to Children's Rights and Gender Discrimination statements better than teachers in urban schools (Tables 4.19 and 4.20).

4.7.2 Teachers' Perceptions of the Effects of Abuse of Rights and Gender Discrimination on the Development of Children

The level of teachers' awareness on Children's Rights and Gender Discrimination was also assessed in the study on the basis of their reaction to the possible impact specific situations depicting discrimination and infringement on children's rights would have on the growth and development of their pupils.

Gender Discrimination

Situations depicting gender discrimination were related to instances like sex segregation in terms of games played at school ampe for girls and football for boys, and others showing instances of sex stereotyping, asking boys alone to kill snakes, or making girls run errands like buying food for teachers, or giving boys toy guns and girls toy babies.

Some teachers did show some level of awareness of the fact that such situations will only reinforce the common gender stereotypes and therefore lead to a condition where boys develop a positive self-image and girls a negative one. Such teachers felt for example that "boys will work hard to buy cars" and "girls may think that guns and cars cannot be handled by them" (see appendix 4 for a detailed breakdown of responses).

One the other hand was the presence of another group of teachers' whose responses went to support the known stereotypes and felt that there was "nothing wrong" with such statements or that it was "the normal thing". Others were more concerned about the dangers the situations depicted in the statements posed to the girls' in terms of exposing them to sexual abuse. They were therefore unable to discern the inherently discriminatory practices underlying the statements they were reacting to. There were responses like "she will one day be raped" or "the girl may be a victim to early sexual abuse"

Child Rights

Teachers' responses to statements on child rights did also show that not all teachers were sensitive to rights issues. Thus some were aware of the harmful effects of canning on the children's development and did feel that repeated canning would make the children withdraw and afraid to take initiatives. Others did think that canning was good and would "serve as a deterrent to others".

The responses from teachers were further classified into those that showed awareness and those that did not show awareness of the effect of the statements on the development of

children (Table 4.21). The classification was to determine the proportion of teachers who were aware of the negative effects and those who were not.

Table 4.21: Percentage distribution of Basic School Teachers by interpretation of effects of Rights and gender discrimination treatment on pupils.

TREATMENT	Respondents Categories and responses (%)			
	Primary (N = 62)		JSS (N = 49)	
	Aware	Not Aware	Aware	Not Aware
1. Whenever pupils see a snake in the school farm only boys kill it	30.6	69.4	24.5	75.5
2. A pupil is always caned when s/he does anything wrong	21.0	79.0	10.2	89.8
3. Girls always play Ampe while boys play football	12.9	87.1	22.4	77.6
4. A girl always buys food for a male teacher	29.0	71.0	14.3	85.7
5. Boys have toy guns/cars as gifts while girls have toy babies	30.6	69.4	14.3	85.7
Mean Total	24.8	75.1	17.1	82.9

Source: The Study

It was realised that the majority of teachers could not correctly tell the effects of abuse of rights and gender discrimination on the growth and development of pupils in the Basic Schools (Table 4.21). Primary school teachers did show a greater level of awareness of rights abuse and gender discrimination than JSS teachers. It is not clear what the inclusion of the topic on “Rights” in the Environmental Studies Syllabus in Primary school might have to do with this level of awareness displayed by teachers in primary schools.

Teachers in the sample are not able to interpret correctly rights and gender discrimination situations in which pupils in Basic Schools find themselves. This finding appears to support that of Youth and Human Rights Project in which young people said ‘teachers teach facts on human rights which do not reflect the daily experiences of students’, YHP (2000).

4.8 Sanctions for Breaking School Rules and Regulations

Another aspect of the study concerns analysis of school rules and regulations. Teachers were given a statement showing the level of involvement of their pupils in the development of Code of Discipline for schools as shown in Tables 4.19 and 4.20. Teachers who involve their pupils in writing the Code of Discipline of their schools are expected to select disagree. But 30.6% and 36.2% of Primary and JSS teachers

respectively agree to the statement. This suggests that more than a third of the teachers in both Primary and Junior Secondary Schools do not involve their pupils in the development of the Schools' Code of Discipline. As much as 16.1% of Primary School teachers said they were not sure of the statement. This implies that they do not even know whether a code of discipline exists for their school or not.

Referring to Table 4.20, Private schools developed Code of Discipline for their schools more than Public Schools. Again, more Public schools (13.6%) are not sure about the existence of a Code Of Discipline for their schools than Private Schools (3.8%). Considering Rural and Urban schools however, there is not much difference in their involvement of pupils in writing the code of discipline for the schools.

Besides the above statement, teachers were also given 15 common offences found in schools. They were asked to select from five sanction categories, the type of sanctions meted-out to pupils on committing specific offences. The sanctions include 'Nothing', 'Caning', 'Counselling', 'Suspension' and 'Dismissal'. For the purposes of analysis, the response category 'Nothing' was discarded. The percentage of teachers who selected the other four responses therefore does not add up to 100. The responses given by the teachers are shown in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22: Distribution of Teachers by Sanctions imposed on Pupils for committing Offences in Basic Schools (%)

OFFENCES	Sanctions imposed on Basic Schools Pupils by:							
	Primary Teachers				Junior Secondary School Teachers			
	Caning		Counselling		Suspension		Dismissal	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
1. Lateness to school	40.3 36.7	29.0 36.7	58.1 57.7	69.4 57.1				
2. Giving wrong answers	3.3 8.2	1.7 8.2	68.3 42.9	68.3 42.9				
3. Failure to do Homework	39.3 18.4	37.7 18.4	55.7 42.9	57.4 42.9				
4. Talking in class	32.3 32.7	32.3 32.7	64.5 65.3	64.5 65.3				
5. Stealing	22.6 38.8	21.0 38.8	43.5 40.8	43.5 40.8	30.6 8.2	32.3 8.2		
6. Disrespect to Head teacher	17.7 30.6	17.7 32.7	26.8 42.9	36.7 22.4	48.4 24.5	48.4 24.5		
7. Disrespect to class teacher	30.0 46.9	29.5 46.9	36.7 22.4	39.3 20.4	31.7 26.5	29.1 28.6		
8. Inattentive in class	8.1 40.8	8.1 40.8	83.9 46.9	83.9 46.9				
9. Wearing unprescribed dress	6.5 10.2	6.5 10.2	80.6 81.6	80.6 81.6				
10. Fighting	40.3 18.4	41.9 18.4	48.4 71.4	45.2 71.4	6.5 8.2	8.1 8.2		
11. Bullying	54.0 46.9	39.0 46.9	35.0 24.5	33.9 24.5	15.0 26.5	22.0 26.5		
12. Abuse of drugs	9.7 38.8	8.1 38.8	38.7 34.7	40.3 34.7	30.6 20.4	29.0 20.4		
13. Sexual misconduct	10.0 26.5	3.3 26.5	20.0 42.9	16.4 42.9	40.0 20.4	45.9 20.4		
14. Pregnancy of a school girl				9.1 25.0	30.9 41.7	30.9 41.7		60.0 25.0
15. A School boy impregnating a school girl	1.6 4.1		4.9 22.5		34.4 44.9			

Source: Field Survey 2001

Caning and Counselling are the two commonly used forms of punishment in the schools. Observations and interviews of pupils show that caning was pervasive in both Public and Private Basic Schools covered in the study. Caning was observed in almost all the schools visited although teachers tried to hide the canes, pupils volunteered information on the use of canes in the schools. Suspension is the third commonly used sanction followed by dismissal. It is important to note that dismissal is meted out only to girls who become pregnant in schools. But when a schoolboy impregnates a schoolgirl only the girl suffers dismissal. This finding corroborates that of POP/FLE Project (CRDD, 1999) and suggests further that there is some degree of ambivalence in the application of methods adopted for sanctioning. Female pupils are being expected to maintain higher levels of sexual discipline than their male counterparts.

Table 4.22 summarises methods applied by teachers to manage pupils who flout school regulations. There appears to be no uniformity in the types methods adopted for dealing with pupils for similar offences committed in the schools since all the teachers do not prescribe the same sanction to similar offences. This suggests that the schools apply the code of discipline guiding Private and Public schools differently.

4.9.1 Children’s Rights and Gender Equity Practice in Classroom

The classroom observations carried out in the study tried to ascertain the extent to which teachers involved boys and girls in the performance of teaching /learning activities. The aspects of teaching/learning activities observed were as follows:

- Adequacy of learning materials,
- Pupils’ classroom seating patterns,
- Class organisation (group work /whole class teaching)
- Types of Teaching Activities
- Types of Learning Activities
- Number of times boys and girls participated in teaching/learning activities
- Quality of activities performed by boys and girls

4.9.2 Adequacy of Learning Materials

The study found out that learning materials were adequate in classrooms of Private schools than Public Schools. In classrooms where inadequacies tended to be more observed girls were at a disadvantage than boys. This was more pronounced in the Northern sector Public Schools visited during the study. Some of the pupils had to borrow pencils and pens from their siblings in other classes in order to do class work. When teachers were asked to explain, they said parents failed to provide supplies such as pencils/pens and exercise books to their wards. The few Circuit Supervisors met incidentally in the schools by the research team confirmed the story of the teachers. They said the issue has been discussed at PTA meeting and parents were urged to provide learning materials for their children but the situation had not change for the better. The Circuit Supervisors added that some parents had different priorities such as marrying new wives and performing funerals more than providing learning materials for their wards in Basic Schools in the area. According to circuit supervisors it was a question of wrong priorities that made parents fail to provide for the needs of their children.

The availability of learning materials for pupils was assessed in the study. It was observed that Private schools had one-to-one learning materials. Both boys and girls had adequate supply of learning materials more than Public schools. The shortage of learning materials was more severe in the Northern zone than in the Southern and Central zones of the country. When teachers and Circuit Supervisors were asked to explain, they said parents preferred to spend money for funerals and marrying new wives more than buying learning materials for their ward.

Observation of pupils' seating patterns involved identifying whether boys and girls mix up in classrooms or they were separated. Observation of class organisation involved identifying the position of the teacher in the classroom or in-group work. Observation of teaching and learning involved assessment of adequacy of teaching/learning materials, identification of types of activities teachers performed (teaching activities), frequency with which boys' or girls performed activities in lessons, and the quality of teaching learning activities performed by boys and girls.

4.9.3 Seating Patterns In The Classroom

In most of the classes, boys and girls sit in the same classroom in a rectangular formation with the teacher in front. In Private School classrooms, girls and boys mix up more evenly than in Public Schools. Many girls were found sitting in front rows in Public Schools than in Private Schools. When some of pupils were asked why they separated boys and girls, some said the girls did not want to mix with them. Some of the girls interviewed said when they mix with boys their friends teased them saying that the boys were their boy friends.

4.9.4 Class Organisation

In all the classrooms visited whole-class teaching was observed. Teachers were found in front of the class assuming the position of fountain of knowledge and realising information to pupils. Group work was also observed involving Primary Three and Four pupils. The normal class of the teacher in question was Primary Four but due to the absence of the Primary Three Teacher she combined the two classes. It was observed that groups were not mixed; some of the groups were mainly boys while other groups were made up of only girls. Group work in the teaching/learning process was not common in both Public and Private Basic Schools visited in the study. This limited pupil-pupil interactions where equity would have been observed in the classroom.

4.9.4 Teaching/Learning Activities

In the classroom situation teachers were observed in the performance of twenty teaching activities (Refer to appendix 2 classroom observation guide).

Participation In Teaching/Learning Activities

The number of times the various teaching and learning activities were performed in each class by boys and girls was recorded for each sex. The average number of times the activities occurred in each class for each sex was determined and divided by the average number of pupils in the class to obtain the Lesson Participation Index (LPI). For more information on the LPI refer to chapter three of the report. The LPIs were calculated for all the classes observed as shown in Table 4.23.

Table 4.23: Distribution of Public and Private Basic Schools By Lesson Participation Indices

Type of School		Lesson Participation Indices (LPIb and LPIg)		
		Boys	Girls	Bias towards Girls
Public	Primary	0.72	0.96	0.24
	JSS	0.77	0.92	0.15
Private	Primary	1.07	1.31	0.24
	JSS	0.85	0.95	0.10

Source: Field Survey 2001

Findings from the field seem to suggest that teaching and learning favour girls in both Primary and Junior Secondary School classes observed in the study because all the Lesson Participation Indices indicate a bias against boys. Girls in private schools have higher levels of participation in teaching and learning than their counterparts in Public Primary Schools. Similarly, Private Junior Secondary Classroom Teaching and Learning have higher rates of girls participating in the lessons than boys. More interaction occurs in teaching /learning in Private Basic schools than in Public Schools.

The seemingly superior performance of Private schools may be explained by the following factors: higher academic qualification made teachers confident in teaching, in addition, provision of adequate learning materials enables pupils to perform activities given them by teachers. Also, boys and girls are mixed properly in classroom sitting arrangement which may help in question distribution in the Private schools than in Public schools. Boys and girls again, mix up well at playtime; this provides a basis of familiarity between boys and girls which may encourage active participation in classroom interactions by girls.

The data was also examined on the basis of zones and the results presented in Table 4.24.

Table 4.24: Distribution of Public and Private Basic School Classes By Lesson Participation Indices

Zone of the Country	Classes and Lesson Participation Ratios (LPI)							
	Public Schools: Boys Girls				Private Schools: (Boys: LPIb) (Girls: LPIg)			
	P3	P6	JSS 1	JSS 2	P3	P6	JSS 1	JSS 2
Southern	0.97 1.03	1.0 0.43	0.92 0.85	0.34 0.60	1.16 1.53	1.26 1.10	0.29 0.67	1.17 1.00
	(0.77**)				(1.02**)			
Central	0.46 0.50	1.12 1.64	0.86 0.38	0.97 1.28	1.40 1.56	0.91 1.40	0.91 1.26	1.67 1.58
	(0.90**)				(1.34**)			
Northern	0.27 0.42	0.46 1.75	1.27 1.86	0.26 0.52	0.93 1.49	0.76 0.77	0.44 0.28	0.68 0.89
	(0.85**)				(0.78**)			
Mean Grade Level Totals	0.57 0.65	0.86 1.27	1.02 1.03	0.52 0.80	1.16 1.52	0.98 1.09	0.52 0.74	1.17 1.16

NB: Mean Zone LPI totals are shown in parenthesis**

Source: Field Survey 2001

Private schools in the Central zone involve pupils in classroom teaching/learning more than all the other zones. The Southern zone is second while the Northern zone is the least. Disaggregating the data by grade levels as shown in Table 4.24, the mean Lesson Participation Indices (LPIs) differ from grade level to grade level, from one zone to another as well as from Private to Public Schools by boys and girls.

Quality Of Activities Performed By Boys And Girls

It was observed that Private School pupils tended to be more articulate and interactive than Public school pupils in classroom interactions. This may be due to the higher levels of mastery of English Language by Private schools than Public schools (CRT, 2000). In both Public and Private Schools boys tended to answer questions by providing short answers in the form of words while girls did so in longer answers as sentences. It will be interesting to investigate further the implications of such differences.

There were instances where (four instances) pupils corrected teachers in both Private and Public schools. Boys corrected teachers more than girls. In all the instances observed teachers accepted corrections because they were valid. Pupils gave examples in classroom interactions in Both Public and Private schools in the study. However, boys gave more examples than girls. During the observation several instances of both boys and girls giving wrong answers were observed. Teachers' reactions in all cases did not show gender bias. Teachers tended to treat all wrong answers neutrally

Practical Activities

The type of practical work observed in Private Schools was Technical Drawing. In Public schools in the Southern and Central zones, boys and girls participated equally. In the Northern zone however, the Technical Drawing lesson observed was taught without any practical demonstration. Apparently, the school had no drawing board for teacher demonstrations. A few of the pupils had drawing boards. But more girls than boys lacked the drawing boards. When the pupils were asked why they did not have drawing boards they said their parents refused to buy them. Pupils were asked to read aloud information from chalkboard and textbooks in classroom interactions in the study. Girls did more reading aloud than boys.

Pupil-Pupil Interactions

Majority of the lessons observed did not provide opportunities for pupil-pupil interactions because group work was rarely observed in the schools visited in the study. The few instances where such interactions were observed boys were just as likely to be involved as girls.

Asking Questions

In about four instances when teachers asked pupils to ask questions for clarifications of issues during lessons, it was only boys who did ask questions. When girls were asked by the researchers why they did not ask questions, some said they did understand the lesson and therefore required no clarifications, others also said they felt shy to ask because the mates may laugh at them if the questions are not good enough. This finding appears to suggest that girls are timid and are not bold enough to face criticisms from their peers.

Competition in class

In some of the schools competitions were organized between boys and girls in spelling and speed in completing mathematics tasks. The above competitions were observed in the Central zone Public and Private schools. Competitions increased pupils' participation in class activities on an equal footing.

Outdoor Observation

The study also assessed activities engaged in by pupils during break-time using a guide (refer to appendix 5). Generally, girls were seen to play games like Ampe while boys played football in Public Schools. Women football, which is a recent introduction in Ghana soccer, was not seen practised in the schools visited by the research team. There

was one instance in the Central zone where a boy was seen playing Ampe. Although the girls accepted him into the game, he was not able to move his legs according to the rhythm of the game. He looked clumsy and participated in an awkward way. He did not perform as the girls did.

In Private Primary schools however, pupils had a wider range of play activities to participate than in Public Schools. Some of the playtime activities include Seesaw, Slide, Merry-Go-Round, Swing, Playpen and Horse. In schools where play equipment are available boys and girls mixed freely and played together. But in schools where play equipment are inadequate or lacking, boys and girls segregated in performing outdoors activities.

Drumming was also observed outside the classroom. This was a boys-only activity. When girls were asked why they did not play the drums, they said they did not know how to play drums. Others said they do not do it at home while others said only boys played drums at church.

The segregation in out door activities that appear to be operating in the basic can be attributed to gender stereotyping on the one hand. The availability or otherwise of play facilities is also one important factor that can help to reduce segregation. When children are left to find their own play activities they end to congregate together according to sex in order to play.

4.10 Suggestions for Improving Rights and Equity Education in Ghana.

The teachers were asked to give suggestions for improving Rights and Equity Education in Ghana. The responses given by the teachers include: development of syllabuses, flyers, textbooks and in-service training for teachers. For the purposes of analysis, the responses have been classified into two as shown in Figure 4.2.

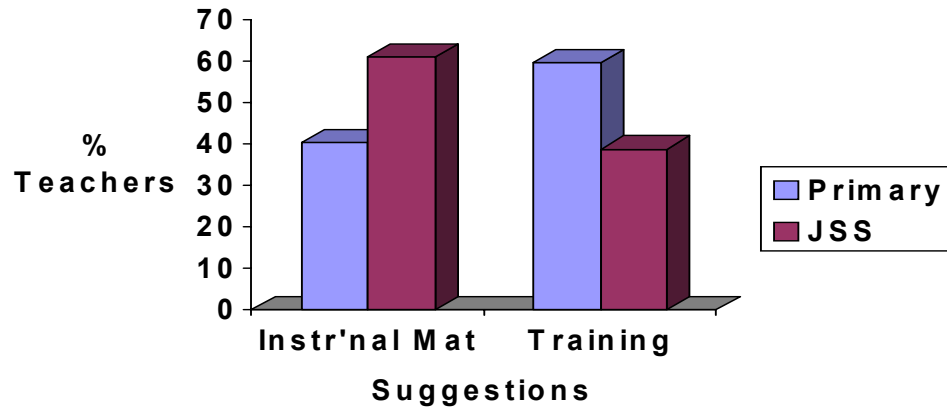


Figure 4.2: Bar Chart of Percentage Distribution of Teachers by Suggestions for Improving Rights and Gender equity Education in Ghana.

Teachers suggestions for improving rights and equity in the classroom were two namely, development of instructional materials and teacher training. Whereas Primary School teachers emphasised training, Junior Secondary School teachers give more support to instructional material development to facilitate the teaching and learning of rights and gender equity in schools.

Age of respondents locality and type of schools in which they are located appear to be important factors in determining how rights and equity issues operate in the schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

RIGHTS AND EQUITY EDUCATION IN BASIC SCHOOLS THE WAY FORWARD

5.0 Introduction

The final chapter of this report will attempt to capture the main findings of the research and draw conclusions from them. The conclusion will form the basis for developing suggestions for improving the practice and teaching of gender equity and child rights education in Ghanaian Basic Schools.

5.1 Summary Of The Situation

The main findings of this research confirm an important gap, the absence of a policy on rights and equity education for Basic Schools in Ghana despite the fact that there have been several attempts at implementing interventions that clearly aim at eliminating discrimination such as the STME and Girl Child Education. Child rights and equity are yet to be operationalised for the education sector. An important gap that creates a situation that leads to the lack of instructional materials and systematic training programmes for teachers to handle equity and rights education in the Basic schools.

Teachers' exposure to rights and equity information is through their own efforts and what they come across in the media or reading materials they chance upon. A situation further compounded by the fact that there are no specific and well-targeted reference materials. Those who teach the concepts depend more on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a document that is mostly supplied to schools by Non-Governmental Organisations.

Basic pupils levels of awareness to their rights as children and the situations that discriminate in terms of gender is an important basis for promoting rights and equity in schools. It did emerge from the study that pupils do agree to a large extent to the right of the child to freedom of religion, as well as association and freedom of speech. On the other hand, pupils were divided on the right to freedom of thought, right to education, rest and leisure, and privacy and freedom of correspondence. Pupils' level of awareness was influenced more by factors such as their age, locality and type of school in which they were enrolled. Pupils were unable to recognise their right to access to information and accepted with little questioning schools' language policy on restricting the use of local

languages. All in all, Pupils show knowledge gaps in the levels of awareness of their rights.

There were more trained teachers in public urban basic schools private schools. Teachers in private schools on the other hand had higher academic background than those in rural based schools. However, teachers in rural basic schools have been in the teaching profession longer than their counterparts in the urban centres. There were more male head teachers in JSS; primary schools had more female heads.

Teachers showed more awareness of child rights than they did for gender equity. In their reactions to child rights, public school teachers were more favourably disposed while private school teachers showed higher levels of uncertainty. Rural school teachers were more sympathetic to discriminatory and abusing statements than their urban counterparts. Despite varying reactions to child rights and gender equity the majority of teachers were unable to discern adequately the effects of rights violation and discrimination on the growth of children.

Basic schools' environment cannot be said to be neutral. Female/male differences do exist in terms of the experiences of rights violations that children suffer. Children also tend to suffer in silence preferring to confine their experiences to friends and their parents than to teachers for fear of victimisation. Caning was the most pervasive form of sanction applied to pupils who flout school regulations. The most severe form of sanction, dismissal was reserved for one type of offence, pregnancy, and the boy child who causes the pregnancy only gets a suspension.

Private schools offered pupils better opportunity for interaction both in the classroom and at play. Private schools provided more play and learning facilities thus giving girls higher levels of interaction. There was more interaction between girls and boys during playtime in the private schools where play facilities existed and varied. Schools in the Northern zone provided the least levels of interaction for pupils in the classrooms. Teachers in all the schools in the sample dominated teaching activities in the classrooms and children had very little opportunity for practical work in the classroom.

5.2 Implications

The key findings have been summarised and recommendations to address human rights and gender equity education issues identified in the study are presented.

Despite the fact that there have been several attempts at implementing interventions that clearly aim at eliminating discrimination between boys and girls in education like the STME and Girl Child Education, the Child Rights and equity are yet to be operationalised for the education sector. This position emerged from the study by the following findings:

- ❖ No comprehensive policy exists for the teaching, learning and practice of human rights and gender equity in Basic Schools.
- ❖ Children in Basic Schools suffer various forms of human rights abuses and gender discrimination in Ghana. More serious is the operation of sexual ambivalence that prescribes different levels of sanctions to boys and girls and expects of girls higher levels of adherence to sexual standards than boys. Pupils' expression of fear of victimisation suggests that some amount of silencing can be said to occur in Ghanaian Basic Schools through a lack of well established structures for dealing with rights violation and victimisation. Some amount of structural violence can be said to have been transferred from society to school. The education system can influence and modify it if it has specific designed strategies for teaching, learning and practice of Rights and Gender Equity.
- ❖ Public and Private schools enforce the Ghana Education Service Code of Discipline for Basic Schools differently.
- ❖ Most teachers do not teach nor practise human rights and gender equity as contained in children's rights documents in the schools.
- ❖ Pupils show knowledge gaps on rights and gender equity issues assessed in the study.
- ❖ Boys and girls segregate in outdoor playtime activities in schools that do not have play equipment.
- ❖ Classrooms that have even distribution and mixing of boys and girls in sitting arrangement tended to give girls higher levels of participation in lessons than classrooms in which boys and girls segregate.
- ❖ The frontal approach devoid of participatory methods dominate classroom interactions in Public and Private schools.

The reasons identified by the study leading to this situation includes the following:

- Lack of a comprehensive policy on Human Rights and Gender Equity Education for the formal education sector.
- Inadequate teacher training in human rights and equity education.
- Inadequate knowledge and skills for teaching and practising human rights and gender equity in schools.
- Inadequate supply of teaching/learning materials for human rights and Equity education.
- Content of GES Code of Discipline for Basic Schools seem to be at variance with current thinking and concerns on human rights and gender equity in schools.
- Presence of “silencing” structures (teachers attitudes) in schools which inhibit “voicing” of pupils when they are abused or discriminated against.
- Lack of human rights and equity service points in schools to enable children who suffer abuses to seek redress.
- Inadequate parental support (low supply of learning materials for pupils) in enforcing human rights in schools.

5.2.1 Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the key findings of the study.

1. There is the need for the development of a comprehensive policy on Rights and Equity Education for the formal and non-formal education system. Such a policy should be holistic and cater for all the levels of the education system and cover all aspects of Children’s Rights.
2. The code of discipline for schools need to be examined and revised to reflect current needs and concerns in human rights and gender equity education for the country.
3. Teacher training should be intensified to ensure that classroom teachers are given in-service training to be able to teach, practice and live human rights in schools in Ghana. Teachers will require training in analysis of school or home situations, which depict infringement on rights of pupils and gender discrimination.
4. Teaching /learning materials on human rights should be based on the needs of children in the Ghanaian socio-cultural context to reflect and address structural

violence situations in the society which are transferred to school. The curriculum development process must involve students' felt-needs and not depend solely on articles from the 1992 Republic of Ghana Constitution or other Human Rights documents.

5. Teaching /learning materials on human rights and gender equity should be made available to schools.
6. Play equipment needs to be provided especially in Public Schools to make it easy for boys and girls to play together.
7. Counselling, legal structures and service points need to be developed for schools to ensure the practice of children's rights and gender equity in the schools. The legal structures would provide easy access to protection for children who are abused in the schools.
8. Parental/community orientation and training in human rights and gender equity should be intensified to provide advocacy to ensure support for human rights and gender equity education in schools and communities.
9. Teachers need to be trained and encouraged to apply participatory approaches in classroom instruction to enable maximum pupil participation in lessons.

5.3 Further Research

The following areas of further research which have not been covered by the study are outlined as follows:

- What rights and equity needs exist in our basic schools and how can education be tailored to meet these needs.
- Why girls participation in classroom interactions (teaching and learning activities) are higher in Private Schools than in Public schools

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APPENDIX 1
RIGHTS AND EQUITY IN THE CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY OF
CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS IN BASIC SCHOOLS IN GHANA.
Questionnaire For Headteachers And Teachers

Zone.....Region.....District.....Urban Rural

Name of School.....1. Public Private Class.....

2. Sex of Teacher: a. Male b. Female Headteacher Teacher

3. Present Qualification:

Qualification	Tick	Qualification	Tick
1. Untrained Teacher		Diploma/HND	
2. Untrained (GCE-O Level)		Degree	
3. Certificate A		Post Graduate	
4. Others, specify			

4. Present Grade

Grade	Tick	Grade	Tick
1. Unconfirmed Teacher		Senior Superintendent	
2. Confirmed Teacher		Principal Superintendent	
3. Assistant Superintendent		Assistant Director	
4. Superintendent			

5. Number of years teaching: a. 0 – 2 years b. 3- 5 years c. More than 5 years

6. Have you had any information on Children’s Rights Education (Teaching and practising of Human Rights in schools)? a. Yes b. No

7. If yes to question 6 how did you get the information on Children’s Rights? *Please fill-in the appropriate column in the table below.*

Process of getting the information	Tick	Name of Material or Programme/ Source
1. Trained in it		
2. Read about it		
3. Heard about it on TV/Radio		
4. Others, specify.....		

8. If No to question 6, why not? a. Does not know b. No access to information on it

c. Not Interested d. Others
specify.....

9. Have you had any information Gender Education (Teaching and practicing gender equity in schools)? a. Yes b. No

10. If yes to question 9 how did you get the information on Gender Equity Education?
Please fill-in the appropriate column in the table below.

Process of getting the information	Tick	Name of Material or Programme/ Source
1. Trained in it		
2. Read about it		
3. Heard about it on TV/Radio		
4. Others, specify.....		

11. If No to question 9, why not? a. Does not know b. No access to information on it
c. Not Interested
d. Others, specify.....

12. Please indicate the level of access you have to the following documents on the Rights of the Child as shown in the Table below by ticking the appropriate responses.

NAME OF DOCUMENT	RESPONSE CATEGORIES				
	No Idea	Heard about it	Seen it	Read it	Owned by self or School
1. 1992 Republic of Ghana Constitution					
2. Children's Act 1998					
3. Criminal Code Amendment Law 1998					
4. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child					

13. Please indicate your opinions on the statements in the table below by ticking **Agree**, **Disagree** or **Not Sure** as an expression of your opinion in each case:

STATEMENTS	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
1. Gender deals with issues concerning females mainly.			
2. Whatever activities boys perform should be performed by girls as well			
3. It is an abuse for Muslim pupils in a non denominational school to be forced to attend Christian Worship.			
4. It is an abuse for Christian pupils in a non denominational school to be forced to attend Muslim Worship.			
5. It is shameful for a male to weep, but females can weep.			
6. It is unfair to call a girl to kill a scorpion in a class where there are both boys and girls.			
7. It is an abuse to send pupils to fetch water for Teachers			
8. A Child who makes comments during the conversation of the parents / teachers should be reprimanded.			
9. It is better to select School Prefects for Basic Schools instead of pupils electing them.			
10. This School's Code of discipline is written by School Authorities only.			

14. What effects will the following abuses of children's rights have on their development?

Please state the effects on the line provided under each statement(a-e).

a. Whenever pupils see a snake in the school farm only boys kill it.

.....

b. A pupil is always caned when s/he does anything wrong at school.

.....

c. Girls always play Ampe while boys play football.

.....

d. A girl always buys food for a male Teacher.

.....

e. Boys have toy guns/cars as gifts while girls have toy babies.

.....

15a. What sanctions are imposed on pupils when they commit the following offences?

OFFENCE	SANCTIONS									
	Nothing		Caning		Counseling		Suspension		Dismissal	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
1. Lateness to school										
2. Giving wrong answers										
3. Failure to do Homework										
4. Talking in class										
5. Stealing										
6. Disrespect to Headteacher										
7. Disrespect to Classteacher										
8. Inattentive in class										
9. Wearing unprescribed dress										
10. Fighting										
11. Bullying										
12. Abuse of drugs										
13. Sexual misconduct										
14. Pregnancy of a school girl										
15. School boy impregnating a school girl										

15b. Which of the above sanctions do you agree to?

.....

16. State any other punishments meted out to:

Boys.....

Girls

17. State any problems you face in enforcing observation of rights of pupils in this school.

.....

18. Please give suggestions for solving the problems you have stated in question 17.

.....
.....
.....

TEACHING OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUITY IN SCHOOLS

19. Do you teach Children's Rights in this school? a. Yes b. No

20. If Yes to question 19, what reference materials do you consult in teaching Children's Rights?

.....
.....

21. If No to question 19, why not? Please explain.....

.....
.....
.....

22. Do you teach Gender Equity in this school? a. Yes b. No

23. If Yes to question 22, what reference materials do you consult in teaching Gender Equity?

.....
.....

24. If No to question 22, why not? Please explain.....

.....
.....
.....

25. Please suggest what should be done to improve the teaching/learning of Children's Rights and Gender Equity in schools.

.....
.....
.....
.....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

APPENDIX 2
Rights and Equity in the classroom
Classroom Teaching/Learning Observation Guide

Name of school.....Region.....District.....

ZoneType of school: Public[] Private [] Urban[] Rural [].

ClassNo. of Pupils in class..... Males Females.

Subject.....TimeName of Observer.....

ADEQUACY OF TEACHING/LEARNING MATERIALS	BOYS: Adequate [] Inadequate []	GIRLS: Adequate [] Inadequate []
TEACHING/LEARNING ACTIVITY	FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION	
	BOYS	GIRLS
Teachers' Activities		
Calls pupils to answer Questions		
Asks pupils to write on chalk board		
Asks pupils to draw on chalk board		
Assigns work to individual pupils		
Demonstrates an activity		
Helping pupils		
Corrects mistakes of pupils		
Expresses dissatisfaction on pupils answers		
Praises pupils for correct answer		
Explains things to pupils in English language		
Explains things to pupils in local language		
Exercises authority or dominance over pupils		
Sends out pupils for wrong doing		
Shouts or shows anger on pupils		
Insults pupils		
Canes pupils		
Asks pupils to clean chalk board		
Asks pupils to distribute exercise books		
Asks pupils to pack or keep exercise books		
Pupils' Activities		
Answer questions by mentioning words		
Answer questions in sentences		
Doing practical work or activity		
Handling tools and equipment		
Ask questions		
Give examples		
Give wrong answers		
Give correct answers		
Read aloud from chalk board or book		
Tell stories		
Pupil-pupil Interactions		
Competition in class		
Corrects Teacher		

APPENDIX 3
Rights and Equity in the Classroom
Pupils Awareness of the Rights of the Child
Interview Guide for Pupils

Name of school.....Public [] Private[] Urban [] Rural[].

Zone..... Region.....District.....

SexTime of Observation.....Observer.....

A. Pupils Awareness Of Their Human Rights

Ask pupils to respond o the following statements

STATEMENT 1:

Kojo and Ama took an exam. Ama performed better than Kojo, but their parents cannot afford to pay fees for both of them. It would be wiser for the parents to send Kojo to school.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

STATEMENT 2:

There are many chores to be done at home, such as cleaning, cooking, fetching water and sweeping. It is O.K. for Amina to be given these chores while Amadu is given time to rest and play.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

STATEMENT 3:

Ahmed, Fatima and Samira attend a public primary school in Accra. They are Moslems, but most of the children in their class are Christian. Therefore, the three students must attend the morning Christian worship.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

STATEMENT 4:

Parents and teachers can never be wrong in their thinking. They are always right and their opinions must be taken.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

STATEMENT 5:

Mr. Boateng has asked Akua to come to his house on Saturday night. Akua doesn't feel comfortable about this, but because he is her teacher, she should obey him.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

STATEMENT 6:

Mr. Koranteng found an envelope in Akua's schoolbook. After reading it, he discovered that it was a letter written by a boy in the class professing love to her. It is O.K. for Mr. Koranteng to read the letter in front of the other students to embarrass both Akua and the boy.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

STATEMENT 7:

Akosua sells ice water for Mrs. Otu. Mrs. Otu has asked Akosua to sell ice water during school hours and long into the night. Akosua wants to attend school and doesn't feel safe selling at night. However, Mrs. Otu is her employer and Akosua must obey her.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

STATEMENT 8:

There are three Dagomba students at Opukuware JSS in Kumasi. These students have been told by their teacher not to speak Dagbani because they are few in the school. It is O.K. for a teacher to forbid a student from speaking his/her own language.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

STATEMENT 9:

A group of boys were playing football on the school compound. Seidu kicked the ball and accidentally hit Mr. Mensa, the Head Teacher, in the face. Seidu was subsequently dismissed from school for this action. Other students believing that Seidu was unfairly dismissed rallied to his aid and held a peaceful demonstration at the school. However, the Head Teacher quickly suspended the demonstration. The Head Teacher has the right to forbid students from peacefully associating with each other or meeting together.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

STATEMENT 10:

Zainabu, a student in JSS, wanted to know about contraceptive use. When she asked her teacher about it, she was told that contraceptive use was not something that a young girl should know about. It is O.K. for a teacher to withhold information from students if they ask for it.

Agree [] Not Sure [] Disagree []

Comments:

.....
.....

B. Identification Of Human Rights Violations

1. Mention three things that your teacher or Headteacher does in the classroom which you do not like.

- i.
- ii.
- iii.

2. Mention three things that your teacher or Headteacher does on the school compound that you do not like.

- i.
- ii.
- iii.

3. Mention three things that your peers do in the classroom that you do not like.

- i.
- ii.
- iii.

4. Mention three things that your peers do on the school compound that you do not like

- i.
- ii.
- iii.

Dissemination Strategies

- 1. Present Status Of Rights And Equity Education In Basic Schools.**
- 2. Factors Contributing to the current status of Rights and Equity Education in Basic Schools.**
- 3. Strategies for Improving Rights and Equity Education in Basic Schools.**
- 4. Way Forward in Rights and Equity Education in Basic Schools.**

Policy Brief on Rights and Equity Education for Ghana

Although structure violence learnt from society is carried to school, the education system can influence and modify it if it has specific designed strategies for teaching, learning and practice of Rights and Gender Equity.

Besides, rights and equity issues which are glaring and obvious, there are others which are hidden under the guise of culture and it is identified by trained minds. Some of such rights and equity articles are found in legal documents which must be made available for study in schools.

In order to enable the school system educate young people on rights and equity a comprehensive policy needs to be developed for the formal and non-formal education sectors.

The formal education sector policy needs to allocate rights and equity tasks for the Basic, Secondary, Technical/Vocational and Tertiary segments of the education system in Ghana. For instance, in the Tertiary level, African studies and law can feature rights and equity issues. Rights and equity can be areas of specialization for legal studies to produce lawyers for the practice of human rights and equity in society.

The various segments of Teacher Education require preparation on Rights and Equity Education. Such people will form the core staff on Human Rights and Equity Education for teacher preparation in Ghana.

In the Institute of Education, University of London for instance, a graduate programme on Social Justice and Education is run. Such type of courses need to be featured in Teacher Education Universities in Ghana to prepare high level Human Rights Educators for the country.