



Gendered School Experiences: the impact on retention and achievement in Botswana and Ghana

by *Máiréad Dunne and Fiona Leach*
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Abbreviations

BECE	<i>Basic Education Certificate Examination, (taken after JSS)</i>
BESIP	<i>Basic Education Sector Improvement Policy</i>
BoG	<i>Board of Governors</i>
BYWCA	<i>Botswana Young Women's Christian Association</i>
D&T	<i>Design & Technology</i>
DFID	<i>Department for International Development, UK</i>
EFA	<i>Education for All</i>
FCUBE	<i>Free Compulsory Basic Education</i>
FEMSA	<i>Female Education in Mathematics and Science in Africa</i>
GES	<i>Ghana Education Service</i>
GEU	<i>Girls' Education Unit</i>
HE	<i>Home Economics</i>
HND	<i>Higher National Diploma</i>
HoD	<i>Head of Department</i>
IDG	<i>International Development Goal</i>
JCE	<i>Junior Certificate of Education</i>
JSS	<i>Junior Secondary School</i>
PBME	<i>Planning Budgeting Monitoring and Evaluation, Ministry of Education</i>
PSLE	<i>Primary School Leaving Examination</i>
PTA	<i>Parent Teacher Association</i>
RE	<i>Religious Education</i>
SMC	<i>School Management Committee</i>
SSA	<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>
SSS	<i>Senior Secondary School</i>

Executive Summary

Rationale

This study explores both the formal and the informal school environment in a number of junior secondary schools (JSS) in Botswana and Ghana, and the part that this plays in perpetuating gender differentiation in retention and achievement. These two countries were selected for their different patterns of male and female educational participation. In Ghana, girls' enrolment at the junior secondary level is lower than boys, both in terms of enrolment and achievement; in Botswana, girls' enrolment is marginally higher but their achievement is marginally lower. Our major interest was to identify in-school cultures and practices that made life in these schools a gendered experience and to trace the effect that these gendered experiences had on the retention of girls and boys at the junior secondary level and their relative achievement. The study draws on both qualitative and quantitative data.

The qualitative dimension of the research was a response to the lack of ethnographic studies, especially with a comparative dimension, to explain why and how differing patterns of achievement are produced. In particular, it picks up on the international concern expressed at the Jomtien Conference of 1990, re-affirmed at Dakar in 2000, over girls' underachievement relative to boys in developing countries and examines the part played by the informal as well as the formal school environment in perpetuating this gender differentiation. The knowledge generated by the study will be of use to international and national agencies in pursuit of the internationally agreed goals of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving universal primary education by 2015.

The quantitative dimension of the research employed existing national statistical data on access, retention and achievement to promote understanding of the ways in which national trends in educational participation are produced at the micro-level. In this respect, the study aimed not only at analysing the daily gendered experiences of individual male and female students and teachers within a number of selected schools, but also at explaining how these everyday experiences of males and females contributed to the inequitable results, attendance and retention manifest in the national data. In addition, it was anticipated that difference within and between schools would provide the basis for the identification of positive organisational practices and strategies that could reduce gender stereotyping and facilitate learning for all students.

Methodology

The increasing trend over the past decade towards producing national statistics which are routinely gender-disaggregated has made possible the study of gendered patterns of enrolment, retention and (where available) achievement within and across developing countries. However, this data resource appears to have been little utilised for comparative studies of patterns of achievement within countries. As in the developed world, it is likely that these national statistics are disguising differing patterns and levels of gender gap, and that variations in the gap exist between schools with similar geographical and socio-economic backgrounds. We believed that a breakdown of the national statistics to examine and contrast the pattern of retention and achievement between males and females in a number of schools would lead to a better understanding of how gender inequities are formed and perpetuated by the school itself (rather than by socio-economic and cultural forces outside the school, which are already well documented).

This study takes six schools in each country as case studies, selected to represent different achievement levels relative to the national averages in different locations. They comprised three high achieving and three low achieving schools, two in urban areas, two in peri-urban areas and two in rural areas. In each location, one school was high achieving and the other low achieving. Data were collected by the in-country research team through a number of methods such as questionnaires, interviews, observations and focus groups over a one year period. The design of the study involved international collaboration between teams of researchers in both countries and the UK. This provided more textured accounts of different contexts and underlined the importance of local knowledges in the production of better insights and understandings of global trends. In addition to these substantive contributions, this approach contributed to research capacity development in the countries involved.

Findings

Across the six junior secondary schools in Botswana and six in Ghana, the researchers found a remarkable **similarity of gendered experiences**, not just for students but also for teachers. This was regardless of location or whether the schools were high or low achieving, and was as true of Botswana with its small gender gap and near-universal ten years of basic education, as of Ghana, where the gender gap is much wider and universal primary education has not yet been achieved. All twelve schools revealed a highly gendered school environment, which served to **constrain the learning opportunities in particular of girls** and to encourage gender segregation and stereotypical gender behaviour. Institutional practices were rarely questioned by either staff or students.

This highly gendered school environment, providing differentiated school experiences for females and males, had varying impacts on retention and achievement, often in interaction with other factors such as quality of leadership, class size and socio-economic status of students. This made it difficult to establish clear links between gendered practices in each school and its achievement and retention data. Nevertheless, the case studies provide a wealth of evidence to show how the gendered experiences of both students and teachers contribute to the contrasting national data gathered from the two countries. The main findings are summarised below.

Achievement: The gendered school environment influenced achievement in particular, **with girls achieving at a lower level than boys** across all case study schools except in a limited range of subjects in Botswana. In Botswana, the case study schools largely reflected the national picture of boys outperforming girls in the traditional ‘masculine’ subjects of Science and Design & Technology while girls outperformed boys in traditional ‘feminine’ subjects such as Languages, Home Economics and Religious Education, and recently have equalled boys in Mathematics. In Ghana, the national picture was of boys outperforming girls in almost all areas but evidence in the case study schools indicates that girls were beginning to make inroads in the ‘feminine’ subjects such as Languages, Home Economics and Religious Education while boys tended to continue to do significantly better in Science, Pre-Technical Skills and to a lesser extent in Mathematics. There was however a huge range in school performance in both country contexts, with a 76 percentage point difference between the highest and lowest performing schools in Ghana and a 31 percentage point difference in Botswana. Despite these differences, the common patterns of gendered formal and informal school structures prevailed.

The research showed that the intake of the low performing schools came predominantly from low socio-economic groups. As elsewhere in the world, poverty has a high correlation with low examination performance. This link was particularly strong in Ghana, where the rural schools

had extremely low levels of achievement. As predicted, in both countries **urban schools tended to do better and the gender gap was significantly lower**. Whereas males outperformed females in all school categories in Ghana, in Botswana two of the three low performing schools had gender gaps in favour of girls.

The study shows that **good school management** can counter-balance the relationship between poverty and low performance to a certain extent. In both countries the low performing schools were characterised by poor regulation of teacher and student behaviour. However, the link between high achievement and good school management existed regardless of whether the Head teacher was male or female.

Retention: national data showed that **drop-out rates were much higher in Ghana than in Botswana, that more girls dropped out than boys** in both countries and that this was linked to **pregnancy and early marriage**. In the case study schools the higher female drop-out was also in evidence except in the low achieving schools in Ghana, which had a high drop-out of both girls and boys, especially in the rural and peri-urban schools. This re-affirms the link between poverty, low performance and high drop out. Unexpectedly, **in the low performing schools in Ghana the boys dropped out at rates greater than the girls** and in two of the three cases, at rates more than double the national average. Reasons suggested in the study relate to both poor quality schooling and locally available opportunities for income generation for boys.

An alarming finding was that **increases in female enrolments** in Ghana appeared to be predominantly in the same **low achieving schools**. The data at national level and for the high achieving schools shows the opposite pattern of higher male enrolments. However, the case study schools showed that overall **truancy and poor punctuality was higher among boys than among girls**. This was particularly noticeable in poor performing schools especially in the urban areas, where there may be more income generating possibilities. On the whole girls' absences were explained as being for valid reasons such as ill health or domestic crises, while boys' absences were treated as truancy and linked to casual income generation, seasonal labour and avoidance of corporal punishment. Punctuality, attendance and truancy are signalled as important markers in the process that leads to dropping out. The research suggests that high achieving schools, with better management, clearer regulation of teacher and student behaviour also had better student punctuality, attendance and retention.

Teachers: The generally higher participation and performance of female students occurred in Botswana, with relatively high proportions of female teachers. The opposite was generally the case in Ghana, which had low female participation and performance together with low proportions of female teachers. In both countries **female teachers tended to stay longer** in teaching **and were clustered in urban schools**, nearly double the national proportions in some cases. Gendered organisational practices and processes in school, exacerbated by gender asymmetries within their domestic/ family circumstances, reduced female teachers' promotion prospects, as this often required transfer. This trend was confirmed by the fact that **long serving male teachers** were more often to be found **in senior positions** than their female colleagues. At the same time, many more recent recruits, especially males, saw teaching as an interim occupation rather than a career. This was more prevalent in the poor performing schools. Head teachers described the consequences of this in terms of a more transitional staff, lower commitment and poorer staff discipline.

There were low levels of professionalism in many of the schools, especially the low achieving ones, with absenteeism, lateness and sometimes a refusal to teach classes. The **quality of school**

management and discipline practices, although better in high achieving schools, **was not clearly linked to male or female head teachers**. Moreover, the presence of a female head teacher appeared to have no impact on the gender regime in terms of allocation of duties, student and teacher interaction, or levels of violence, or on improved achievement by girls. Disturbingly, despite two of the high achieving schools in Botswana and one in Ghana being headed by females (and two low achieving schools in each of the two countries being headed by males), there was **widespread cultural resistance to female authority**; almost all teachers, female as well as male, expressed a preference for male head teachers.

As schools were smaller in Ghana, the number of teachers in each institution were fewer. At the same time, the student-teacher ratio was higher in Ghana (28:1 in one school) than in Botswana (with 16:1 as the highest ratio), with the largest averages in rural schools in Ghana and urban schools in Botswana. In all the schools, with very few exceptions, **teachers were teaching conventional 'male' and 'female' subjects**. In Botswana, with its higher proportion of female teachers at JSS (47% nationally) there were some teachers in the case study schools teaching Mathematics and Science but none teaching Design and Technology (D&T), while there were some males teaching English and one Home Economics (HE) teacher. In Ghana, the female teachers were predominantly in the languages and HE with a few teaching Agriculture (unusually there was also one male HE teacher).

In summary, school staffing profiles were influenced by gendered subject specialisms, the gender-specific effects of promotion and hence location. The use of teaching as a stepping-stone en route to other study and career opportunities, evident in both countries, was identified especially with young male teachers and affected the lower achieving schools in particular. The gender regime, including the resistance to female authority, was persistent across the case study and country contexts irrespective of the gender of the head teacher. Staff configurations within schools were structured by gender and offered little significant disruption to the gender order.

School environment and community participation: Although the schools in Botswana were better built and resourced, only one of the twelve case study schools could be considered in good physical condition. It was noticeable that the low achieving schools had more dilapidated buildings and inadequate furniture. A depressing finding, given recent emphasis in particular by donors, was that there was very **little evidence of community involvement** in the schools or schools working in the community. This prevented further exploration of the gender dimensions of community – school links and any possible impact on retention and achievement. Even where there was an active Parent Teacher Association, there was little significant impact on the school. Most involvement was in urban areas where there were more settled lifestyles.

Institutional practices: the study revealed a wide range of institutional practices which **reinforced and perpetuated the gendered nature of schooling** and contributed to the patterns of retention and achievement noted above. In all schools, both male and female students and teachers were found to be performing primarily **gender-specific duties**, which for both female teachers and students were an extension of household tasks. Although prefects and monitors were appointed equally by gender, in practice there was an explicit gender hierarchy in which the male prefect dominated. In the classrooms boys almost always sat at the back and round the sides and girls at the front and in the middle. **Boys thus dominated the physical and verbal classroom space**, which discouraged the girls. As they worked around the boundaries imposed, the girls' opportunities to excel in the public arena and in the presence of the teacher were limited and they demonstrated low levels of classroom participation.

The **gender segregation** of students was also evident outside the classroom, with queues for assembly and other events separated by gender both in terms of students and supervising teachers. Interestingly, this pattern of gender segregation was also evident among the teachers. The everyday school context thus presents limited opportunities for social exchanges between the gender groups. At the same time, there was limited social interaction between staff and students. **Teacher – student relations** tended to be distant and authoritarian with very few incidents reported of students confiding in teachers. It was noticeable that only one school had a School Council as a formal mechanism for student representation and a forum for dialogue with students. Although a general finding, teacher - student relations were configured through gender as shown above. In some cases, there was talk of sexual relationships between male teachers and female students. The boys cited this as the basis of a perceived favouritism for the girls. Male students also often openly contested female teachers' authority, in some cases refusing to be disciplined by them; they also showed a lack of respect in verbal interchanges with female teachers and downplayed the importance of subjects taught by women.

Corporal punishment was not highly regulated and was most often administered in contravention of the national policy guidelines. Teachers frequently used it as a punishment in gender specific ways, predominantly directed at the boys and of variable severity. Female teachers often asked their male colleagues to administer corporal punishment to students. **Verbal abuse**, which many students considered more damaging than corporal punishment, was common and used especially by female teachers. Student inter-relations witnessed high levels of **bullying, sexual harassment and aggressive behaviour** both inside and outside the classroom, largely by boys directed at girls. The boys' dominance of the classroom space, described above, was sustained through this kind of behaviour. Despite the wide use of disciplinary measures, teachers did not usually punish this **gender violence**, as they considered these acts as 'normal' and a 'natural' part of growing up.

In summary, it is evident that the experience of schooling for students and teachers is highly gendered. Although links to retention and achievement are not directly substantiated by this research (this would require more systematic research over a longer period), it is clear that gender has an enormous impact on interactions and identity formation within the school setting. Despite the pervasive influence of gender and its realisation in sometimes degrading interactions, it is met by non-intervention by teachers and school managers. The effect is to sustain traditional institutional practices and reproduce damaging gender asymmetries.

Policy implementation: There was evidence that a number of policies relating to schools were not being implemented. In particular, recent policies in both countries on **the re-admittance of schoolgirl mothers** appeared not to be working, due to resistance from head teachers and a hostile classroom environment. Strict guidelines on the **administration of corporal punishment** were also flouted in all the schools and, despite explicit national policies banning (and punishing) **sexual relations between teachers and students**, there was evidence from the case studies that this did occur but was rarely dealt with officially.

Recommendations

The recommendations listed below address the various stakeholders. At the same time, chains of recommendations addressing the same issues with different constituent groups should demonstrate the underlying need for a holistic approach towards gender equity.

Policy Makers

Gender awareness training and continuing professional development

- Ministry-led in-service training for teachers and head teachers needs to raise awareness of gender differentiation together with strategies to address incidents as they arise in the formal and informal curriculum.
- Teacher training should include strong elements of gender awareness that cross-cut the curriculum as well as strategies to actively address gender imbalances in the formal and informal curriculum.
- The school curriculum needs to be audited for negative gender images. Gender representations especially in textbooks need to reflect more diverse social positions and activities for all groups.
- Ministries should provide training for school Heads to develop school-based policies, monitoring and strategies on gender equality.

Teacher recruitment, retention and career development

- Ministries should review school staffing and promotion policies to provide a more equitable distribution of teachers in schools by gender, age and experience and to develop more flexible, alternative career paths. These need to be linked with systematic staff review, appraisal, professional development and incentives for good performance.
- In-service training should incorporate more school-focussed approaches and school-based initiatives to tackle the most obvious gender imbalances, for example, in student subject choice, teacher specialisation, staff and student responsibilities.
- Routes into teacher training need to be made more flexible to encourage students into non-traditional subject areas. Extra training and support should then be provided for trainees who do not meet the standard entry requirement. In Ghana, for example, females who have lower performance in mathematics could over the course of their training be brought up to the required standards.
- Appointment to Headship should be accompanied by appropriate training in leadership with incentives in place to ensure that good Heads remain in schools rather than moving into Ministry posts.

Quality of learning and student retention

- Ministries need to follow through policy formation to implementation. This needs to include school-level review and support for head teachers in enforcing existing policies with regard to, for example, student and staff discipline and returning drop-outs.
- Ministries need to address the particular difficulties of recruiting and retaining teachers in rural schools, so as to attempt to raise quality and to address issues of student truancy, drop-out and poor performance.
- Ministries should ensure that all education-related data is gender disaggregated in order to establish a gender-sensitive national and school monitoring system. School Heads and teachers can be alerted to gender gaps in their school and act accordingly.

Physical school environment

- Ministries need to emphasise the importance of well-maintained physical facilities, classrooms, toilets and furniture, however basic.
- An adequate supply of textbooks and resources needs to be ensured to Ghana schools.

Community involvement

- Assumptions and expectations that community support can be taken for granted need to be modified by both Ministries and development agencies. Forms of support, beyond those of finance and labour, which enhance school quality need to be incorporated into notions of community involvement.
- Ministries, district officials and Heads need to consider ways of fostering reciprocal school-community relations and encouraging schools to work to develop strong, positive and trusting relations with parents / guardians and other community members.

School Managers

Teacher retention

- School Heads should set and exemplify high standards and expectations, which teachers can feel motivated to achieve.
- Heads should try to create a positive and supportive working environment for teachers, including opportunities for professional development and performance incentives.

Gender equitable representation

- A review of school procedures and practices needs to be initiated to allow for reflection on their gendered nature and the reconstruction of school routines in more equitable ways. This might include uniform, sports, out of classroom behaviour and subject options etc.
- Duties for both teachers and students should be made as non-gender specific as possible and more mixed group activities should be encouraged. Female and male prefects should have identical roles, or alternate these on an equal basis (e.g. the girl prefect should also ring the bell for lessons). Where duties remain segregated, they should be given equal value.
- Greater teacher collaboration and communication across the gender divide should be encouraged to promote good pedagogical practice with teachers learning from each other. This will produce a more supportive working environment, enhance staff motivation and set a good example to students.
- Heads should initiate whole school strategies to address gender equity issues and deal with cases of gender violence and abusive behaviour. This could include induction and separate and joint discussion fora for staff and students with scope for involving them in the development of solutions.

School discipline: students

- School Heads need to develop and enforce clear policies on corporal punishment. Alternative disciplinary strategies in a structured system of sanctions, including for example, detention, extra duties, warnings, letters to parents, and short suspensions, could be introduced with an induction for all teachers.

- Teachers need to be encouraged to adopt a more pro-active stance in relation to classroom organisation and interactions. They need to treat incidents of gender violence as serious offences and respond by using appropriate sanctions.
- Heads need to develop a gender-specific policy to address gender violence in their school and to provide guidelines to teachers, parents and students, for example in the school prospectus, on how to identify cases of abuse and violence, and the importance of reporting incidents.
- A stronger pastoral system to address student welfare, perhaps going beyond school into the community, would help to keep vulnerable students in school. This could be linked with stronger school-community relations and built into life skills education for boys and girls taught together.
- Head teachers need to provide support for the integration of returning schoolgirl mothers and other drop-outs. Teacher intervention in the classroom and a more prominent role by a school counsellor would ensure a student's smooth re-introduction into class.

School discipline: teachers

- Heads need to establish high expectations regarding teacher attendance, punctuality, use of corporal punishment, verbal abuse and teacher misconduct with students.
- Heads need to implement national policy and develop school based policy and practices to sanction and reward teachers so that there are strong incentives for high standards of teacher professionalism.

Physical environment

- Heads should encourage efforts to create and sustain a conducive teaching and learning environment for both staff and students by ensuring that buildings and furniture are clean and in good repair, that toilet facilities are adequate and sufficient textbooks and other resources are kept and utilised.
- Head teachers should encourage and reward care of the school environment (classroom, textbooks, furniture, grounds) by students, perhaps through prizes.
- Teachers need to be encouraged to use the buildings and wall space as a supplementary resource for teaching and learning.

Community relations

- Heads should encourage diverse forms of community support, for example talks, clubs, classroom help and special events, with clear channels of accountability and communication. This should be reciprocated through school initiatives in the community.
- Schools should devise alternative forms of community support to funding for example talks, reading clubs, classroom help and special events.

Teachers

- Teachers need to understand the role of the school in developing gendered social behaviour and reflect on how their practices in the formal and hidden curriculum reproduce gender inequalities.

- Teachers should take a more pro-active role in creating a positive and co-operative environment for both female and male students. This could include encouraging students to opt for, and excel in, non-conventional subjects, paying attention to seating arrangements and intervening to encourage more shared and mixed activities, interaction, duties and participation.
- Teachers should be conscious that they provide examples of gender behaviour, which students will emulate. They should therefore expand their repertoire of roles and activities and present exemplary professional and inter-personal behaviour, which would result in interactions between females and males being regarded as uncontroversial, 'normalised' and de-sexualised.

Students

- Students, both male and female, should complain about incidents of violence to the appropriate authority, for example, school prefect, form teacher, parent or head teacher.
- Students should encourage their parents / guardians to become more involved in school affairs and in the case of complaints to be prepared to support and represent them to the school management.
- Girls should support each other more, in particular in opposing and reporting aggressive male behaviour, for example, moving around the school in groups to avoid being singled out for intimidation by male students and propositioning by male teachers.
- Students should request a forum where they can discuss issues and air their views, for example, a formal School Council, so that they have a collective voice through which to express their concerns to the school management.

Communities

- Parents need to be encouraged to become involved in school in a broader variety of ways, for example, helping in lessons and with maintenance of buildings and grounds, giving talks or organising events. In exchange, they can expect a more accountable and transparent school management and reciprocal support for community development.
- Parents and communities need to become better informed of Ministry regulations and teacher codes of practice, so that they are able to take effective action when required.
- More imaginative use of school buildings, e.g. for local meetings and community events, will bring the community closer to the school and facilitate mutually beneficial relations.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Rationale

This collaborative research study involved researchers from the Centre for International Education, University of Sussex, UK, the University of Botswana and the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. The study explored the gender structure of the school environment in a number of Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) in Botswana and Ghana, and the part that this played in gender differentiated patterns of retention and achievement. The two countries were selected for their different gendered patterns of educational participation and achievement. In Ghana, nationally girls' enrolment, retention and achievement were lower than boys; in Botswana, girls' enrolment and retention were marginally higher but achievement marginally lower. Our main interest was to identify in-school culture and practices that made institutional life a gendered experience, to trace the effect of these upon retention and achievement of girls and boys at JSS especially in the core subjects of English, Setswana / Fante, Mathematics and Science, and to highlight potential areas for policy intervention in pursuing gender equity in education.

For the study, we selected schools that represented different achievement levels relative to the national averages in different locations. In each country, a total sample of six schools was selected, comprising three high achieving and three low achieving schools, these being in urban, peri-urban and rural locations. The range of institutional contexts provided a wealth of data with which to explore how and why the gender differences were produced and perpetuated. Difference within and between schools provided the basis for the identification of negative organisational practices as well as positive strategies to reduce gender stereotyping and facilitate learning for all students.

The approach to the research combined qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative dimension made use of existing statistical national and school level data on access, retention and achievement (using national examination results). These data provided the base line for the ethnographic case studies to explore understandings of the ways in which national trends in educational participation and achievement were produced at the micro-level. In other words, the study sought to explain how the everyday experiences of females and males in particular schools contributed to the inequitable results manifest in the national data.

This study also provided the opportunity to build in-country research and evaluation capacity on issues of gender through active collaboration between research teams from the design stage through data collection to analysis and joint publication. Although the study represents a synergy of qualitative and quantitative methods, it was the qualitative research and analysis skills of all the researchers that were in particular sharpened. Consequent international research networks have been established which are significant to future research, the development of more refined theoretical understandings for improved practice, more contextually focussed policy recommendations and effective dissemination strategies. All this can make a significant contribution to the achievement of the International Development Goal (IDG) of gender equity in education (DFID, 2000).

1.2 Theoretical Background

The decade since the 1990 Jomtien Conference on Education For All has witnessed vigorous action by governments and development agencies to increase educational enrolments, in

particular of girls, given that in the majority of developing countries girls have lower school enrolment rates, higher drop-out rates and lower achievement than boys. After a decade of mixed success, the goal of expanding educational participation was re-affirmed at Dakar in April 2000 and broadened to embrace issues of quality and achievement. There was particular concern over girls' underachievement relative to boys', especially as this becomes greater as students advance up the educational ladder.

There is now considerable research knowledge about the causes and consequences of girls' lower participation rates in education. However, much of this has concentrated upon the large scale collection of quantitative data or the quantification of qualitative data, (see for example Colclough et al, 1998; Lloyd et al, 1998; Abraha et al, 1991). This research has focused on access and retention rather than on achievement and has largely served to identify constraints to girls' schooling which originated outside the school, such as household poverty, the imposition of school fees, distance to school, gendered division of domestic labour, and family and socio-cultural attitudes, (see for example Colclough et al, 2000; Brock and Cammish, 1998; King and Hill, 1993; Swainson et al, 1998; Logan and Beoku-Betts, 1996; Bendera, 1999, Wamahiu, 1996). Suggested improvements have also tended to focus on external interventions e.g. scholarships or fee waivers for girls and policies on the re-admission of pregnant schoolgirls. Research that has examined constraints within the school has been more limited and has revolved around formal aspects such as inappropriate curricula, limited subject choices for girls, gender-biased textbooks, poor careers advice and the need for more female teachers, (see for example Obura, 1991; Finn et al, 1979; Odaja and Heneveld, 1995; Joshi and Anderson, 1994; Gaynor, 1997). There have been few in-depth qualitative studies in developing countries which have sought to examine the informal school environment and the part that this plays in perpetuating gender differentiation in education. Some examples are: Anderson-Levitt, 1998; Brenner, 1998; Stephens, 1998; Gordon, 1995; Sey, 1997; Kutnick et al, 1997; Miske and Van Belle-Prouty, 1997; Maimbolwa-Sinyangwe and Chilangwa, 1995. The current study sought to build on this latter group of small scale studies.

Two new and related phenomena which have gender implications for educational participation have also generated a number of studies: the first is the uncovering of widespread gender violence in African schools (Leach and Machakanja, 2000; Leach et al, 2003; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Mirsky, 2003) and the second is the identification of particularly high rates of HIV/AIDS among adolescents, females in particular (see Bennell et al, 2002 for an analysis of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the educational systems of three countries in sub-Saharan Africa). In both cases, research interest has been directed at social interaction and social relationships within schools and at student perspectives on these issues.

The earlier shift away from an almost exclusive concern with expanding access towards embracing issues of quality in schooling in developing countries spawned a number of studies which drew heavily on Western models of school effectiveness and school improvement. Despite being an important development, these studies were largely based on statistical measurement; they also concentrated on the identification of school quality indicators such as material inputs, teacher competence and management, and they lacked a gender perspective, (see for example Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Dalin, 1994; Heneveld, 1994; Riddell, 1997). A few focused on the link between school quality and girls' participation (see Lloyd et al, 1998; Baden, Hassim and Meitjes, 1998; Abraha et al, 1991). However, in all of the above, there has been a lack of systematic and in-depth studies to provide comparative qualitative data to explain how the gendered school environment impacts on the quality of the schooling experience for females and males and how gender-differentiated outcomes occur.

Over several decades, feminist research in the industrialised world has provided detailed analyses of the gendered structure of institutions (see for example Arnot, 2002; Thorne, 1993; Byrne, 1978; Deem, 1978). This work has included empirical explorations both of the macro-level data and at the ways in which these patterns and trends are produced through social relations at the micro- or local level (see for example Walkerdine, 1990; De Lyon and Widdowson Migniuolo, 1989). Of particular relevance to this study are analyses of differential achievement by gender in specific subjects and of the changing patterns of performance between female and male students (for example Arnot et al, 1999; Dunne and Johnston, 1994; Epstein et al, 1998; Kelly, 1987; Paechter, 2003; Parker et al, 1996; Whyte et al, 1985). These gender analyses have made explicit the connection between the macro- and micro- levels and provided a broader arena for research and intervention. Importantly this work has highlighted the meso-level of the institution as a critical site for the production of gender differences. International feminist scholarship has provided deconstructions of organisational structures and cultures as well as gendered analyses of the micro-politics of the organisation (see for example Morley, 1999; Nussbaum, 1999). On the one hand, this has exposed gender oppression in the structural configurations of many organisations and the normalisation of asymmetrical gender relations including explicit gender violence. On the other, it has underlined the significance of human agency to understandings of organisational processes and outcomes. Such work has been an important formative influence on this study as we seek to explore the organisation of schooling by focusing on the formal structure, the informal institutional life and the ways in which individuals, especially girls, use their agency to navigate these often dangerous structural arrangements. Finally, in addition to the substantive foci, much of the above cited feminist research extends its concerns to include reflections on both educational practices and the policy context.

In the developing world, gender issues have been raised at a general level with respect to the social justice and human rights agenda (see for example Nussbaum, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000; Unterhalter, 2003). The extensive development of gender research in educational institutions briefly indicated above, however, has not been matched in the developing world despite glaring gender inequalities in educational participation (see Stromquist, 1998; Arnot and Dillabough, 2000; Unterhalter, 1999). The research reported here sought to address these gaps in the research base and to capitalise on the earlier work in the industrialised world in an effort to push forward understandings and interventions that might be productive of greater gender equity and the accomplishment of the gender IDG in education. More specifically, we set out to explore the extent of gender differentiation in schools and its association with schooling failure through low achievement, poor attendance and/or drop-out in two Sub-Saharan African country contexts.

The analysis contained in this report highlights the reciprocal constitution of individuals and organisations through discourse, rules and practices (Giddens, 1984; Hall, 2002). As Parker (2000) notes:

...organizationseffectively provide ways to think, that is to say memories, identities and analogies that structure the lives of the people within them. (Parker, 2000, p.82)

Within schools, traditions of appropriate behaviour, of who does what and when, provide important markers and boundaries of the gender regime with which individuals identify, and through which they act out their gendered identity. The significance of agency is highlighted as Butler refers to ‘gender as always a doing’ emphasising the mutual constitutive production in which gender identity is ‘performatively constituted by the very “expressions” that are said to be its results.’ (Butler, 1990, p.25). In an elaboration she suggests:

...the action of gender requires a performance that is repeated. This repetition is at once a reenactment and reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established: and it is the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimation. (Butler, 1990, p.140).

This places great significance on the mundane, 'taken for granted' routine practices within the institution that are fundamental processes in the social construction of gender which has also been acknowledged in developing country contexts (Kabeer and Subramanian, 1996). Institutional structures then, with their inscribed social relations of gender – the gender regime, symbolically construct and regulate everyday life. These are continually acted out within the school to normalise unequal power relations. As such, it is the normality of school life that this research examines in an attempt to develop a more sophisticated and dynamic analysis of the persistent production of gender inequality than the statistical categories and data alone can provide. At the same time, it attempts to relate this daily life to the conditions and outcomes described by the statistics.

Within institutions, the rules and practices are productive of gender inequality; the gender division of labour, for example, organises production and reproduction in societies globally. In schools too, performance of specific tasks are gendered and they both signify and reinforce asymmetrical power relations within and between teachers and students. Similarly, the differential command of the resources of space and time are constructed through acts of power and exclusion (Thorne, 1993). As Parker points out:

...spatial differences were not usually of importance as 'only' geographic characteristics in themselves, but were used as a kind of shorthand to refer to other organizationally relevant divisions. As is obvious, most spatial divisions are also functional divisions and the use of spatial binaries usually involved assertions about the different character of different functions. (Parker, 2000, p.194)

This is significant within school, not only with respect to gender but critically with respect to age and authority, which are fundamental to teacher-student relations. Gender boundaries and feminine and masculine identities are then discursively produced and reaffirmed within the institution of the school in the interests of those with most privilege. It is important to add, however, that this is not accomplished passively but is constantly performed over time through acts of resistance and accommodation. The gender and sexual identities instantiated in the institutional norms and practices, however, need to be constantly acted out and maintained in the face of contestation. This is realised through forms of physical and material control as well as in the symbolic and psychic regulation of the complex institutional arena (Hall, 2000). Both symbolic and physical violence are utilised to 'police' the boundaries of gender, sexual and authority relations instituted in the school and to punish transgression. The prevalence of the abuse of girls in some African school environments (Leach et al, 2003) provides an example of performance and regulation in a developing country context. This is an active process also in the regulation of sexual identity and forms of femininity and masculinity (Duncan, 1999; Mac an Ghail, 1994). The processes of performance, accommodation, resistance and control are all significant within and between gender groups of peers and also through age/authority relations.

As a starting point for this research, the available statistical data on gender inequality in developing countries indicated that significant gender differences exist between regions, districts and schools in terms of retention and achievement. This suggests the systematic production and reconstitution of gender differentiation within organisations themselves. In this research, the above theoretical position is evidenced through its focus on schools as institutions highlighting

the gendered experiences of schooling. Specifically, case studies were used to produce accounts of institutional life which were analysed to show how an organisation works to construct a 'gender regime' and to normalise specific forms of behaviour and interaction. Once the gendered behaviour is enacted, it in turn reaffirms the gendered structure of the organisation in a cycle of reciprocation. This exploration of the gender order in schools was an investigation of the institutional construction of gender inequality, and included both the formal and informal/hidden curriculum in its broadest terms. It connects to the quantitative data on retention and achievement as effects of the gendered institution.

In terms of the structure of the data analysis, the quantitative national data from each country are presented and analysed first, followed by the ethnographic qualitative accounts at the school level that provide 'thick descriptions' of institutional life; these are discussed in four sections. The first section on school management reviews how gender frames daily school practices, the mechanisms of control and regulation, and the ways in which teachers collude or resist management. The second section is an exploration of the distribution of school duties by gender; the institutional division of teacher and student labour provides an important view of the effects of gender differentiation as well as of the forms of control over the gender boundaries acted out by both male and female students. The gendered use of space in the third section considers the ways in which male students in particular occupy both the physical and verbal space as well as teacher time within the classroom; acts of collusion, especially by the teacher, and of resistance by the female students are also considered. The male students' attempts to control female incursion into the 'male' space are significant repeated acts of identity affirmation. This leads into the final section on gender violence that explores more energetic forms of gender regulation. Through symbolic and physical acts of violence, gendered identities are controlled and re-inscribed within the institution by both teachers and students. The dynamic constitution of gender position is further explored in the teacher and student discourses of gender and performance. All of these sections are considered in relation to the data on retention and achievement in the case studies. As outlined below, the attempt was to produce a more nuanced and textured account of the ways in which the gender inequities evident in the statistical data are produced in the local arenas. The effort is to enrich and diversify strategies to address these persistent inequalities and the consequent social, political and economic gender differentiation, as well as to point to required or recommended policy changes to support the identified strategies.

The detailed case studies, six in each country, which follow the same structure of analysis, are located in Appendices 2 and 3.

1.3 Research Objectives

As explained above, the research focused on the gendering of the school environment and the ways in which this influenced school outcomes in selected case study schools. These schools were chosen to reflect important variations in achievement and retention as presented by the statistical data; the sample included schools with relatively high and low achievement levels compared to the national average in different locational contexts. The purpose of the research was to explore how and why these differences came about.

The specific objectives were:

1. To engage in an intensive study of the way in which the learning experiences of students aged 12-14 are gendered at the school level and the impact that this has upon their retention and achievement.

2. To use these data to explain and qualify already available national statistical data on retention and achievement.
3. To study the institutional culture that supports these gendered experiences, both in terms of the formal and informal structures of the school.
4. To gather national data together to allow cross-national comparisons for dissemination and policy recommendations.
5. To highlight and disseminate examples of good practice and recommend appropriate school-focused strategies to address existing inequities.

1.4 Outcomes

The knowledge generated by the study will be of use to international and national agencies that are pursuing their commitment to the internationally agreed target of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving universal primary education by 2015. The study has also promoted research and evaluation capacity with particular emphasis on qualitative and ethnographic data collection and analysis, this methodological approach being less familiar to researchers in the international field than quantitative survey approaches.

The study has provided the following outcomes:

- new insights into a persistent problem about gendered participation and achievement in education in two countries of sub-Saharan Africa.
- important policy directions for improving school quality by providing a positive school environment for boys and girls, without which initiatives and innovations will have a reduced effectiveness.
- some examples of good practice for a more equitable experience in, and outcomes of, schooling.
- in-country research capacity building, especially in the use of qualitative methods.

These outcomes have been produced in three principal ways: by carrying out a comparative two-country study into the in-school cultures and practices, from the point of view of the participants, that made life in school a gendered experience for teachers as well as students; by tracing how the experience within the institutional setting contributed to the relative underachievement of girls (and sometimes boys) in specified national contexts; and by focusing on the ways school organisation and culture can reduce gender stereotyping and facilitate learning for both gender groups. The use of research teams in each country working in collaboration with a UK team has strengthened research capacity in these two countries.

A further outcome relates to the combined use of quantitative and qualitative data. Increasingly, although not universally, national statistics have been gender-disaggregated which has facilitated studies of various gendered patterns in education within and across developing countries. With some notable exceptions, for example the District Primary Education Project (DPEP & NCERT, 1998; Aggarwal and NIEPA, 1999) in India and the primary level monitoring studies carried out by the Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), this data resource has been largely under utilised for comparative studies of patterns of achievement within countries. Inevitably, the national statistics have disguised differing patterns and levels of

gender gap even between schools with similar geographical and socio-economic contexts. In an effort to probe more deeply into gender and schooling, this study has gathered and broken down national statistics in Botswana and Ghana to examine and contrast the pattern of retention and achievement between females and males in a number of schools. The attempt was to produce greater synergy between the quantitative and qualitative data. Although only partially successful in these terms as a result of inadequate national and local data and a range of practical problems (see 2.6.), it has, nevertheless, provided a better understanding of how schools produce and perpetuate gender inequities. In this way the research adds an important dimension to the well documented studies that have focused on gender asymmetries formed by socio-economic and cultural forces outside the school.

1.5 Structure of the Report

The next chapter provides an account of the research methodology. This is followed by details of the research questions, research design, sample selection, ethics and limitations. The latter section, drawn from the reflections of all the country teams, includes some suggestions for future research design and collaborative research practice. The subsequent chapter presents the country data for Botswana and Ghana respectively. These provide the country overview and then a summary comparison. The full case study reports, starting with the high performing schools in urban, peri-urban and rural contexts, then moving to the low performing schools in the same order of location, are available in Appendices 2&3. Chapter 4 presents the discussion of the findings which includes comparative as well as country specific comment. Examples of good practice are elaborated in the final section of the chapter. The report is completed with Chapter 5, which provides conclusions and policy recommendations.

Chapter 2: **Research Methodology**

2.1 **Introduction**

The approach adopted in this research was a fundamental aspect of the project. Efforts to explore the ‘stories’ behind national and international trends on gender and schooling demanded the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods (Dunne, 1996). This was a complex process that attempted to bring together the international research of stolid macro-level national trends with the local institutional and classroom processes that are dynamic, contingent and personal. The international co-operation integral to the design was intended to provide more textured accounts of different contexts and to underline the importance of local knowledges. Local insights were invaluable here, and were significant to the quality of the data and the development of contextual understandings and interpretations. The contribution of this research for the international development community lies in the production of better insights and understandings of the global trends as they appear at the local level as well as in the development of strategies to move the gender equity agenda forward. In addition to these substantive contributions, this approach to research inevitably facilitated significant learning by all researchers involved in the research process.

In this chapter, the basic outline of the research is presented through sections on the research questions, the design and sample selection, and ethics. A consideration of the limitations of the research completes the chapter.

2.2 **Research Questions**

The research focused on the gendering of the school environment and the ways in which this influenced school outcomes in selected case study schools. The school data were used to connect and qualify the national statistical data on access, retention and achievement with the everyday experience of females and males in these schools. In this way, by finding out why such differences in achievement were produced, the study was able to enhance our qualitative understandings of a range of local contexts that were only broadly described by national survey data. The research also looked at teachers and students simultaneously to reveal the way in which the gendered school environment impacted on them differentially.

The research objectives listed in Chapter 1 were elaborated into more specific questions that shaped the research design and data collection. The research sought to answer the following questions:

- a) What is the national picture of the relationship between gender and access, retention and the outcomes of schooling?
- b) In terms of these issues of gender and schooling, what is the situation in the case study schools relative to the national picture?
- c) What evidence is there in the formal school structure of the differential treatment of males and females (curriculum, access, management, appointments, promotions etc)?
- d) What evidence is there in the daily school practices (informal school structures) of the differential treatment of males and females?

- e) In what ways do students and teachers view the experience of schooling as gendered? What are their explanations, attitudes and responses to sexism within the school? What relationship do they see between the gendered experience of schooling, drop-out rates and the examination results?
- f) How are the students' and teachers' explanations, attitudes and responses differentiated by gender?
- g) Are gender relations an explicit area of concern within the schools? In what ways does the institution prevent or condone sexism? What is the institutional response to incidents of sexist behaviour within the school either in or outside the classroom?
- h) In what ways do the teachers and students support or resist the prevailing institutional culture?
- i) In what way does the location of the school (urban, peri-urban, rural) influence the prevailing institutional culture and practices?
- j) What examples were observed of good practice to promote gender equity within the school and in what way were they effective?

The identification of the research questions was an important part of refining and clarifying the purpose and shape of the research. These were to some extent overlapping and therefore they have not provided a suitable structure to report and discuss the findings. Instead we have set out the country scenarios, first for Botswana and then for Ghana, in the next chapter. This provides an overview of the national scene, starting with a general introduction followed by sections on the education system, teachers, enrolment, retention/drop-out and achievement (question a). After the national level characteristics of both educational systems have been highlighted, there is a comparative discussion of key differences between the two at the macro-level. Chapter 4 then presents the key findings from all 12 case study schools across the two countries. The detailed case studies are presented in Appendices 2&3. Both the Appendices and the discussion in Chapter 4 are presented in the same format. First, the formal aspects of schooling gathered largely through the school level quantitative data on teachers, enrolments, drop-out etc. (questions b & c) are presented, followed by the more qualitative data (questions d, e & f) documenting informal aspects of life in school. These have been organised into four sections entitled: school management, gendered duties, gendered space and gender violence. Throughout this discussion, the case study data is used to comment on the sample variables of school achievement levels and location (question i). At the end of this chapter, separate sections entitled 'institutional responses' and 'good practice' address research questions g and h and research question j respectively. The final chapter completes the report with an initial section that critically reflects on the extent to which the study addressed the research objectives and questions, with some suggestions for further study. Then, based on the report findings, recommendations are compiled to address specific audiences implicated in the research.

2.3 Research Design

Informed by theoretical insights and methodological approaches in previous research, this collaborative research design focussed upon gender as a structure of inequality in schools. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to explore the gendering of schools with specific

reference to issues of retention and achievement. National level statistical data were collected to contextualise the ethnographic case studies, providing the backdrop for a detailed analysis of the way in which gender influences retention and achievement at the school level. Six case study schools in each country were systematically researched using a variety of predominantly qualitative methods, although quantitative methods were also used in relation to school records and some small scale surveys. As already indicated, the schools were divided into urban, peri-urban and rural high performing and low performing. In each of the case study chapters, analysis of the three high performing schools (urban, peri-urban and rural) is followed by that of the low performing schools in the same order of location.

In this collaborative research enterprise, researcher communication and negotiation were central to the development and progress of the research. It demanded high levels of communication and contact between the three researchers of each country team and internationally. The collaborative nature of the project was ensured through UK workshops at the start and towards the end of the study, two in-country workshops, continual country team meetings and on-going electronic communication.

The initial workshop was held at the University of Sussex and brought the lead researchers from both countries together with the UK team to develop preliminary research instruments. After local piloting, these were further refined in the first in-country workshop, through the collaboration of each country team with a member of the UK team. Country research team meetings took place as the researchers engaged in the main data collection phase. The continual analysis of the data and discussion of critical incidents in these meetings facilitated progressive focussing and the crystallisation of emergent issues that were incorporated into the analytical framework. A second in-country workshop was devoted to the complex process of qualitative data analysis. It also provided the opportunity to review progress in the data collection and pinpoint any gaps that needed further visits to the case study sites. A final workshop which included all six country researchers took place at the University of Sussex to review key findings and to finalise the report structure. The whole series of workshops, team meetings and communication networks provided the means for collaboration and proved to be very important in terms of the quality of the data and the success of the project as a whole.

The above framework structured progress and development of the research with initial substantive foci for data collection that included:

- Organisational school structures and practices, with specific attention to the gendered distribution of responsibilities and gender relations among staff, between staff and students, and among students. This included the teachers' position in the school hierarchy, the use of prefects, disciplinary procedures, subject choices, organised out-of-class activities and the use of space.
- Classroom structures and practices, e.g. organisation of the classroom, seating arrangements, teacher-student interactions, student-student interactions, use of curriculum materials, pedagogical style, disciplinary style, critical incidents that occur in the classroom.
- Out-of-class behaviour and interactions, e.g. at break-time in the school grounds and in the staff room, student entry and exit from school, friendship groupings, incidents of bullying and sexual harassment.

Within each country research team, each of the three researchers was responsible for two schools, making a total of six cases in each country. In more specific terms, each carried out:

- Non-participant observation of a single class for a minimum of one day per week over two terms, using schedules for structured observations and note-taking for less structured observations.
- At least two interviews with subject teachers of the specified class, at the start and end of the field work period.
- Individual interviews with girls and boys from the class.
- Single sex focus group interviews (two male and two female) in each school.
- Recording of critical incidents, which may lead to opportunities for further data collection.
- Questionnaire surveys as appropriate.

With the exception of the critical incidents, all the pro-forma schedules are included in Appendix 1. In addition, a School Profile developed collaboratively by the teams as a guiding checklist may also be found in Appendix 1.

2.4 Sample Selection

In each country, a team of three researchers carried out the empirical work in six co-educational state day schools in the junior secondary sector. Two of the schools were located in urban areas, two in peri-urban areas and two in rural areas. In each locational category (urban, peri-urban, rural), one school was selected to reflect high achievement and the other relatively low achievement. The country sample of six thus comprised three relatively high achieving schools and three relatively low achieving, one of each within the three locations.

The locational variable in the samples was dependent upon patterns of settlement and population density in each country context. Botswana is a relatively sparsely populated country of 1.7 million occupying around 600,000 sq km, whereas Ghana has a much higher population of almost 19 million in less than 240,000 sq km. This resulted in differences between the country samples: for example, the urban schools in Botswana were in the national capital whereas in Ghana they were in a regional administrative centre. Nevertheless, broadly speaking the urban and rural contexts were similar. It was the peri-urban setting in which there was the greatest variation. In Botswana, the peri-urban schools were on the outskirts of a growing agrovillage with a sprawling population of around 55,000 that was over 50 km from the capital. In Ghana the peri-urban settlements were smaller, between 5-15,000 and nearer (10-20 km) to urban locations. Although these differences have minimal consequences at the national level, more caution is needed with cross-national comparisons.

To allow for a manageable in-depth ethnographic study within the selected schools, the researchers concentrated on qualitative data collection from a single focus class in the second year of the three year JSS cycle. The students in this year group had gone through the settling-in period of Form 1 and were likely to be under less examination pressure than those Form 3 students in their final year. The latter was an important aspect in facilitating access. Due to differences in the school year, in Ghana the focus class was in the last term of Form 1 at the beginning of the data collection period but had moved up to Form 2 at the start of the new school year in which the main data collection took place. In Botswana the focus class was in Form 2 for the duration of the data collection

period. The data collection methods, delineated in the previous section, were used mostly in relation to the students and teachers of the chosen class. This was supplemented by school level observations, informal conversations, description of critical incidents, quantitative data gathered from school records and documents as well as from district/provincial Ministry sources.

2.5 Ethics/Confidentiality

Although this research included the use of data already in the public domain, in common with most ethnographic research studies, all the schools involved in the research were given assurances of confidentiality. Respondents within each case study school were offered similar levels of confidentiality. As a result, pseudonyms have been used in all cases for schools and named respondents.

The purpose of the research in its broadest terms was explained to individuals and groups of respondents. Their right to refuse to participate was respected and their contributions were treated in confidence and with empathy. It was important in this regard to offer assurances to both teachers and students who offered to participate. It was important not to jeopardise the social position of respondents within the institution. There were those who, although they expressed willingness to be interviewed, seemed to avoid contact or become unavailable. Their right to silence and privacy was also respected.

The need for sensitivity was heightened as all researchers were from the university sector and most were known by teachers as experts in their local contexts. For the students too, age and authority relations had to be addressed in order to build trust. As such, it was important to clarify and emphasise the exploratory style of the research and guard against any inspection or evaluation role for the researcher. Levels of participation and the quality of the data suggest that on the whole the respondents were satisfied with the ethical stance and confidentiality with which the researchers conducted the studies.

2.6 Limitations

This section is a compilation of the limitations of the research derived from reflections by each of the research teams.

In both country contexts the availability of current statistical data presented problems in sample selection. This was particularly difficult as the practice of keeping and analysing gender disaggregated data was not universal at national level. For example, in Botswana the national examination results were not gender disaggregated and in Ghana only regional comparisons of retention to Senior Secondary School (SSS) were kept rather than examination subject performance data by gender. This made sample selection problematic. Additionally, certain comparisons between the school and national levels had to be more qualified and contingent than anticipated. The effects of these difficulties were an adjustment to the initial plan of case study school selection of a low and average gender gap in achievement compared to the national average in each locality. This was modified to a sample that included a relatively high performing and a relatively low performing school in each location (urban, peri-urban, rural). The implications of this were that good practice had to be identified more generally rather than as consolidated good practice through the comparison of one school with another in the same location. This made more tenuous the conclusions about the relations between practices and gendered outcomes.

Pragmatics also has some part to play in the selection of the sample. The demand for accessibility to the researcher and the travel/communication difficulties are all considered in the sample selection. This is particularly significant to the rural schools. In both countries, the sample was drawn from southern districts and all were in proximity to a reasonable road. In more diverse and highly populated Ghana, this may have significance for how the findings relate to other regions with different dominant cultural and religious practices which are constitutive of gender relations and social practices. Notwithstanding this possible limitation, there was a strong (and comforting) reflection of the national trends within the case study schools. Further research should consider the inclusion of a greater regional variation within the case study school sample, which could produce more specific and contextually sensitive recommendations.

At school level too, the researchers encountered great difficulty in collecting quantitative data. Different practices regarding the collection and maintenance of records meant that in some instances, the data as they existed did not meet the researchers' requirements. The extraction of the quantitative data from the available records was often very laborious or simply not available. Difficulties were most acute in the poor performing schools. The development of the case study school profiles demanded persistent efforts by the researchers to obtain the best and latest data available. It often required more extensive interviews with the head teacher, which in itself produced difficulties as elaborated below.

Another point related to the scope of the study concerns the difficulties in researching within complex institutions like schools. In this research, a narrow empirical focus was required by the intention to gather high quality qualitative data, as well as by constraints of both time and finance. This was accomplished by selecting core subjects, i.e. English, Science and Mathematics plus Setswana in Botswana and Fante in Ghana, as the focus of observations in both countries. With males dominating the teaching force in Ghana, in some schools these subjects did not include a female teacher. Although efforts were made to include other opportunities for data collection, general difficulties resulted in some missing data.

The busy schedules of head teachers and teachers left them with very little time to be interviewed and/or to look for requested data. Making appointments was hindered as teachers were mostly in the classrooms teaching, and during study times they were not around the school or staff room. In many cases, there was a problem of absenteeism of both teachers and students. There were instances where some of the schools were virtually empty and researchers had to reschedule their plans. This was especially pronounced in the rural and low performing schools. Messages left by the researchers met with little response. Missed appointments, poor communications, teacher transfer, school closure, changed timetables, poor management, and insufficient appointment times all resulted in lost researcher time, often exacerbated by long journey time. The difficulties in data gathering meant that the expected additional and opportunistic data were minimal, although there were some examples such as the gender analysis of class texts.

The co-ordination of a large team of researchers in ethnographic style research presented many challenges. All team members have different theoretical and methodological starting points that demand careful negotiation. Similarly, they all had opportunities for data collection dependent upon their location, other pressures and the case study schools. Both of these factors produced certain unevenness in the data and analysis which underlines the tensions between responsiveness to the context and the demand for levels of uniformity in the research as a whole. These dilemmas are particularly acute in qualitative and ethnographic research. The production of

uniform research instruments was an attempt to ameliorate these and to provide structures for the analysis. To the same ends, the research design incorporated frequent in-country face to face meetings and electronic communication. This was important to the continual data analysis, progressive focusing and emergent themes that typify the use of exploratory qualitative methods. Although this was successful, the design could have enhanced the collaborative analysis process much further but this would have required increased time and financial costs. There are several possibilities including more workshops between each country and the UK team in situ, to punctuate the data collection process further and to allow more discussion of emergent themes as the foci of the subsequent data collection; more structure for the on-going country researcher meetings; more intensive data collection perhaps spending a week in the same case study school; exchange visits for researchers between countries; and the inclusion of a writing workshop within the design. Finally in terms of communication, the researchers should be provided with individual e-mail accounts to avoid the interruptions caused by institutional breakdown. This could be further improved by both synchronous and non-synchronous electronic communications which would provide the platform for debate and the sharing of ideas and problems.

Chapter 3: **Country Contexts**

3.1 **Introduction**

This study was an exploration of the ways in which school environments played a part in the production and perpetuation of gender differentiation as indicated by national achievement and retention data. Although these quantitative indicators are important, the purpose of the research was to reach beyond these through an exploration of the daily experience of schooling by gender. As a starting point in the research and to provide a better basis for comparison, we selected two sub-Saharan African countries with quite different achievement and retention profiles by gender. The research design was intended to provide critical comparisons between countries and also within countries through the selection of six case studies in each country context (as explained in Chapter 2). This chapter provides an overview of the two countries, outlining each context as a basis for the later discussion and helping to locate the case studies that are described in detail in Appendices 2&3.

In more specific terms, the two country cases were chosen to represent different national configurations of gender retention and performance in junior secondary schooling. As such, there are clear differences that distinguish them. The gender gaps in Ghana were both in participation in schooling (access and retention) and in examination achievement, with boys participating and performing at higher levels than girls. In contrast, in Botswana the participation of girls was slightly higher than that of boys, but, despite some fluctuation, girls had lower results. The next two sections of this chapter will contextualise these key differences with reference to the available national quantitative data. The final section provides a synthesis, by highlighting the main points of contrast between the country contexts.

3.2 **Botswana – The National Scene**

Botswana in Southern Africa gained independence from Britain in 1966, when it was one of the poorest countries in the world. Today it is the world's third largest natural diamond producer and a middle-income country with a GNP per capita of \$3,040, one of the highest in the continent (UNESCO, 2002). The 1999 census estimated the population at about 1.7 million, with a declining growth rate of 2.3% in 1999. This figure averages the high annual growth rates of 4.4% in rural areas and the comparatively low rates of 1.9% in urban areas. Due to the high prevalence of AIDS, life expectancy is estimated to have fallen from 67 years in 1991 to 39 in 1999 (UNESCO, 2002). Fifty percent of the population is under the age of 50 years. Women constitute 52.25% of the population and there is a high percentage of female-headed households (47%) (Government of Botswana, 1998). Adult literacy is 77.2% (females 79.8%, males 74.5%) and higher in the 15-24 age group at 88.3% (females 92.1%, males 84.5%), with a gender gap in favour of females across both groups (UNESCO, 2002).

In Botswana, there are three main ways of earning a living: earning cash income, cattle farming and crop farming. Women are numerically under-represented in all three areas. For instance, the proportion of women earning cash is 40% and these are concentrated in the lower paid categories in insecure jobs without employee rights and working long hours. In the wholesale / retail sector, the largest employer of women, they work mainly as shop assistants and cleaners. In cattle farming, only 14% of the cattle are owned by women. Traditional practices and inheritance patterns are inscribed in myths, taboos and legends which reproduce the association

of men with cattle. Women's involvement in crop farming is similarly limited, with very low returns. So, despite being in the majority numerically, women have limited access to and control of resources and are among the most needy.

Although there have been improvements, women are also under-represented in key decision-making positions at all levels of society. The proportion of women parliamentarians rose from 5% in 1987 to 10% in 1995 and to 19.4% in 1999. Their relatively low economic status and under-representation in decision making roles at all levels is indicative of the vulnerability of women, which is supported by the statistics on gender violence. Reported cases of rape increased from 459 in 1982 to 1183 in 1997 while defilement cases (sex with children under the age of 16) rose from 72 to 108 in the same period. Although under Botswana statutes it is an offence for a man to indulge in sexual relations with a girl under the age of 16 years, the reality is that there is an upward trend in such cases. This is due in part to customary law that condones early and arranged marriages and in part to the trend for older men, in the face of the AIDS epidemic, to seek to have sex with younger girls. In such cases of arranged marriages and pregnancy, the girl child is denied personal and educational development and forced to drop out of school (although a policy of re-admission exists).

Within school too, the use of violence is permitted as a disciplinary sanction. Procedures to reinforce the curriculum are regulated. The Botswana Education Act specifies that corporal punishment shall be administered to a student only on reasonable grounds and only when other disciplinary measures would be ineffective. The Act further states that corporal punishment shall be administered only by the headmaster (sic) or whomever he delegates or another person authorised by the Permanent Secretary. In addition, the Act specifies that no male teacher, except the headmaster, shall inflict corporal punishment upon a female student and this should only be on the hands. Males however may also be beaten on the back and buttocks.

3.2.1 The Education System

Before Independence (in 1966) conditions in schools were poor in general (UNESCO, 1964). School fees excluded poorer students, transition rates from primary to secondary school were very low and there were only 40 graduates in the country. This education provision created a small but privileged educational and occupational elite based on disparities of access rooted in gender, socio-economic, regional and ethnic differences (Campbell and Abbott, 1977). With its new found mineral wealth, ten years after independence (in 1976) the Government established the First National Commission on Education. Its recommendations were built around the following principles:

- Creation of a national education system through a systematic co-ordination of schools and the institutionalisation of a common curriculum.
- The removal of inequalities of educational access rooted in gender, religion, ethnic group, socio-economic background or location.
- The provision of nine years of basic education, which was extended to ten years by the second National Commission of Education of 1993.

A large proportion of the national budget was allocated to support the massive educational expansion. In 1999/2000 this was recorded as 9.3% of the GNP (UNESCO, 2002). Primary school fees were abolished in 1985 and secondary school fees in 1988. In partnership with local communities Community Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) were set up to share costs and ensure minimum standards (see Appendix I). Senior Secondary Schools (SSS), located in large villages, are the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Education and include boarding facilities for children

from small remote villages. There is also a feeding programme in operation in which food is prepared in school and distributed at break and lunch time to all students. In addition, students are supplied with basic school equipment including pens, pencils, exercise books and some textbooks.

In addition to the state system, there are high cost private schools. Currently these form 10% of primary and 15% of secondary schools. In 1998 these enrolled 7% of the national school intake. In total, in 1998 there were 721 primary school and 272 secondary schools. The average size of a Government aided primary school in 1998 was around 450 pupils and 16 teachers, with secondary schools reaching an average of around 530 pupils and 29 teachers (ABT, 2001). Some schools, especially those in remote areas, have small enrolments. For instance in 2000 the smallest Community JSS had an enrolment of about 150 students. The national average pupil – teacher ratio in 1998 was 28 at primary level and 14.8 at secondary level.

Schooling is organised in a 7-3-2 system, consisting of seven years of primary education, three years of junior secondary education and two years of senior secondary education. In the 1970s, about 25% of primary school leavers continued to JSS; by the 1980s this proportion increased to 40% as more JSSs were built. At the end of each level, an examination was used to select students for progression to the next level. However, with the achievement of almost universal junior secondary schooling in the 1990s, the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) was no longer necessary for selection purposes. The Junior Certificate of Education (JCE) examination however plays a highly selective role in determining those who continue to SSS. Similarly, the Botswana Certificate of Secondary School modelled on the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate (UCLES) is taken at the end of SSS and provides a selection mechanism for entrance to higher education.

3.2.2 Teachers

Teachers comprise over one quarter of all skilled employment in the country (Bennell et al, 2001). Training of teachers is undertaken in six teacher training institutions and the University of Botswana. Twelve education centres for in-service training supplement these programmes. About 60% of teachers are employed in primary schools, 32.1% in JSS level and 9.9% in SSS level (Bennell et al, 2001).

By 1998 at primary school level, teachers were predominantly female (81.9%) and only 8.2% of teachers were untrained. Interestingly, in that year 2% of all primary teachers were on study leave, with an over-representation of males (33.2% rather than 18.1%) in this group. Secondary teachers, (both JSS and SSS combined) comprised a slightly higher proportion of males (53.2%). In 1998 there were 20.4% untrained secondary teachers, a higher proportion of whom were females (52.7%). Of the secondary teachers, 22.9% were non-nationals, of whom nearly 70% were males.

The conditions of service for teachers are governed by the Unified Teaching Service Code of Regulations (Government of Botswana, 1976). According to the regulations, promotion depends upon qualifications, experience, proven merit and suitability.

There is a marked predominance of women in urban schools. This is the result of their reluctance to accept transfers to more rural schools due to family responsibilities. This situation has an adverse affect on their promotion prospects since promotion often involves transfer to another school, which may require them to move outside the towns. Many will not apply for promotion for this reason.

3.2.3 Enrolment

In the last ten years, there has been a more or less equal representation of girls and boys in primary and secondary school education. Primary enrolments have increased such that by 1999 the gross enrolments stood at 117.8% with a corresponding net enrolment of 99.5%. These figures show in excess of 17.8% of the enrolments are over-age children and that only 0.5% of the age cohort children have not enrolled. Botswana has now almost achieved ten years of basic education. In 1998 at secondary level there 143,604 students enrolled, of whom 52.9% (75,909) were female and 47.1% (67,695) were male.

3.2.4 Retention and Drop-out

The second National Commission on Education (Government of Botswana, 1993) and Vision 2016 reiterated the recommendations of the Commission on Education report (Government of Botswana, 1977) concerning educational access for all irrespective of ethnicity, gender, location, disability or age. The positive results of these policy recommendations show that, over the years, the number of Standard 7 pupils who progress to JSS has been increasing. As shown in Table 3.1, the transition rates have increased from 91% in 1995 to 96% in 1999. This has been made possible by the policy on 10 years of universal basic education, which requires every Botswana child irrespective of their PSLE grade to proceed to Form 1 (Central Statistics Office, 2001).

Table 3.1: Botswana Transition Rate to Junior Secondary School (1995-1999)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Standard 7	39,499	40,267	41,906	40,707	38,825
Form 1	31,362	35,353	38,420	39,126	39,130
Transition Rate (%)	91.1	91.4	95.3	93.3	96.1

Source: Republic of Botswana (2000 – 2001)

Based on total enrolments, the data for 1998 shows gross progression rates into Form 1 of JSS of 80.7%, i.e. the proportion of the cohort enrolled in primary Standard 1 in 1987 who continue into Form 1 (JSS). On the same basis, the progression rate into Form 5 (end of JSS) for the same cohort was 31.2% (Republic of Botswana, 1998). The breakdown by gender shows that gross progression into Form 1 for girls (85.6%) was at higher rates than boys (75.8%). By Form 5, however, gross progression rates were 32.2% for girls and 30.2% for boys. In raw numbers, the 461 more girls enrolled nationally in Standard 1 in 1987 resulted in 2409 more girls in Form 1 in 1994 and 556 more girls in Form 5 in 1998. The higher retention rate of girls in primary and secondary schooling is an important characteristic of the Botswana education system. Since 1991, however, the Standard 1 intake has shown higher proportions of males than females; the future analysis of these cohorts will show how this has influenced retention.

While entry to JSS is not dependent on examination, the transition to SSS is automatic only for those who obtain A and B grades in the JCE examinations. Depending on pass rates each year, those who obtain a C grade, the lowest pass category, have a more uncertain possibility of continuing into SSS. In the last three years, transition rates have been between 40% and 50%.

Transition to tertiary education is about 5.8%. At university level, by 1999 females comprised about 46% of full-time students on the University of Botswana main campus and 65% of the part-timers. They also predominated in the teacher training colleges, making up just below 60% of the students, but comprised less than 36% of those registered in vocational training institutions.

Turning to drop-outs at the secondary level, the 1998 statistics show that over 70% of secondary drop-outs are female and less than 30% are males. At JSS level in 1999 the total drop-out rate was 2.4%, comprising 3.2% for girls and 1.6% for boys. The predominant reason for drop-out was pregnancy, which accounted for 39% of all drop-outs and predictably 54.2% of female drop-outs. Significantly here, 79.6% of female drop-out due to pregnancy at secondary level occurred between Forms 1 and 3 in the JSS years. The second most common named cause was desertion, and then school fees, which accounted for 6.5% of all drop-outs (Republic of Botswana, 1998).

An analysis of Junior and Secondary school female drop-out rates due to pregnancy shows an increase from 1.5% in 1988 to a high of 3.0 % in 1992 to a current average of about 2.5% (Chilisa, 2002a). Table 3.2 shows that drop-out rates for JSS girls averaged about 2% between 1997 and 1999. This amounts to around 1000 girls dropping out from JSS each year due to pregnancy.

Table 3.2: Botswana JSS Drop-out Due to Pregnancy by Gender (1993, 1997-1999)

Year	Form 1		Form 2		Form 3		Total		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1993	Drop-outs	1	344	10	561	1	107	12	1012
	Students	14294	17068	13957	16915	4101	4193	32352	38176
	Rate	0.0	2.0	0.1	3.3	0.0	2.6	0.04	2.65
1997	Drop-outs	87	350	17	466	0	122	104	935
	Students	18036	20384	17629	19996	7127	8310	42792	48690
	Rate	0.48	1.72	0.10	2.33	0	1.47	0.24	1.92
1998	Drop-outs	8	265	13	499	0	238	21	1002
	Students	18505	20621	17860	20016	17396	19166	53761	59803
	Rate	0.04	1.8	0.07	2.49	0	1.24	0.04	1.68
1999	Drop-outs	3	196	6	407	4	496	13	1099
	Students	18871	20259	17941	20136	17475	19209	54287	59604
	Rate	0.02	0.097	0.03	2.02	0.02	2.58	0.02	1.84

Source: Republic of Botswana (2000 – 2001)

In the case of pregnancy, the Ministry of Education policy (see Appendix 5) describes the required actions from parents and schools. This includes the exclusion of both male and female students implicated in the pregnancy and a re-entry policy that allows those students to re-enter the school system at a later date. In comparison to the girls, almost zero boys drop out of school for pregnancy related reasons. Explanations for these differences include the observation that a significant number of girls are impregnated by older men and in the few cases where a boy is involved, parental negotiations take place to allow the boy to continue school. Further, despite the policy, it has been found that many girls do not return to school due to fear of ridicule, intimidation, social branding and harassment by the school community (Chilisa 2002a).

Table 3.3: Botswana JSS Drop-out Due to Other Reasons by Gender (1995, 1998-99)

Year		Form 1		Form 2		Form 3		Total	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1995	Drop-outs	405	423	294	428	77	92	776	943
	Students	16159	19194	16313	19251	5607	6051	38079	44496
	Rate	2.51	2.20	1.80	2.22	1.37	1.52	2.04	2.12
1998	Drop-outs	312	310	351	389	113	150	776	849
	Students	18505	20621	17860	20016	17396	19166	53761	59803
	Rate	1.68	1.53	1.97	1.94	0.65	0.78	1.44	1.42
1999	Drop-outs	280	258	327	297	269	240	876	795
	Students	18871	20259	17941	20136	17475	19209	54287	59604
	Rate	1.48	1.27	1.82	1.47	1.54	1.25	1.61	1.33

Source: Republic of Botswana (2000–2001)

Table 3.3 shows the average drop-out rates due to other reasons. This shows a slightly higher drop-out for boys, at about 1.5% compared to 1.4% for girls. Reasons for dropping out among boys include expulsion, truancy and illness. The girls' reasons include abduction and early marriage.

3.2.5 Achievement

All JSSs are required to offer seven core subjects including: Agriculture, English, Mathematics, Moral Education, Science, Setswana and Social Studies. Students then choose two optional subjects, one from each of the following two groups: Practical subjects (Home Economics and Design & Technology) and General subjects (Religious Education and Art). Computer Awareness and Physical Education, although recommended by the second National Commission on Education (Government of Botswana, 1993), are still being piloted in a few schools. Business Studies and Guidance & Counselling lessons are also provided in some schools although coverage across different schools is variable.

Overall performance across the country, in Table 3.4, shows that consistently around 80% of students achieve a pass grade between merit and C in the JCE. Similarly, approximately 20% fail with D grades.

Table 3.4: Botswana National Achievement at JCE (1998-2001)

	Merit	A	B	C	Total Passes	D
1998	0.1%	1.3%	23.5%	52.1%	77.1%	22.9%
1999	0.1%	0.1%	12.1%	70.5%	82.9%	17.1%
2000	0.2%	1.7%	23.4%	52.1%	77.3%	22.7%
2001	0.5%	0.6%	9.4%	71.7%	82.2%	17.8%

Source: Republic of Botswana, MoE (2002)

The majority of students attain a C grade pass, which does not necessarily assure them a SSS place. Only those students with merit, A or B grades can be confident of a place, but due to fluctuations in the proportion of these passes e.g. a low of 10.5% in 2001 and a high of 25.3% in 2000, in some years those who pass with a C grade may be able to continue into SSS.

The options system has resulted in gender disparities, for example, in 1998 only 20.5% of those opting for Design & Technology (D&T) were female and 13.3% of those opting for Home

Economics (HE) were male. Art too seems to be a masculine option with males comprising 67.2% of those taking the subject. In terms of examination entry, by 2000 only about 26% of the students who sat for the JCE in D&T were girls. Predictably, this is a subject in which boys outperform girls. The reverse is the case for HE. An analysis of the JCE performance data (see Appendix 6) shows that for all three years 1998 – 2000, girls did significantly better than boys in Setswana, English and HE, while boys did significantly better than girls in Science and D&T. The results in Mathematics show no significant gender differences in performance, although for the first time in 2000 the average score for the girls was higher than for the boys. These results reflect an overall stereotypical format of girls' better performance in languages and boys' domination in Science.

In conclusion, this overview has provided a profile of schooling in Botswana, a country which has achieved UPE and has a negligible gender gap. We now turn to focus on Ghana which, as the next section demonstrates, has a quite different education profile.

3.3 Ghana – The National Scene

Ghana is a West African country which shares boundaries with Togo to the East, Cote D'Ivoire to the West and Burkina Faso to the North. It has a population of 18.9 million, a population growth rate of 2.7% and life expectancy of 57 years. Women are slightly in the majority and constitute 50.5% of the Ghanaian population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000). With a GNP of \$390 per capita in 1999 (UNESCO, 2002), Ghanaians are engaged in four major occupations: agriculture and related work (49.2%), manufacturing and transport equipment work (15.6%), sales work (18.0%) and professional and technical work (8.9%). Figures for women show that only 48.3% are involved in agriculture and related work, 20.2% in sales work, 13.2% in manufacturing and transport equipment work and 7.7% in services. The relative absence of women from the professional and technical occupations is to be noted.

This indication of the marginalisation of women is evident in other social indicators. Despite the higher proportion of women in the population and recent campaigns to get women more actively involved in national politics, there are only 18 women in the 200-seat parliament. Further, only four out of the 39 Ministers of State are women. With very few women district assembly members, the situation at the district level is no better. In terms of ownership of property, due to inheritance practices, women do not usually own land. Similarly, heads of households are mainly male. Where a female is head of household, it is likely to be either a single person or a single parent household.

Despite the limitations of the available statistics and problems of under-reporting, figures recording violent incidents against women can provide further insight into the vulnerable position of women in Ghanaian society. Data from the Women and Juvenile Unit (2002), for example, shows that, over a seven month period in 2002 in Central Region, more than 50% of the reported cases of violence against women were wife battering and 26% were incidents of defilement of girls under 16. The issue of gender violence is relevant to schools. Schools are subject to national policies on corporal punishment and sexual offences and pregnancy specified by the Ghana Education Service (GES) in its codes of practice. The code of discipline for Basic Education Schools in the head teachers' Handbook emphasises three points:

- Illegal punishment, violence and brutal acts against the pupils are criminal offences for which the teacher can be taken to a court of law;
- Corporal punishment should be administered only by the head teacher, but on rare occasions when the head teacher delegates this responsibility, he/she must supervise its administration;

- Whipping or beating children because they cannot read or work sums correctly is not allowed.

The code clearly specifies that caning should not exceed four strokes and that sanctions should be appropriate to the age of the pupils and the misdemeanour involved. It also advises the head teacher to keep a punishment book for serious punishments such as suspension and caning. The purpose of this record is to protect students from unreasonable punishment, violence and brutality from teachers and to avoid giving parents and guardians cause for negative criticism of teachers. Unlike in Botswana, this policy is not gender specific.

In terms of sexual relations, a range of sanctions is specified for teachers who indulge in sexual relationships with students and colleague teachers. The sanctions range from suspension for two years in cases of a first time sexual relation with a student other than rape to dismissal from the GES for cases including rape and sexual relations with students resulting in pregnancy. For students who indulge in sexual relationships, sanctions range from caning and suspension for a first time sexual misconduct to withdrawal and transfer in cases of pregnancy/termination of pregnancy.

Head teachers are empowered to readmit pregnant students who have given birth. The code does not, however, specify sanctions against the male students who indulge in sexual relationship with female peers as it does in Botswana.

The government's intentions to address these broader social and educational gender issues have been expressed in the appointment of a Minister for Women Affairs and a Minister of State in charge of Primary, Secondary and Girl-Child Education.

3.3.1 The Education System

As already noted, the Ghana educational system is much less well resourced and has lower participation rates than that of Botswana. The high proportion of under-15s in the population (41.3%) together with the high adult illiteracy rate of 45.9% (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000) has prompted the government to devote about 4.2% of GNP to education (UNESCO, 2002). In addition to direct budgetary funding, the government has set up the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GET Fund) with the aim of improving educational infrastructure nationwide. A key target is to reduce the illiteracy rate by improving access and participation of children of school-going age. There would appear to have been some success as data recorded in 2002 reports the adult literacy rate at 71.6%, with females at 63.2% and males at 80.3%. In the 15-24 age group, the figures are higher at 91.1%, although the gender gap has been sustained with females at 88.6% and males at 93.6% (UNESCO, 2002).

The Ghana educational system is also much older than that of Botswana, being relatively well developed under British colonial rule. Major reforms implemented in 1987 have produced the current system of education. The structure (6-3-3) is six years of primary schooling, three years of Junior Secondary School (JSS), three years of Senior Secondary School (SSS) and four years of university education. More recently, in 1996, a new educational policy known as the Basic Education Sector Improvement Policy (BESIP) was launched. Reforms outlined in the Free Compulsory Basic Education (FCUBE) document include improving the quality of teaching and learning, access and participation, and the cost and financing of education.

With support from DFID and other international donors in its attempts to achieve Education for All (EFA) and its concern with issues of access and participation by girls in particular, the

Ghana Ministry of Education established a Girls' Education Unit (GEU) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) in 1997. This was tasked with increasing the national enrolment of girls in primary schools to equal that of boys by the year 2005. Additionally, GEU was to develop strategies that would reduce the drop-out rates for girls in primary schools from 30% to 20% and that of girls in Junior Secondary School (JSS) from 21% to 15%. The co-ordinating role of the GEU was to facilitate, network, influence, focus, plan, evaluate, collect and disseminate data on good practices with a view to improving the enrolment and retention of girls in school.

3.3.2 Teachers

The composition of the teaching force presented in Table 3.5 shows that, unlike in Botswana, it remains a male dominated profession. At primary school, a relatively stable 37% proportion of female teachers drops to around 25% in JSS. Given the relatively poor school performance of females in Mathematics, the training college admission requirement for a pass in Mathematics is likely to skew the intake in favour of males. This condition, it appears, has created the situation where the training colleges consistently admit and train many more male than female teachers.

Table 3.5: Teachers in Ghana Public Schools by Gender (1997-2001)

Year	Level	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total
1997/1998	Primary	36613 (63.3)	22170 (37.7)	58783
	JSS	26123 (74.9)	8775 (25.1)	34898
1998/1999	Primary	38987 (62.8)	23107 (37.2)	62094
	JSS	28265 (74.7)	9562 (25.3)	37827
1999/2000	Primary	38843 (62.7)	23084 (37.3)	61927
	JSS	27975 (74.5)	9567 (25.5)	37542
2000/2001	Primary	38029 (62.1)	23200 (37.9)	61229
	JSS	26807 (74.7)	9084 (25.3)	35891

Source: MOE, Ghana (2002)

There is a national policy on promotion (see Appendix 7) that does not explicitly refer to gender. There are six teacher grades: Junior Teacher, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, Senior Superintendent, Principal Superintendent and Assistant Director. Individuals qualify after a specified number of years of service. For the first three promotions, individuals are expected to apply for inspection by the District Office. Subject to satisfactory inspection, promotion is granted. The next two promotion points demand an interview, the first through regional offices and the second at the national headquarters.

It should be noted that 83.7% of teachers at secondary (JSS and SSS) are trained and the others include untrained teachers and national service personnel (UNESCO, 2002). The student - teacher ratio is 20:1 which is higher than in Botswana.

3.3.3 Enrolment

The national gross enrolment data for Ghanaian primary and junior secondary schools over four academic years between 1997 and 2000 are presented in Table 3.6. It shows a gradual increase in the proportion of girls enrolled in both primary and junior secondary schools.

Table 3.6: Ghana Primary and JSS Gross Enrolment by Gender (1997-2000)

Year	Primary School				Junior Secondary School			
	Boys	%	Girls	%	Boys	%	Girls	%
1997/98	1,066,278	53.3	962,553	46.7	394,083	55.9	310,333	44.1
1998/99	1,099,190	53.3	962,553	46.7	402,724	55.3	325,590	44.7
1999/2000	1,123,394	53.1	991,587	46.9	405,486	55.1	330,765	44.9
2000/2001	1,067,394	52.8	954,282	47.2	382,809	54.7	316,544	45.3

Source: MoE, Ghana (2002)

The enrolment of girls showed a 0.5% increase at primary school and a 1.2% increase at JSS over this four-year period. Nevertheless, boys still outnumber girls at both levels. Reference to net enrolment rates provides additional insights. According to the Ghana team on the Female Education in Mathematics and Science in Africa (FEMSA, 1998) Project, at primary level net enrolments were 71% for girls compared with 82% for boys. In addition, they found that gender disparities in favour of boys at all levels increase considerably after age 11 (the end of primary level) and widen at higher levels. On a positive note, both FEMSA and the National Education Forum noted the growth in female attendance since the reforms of 1987 and the closing of the gap, especially at primary level. In the Greater Accra Region, this has resulted in gender parity in primary enrolments and in the Volta Region girls outnumber boys (52% to 48%). Nevertheless, at the national level, the gender gap persists with regional variations showing more pronounced disparities in the rural areas and in the northern regions. The national primary enrolment of girls in the 2000/2001 academic year shows a very low 0.3% increase.

3.3.4 Retention and Drop-out

Table 3.7 shows student drop-out at both primary and JSS levels in Ghana.

Table 3.7: Ghana Primary and JSS Drop-out by Gender (2000)

Primary			
1994/1995-1999/2000 Cohort	Boys	Girls	Total
Total drop-outs	23.10%	29.90%	24.80%
Annual average drop-out rate	4.60%	6.00%	5.00%
JSS			
1997/98 – 1999/2000 Cohort	Boys	Girls	Total
Total drop-outs	15.90%	19.90%	17.60%
Annual average drop-out rate	7.90%	8.90%	8.80%

Source: MoE, Ghana (2002)

The data indicates that nearly one quarter of the cohort that first enrolled in 1994 dropped out during the six year primary cycle ending in 2000. There was a 17.6% drop-out during the three year JSS cycle with a higher yearly average drop-out of 8.8% than in the primary school. Importantly, the national picture shows that at both levels the drop-out of girls is higher than that of boys. The drop-out rates compound the gender disparities, in that nationally fewer girls enrol and more girls drop out of school at both levels.

In an assessment of the situation, GEU observed comparable enrolments of girls and boys in primary 1 and 2. Girls begin dropping out from primary 3; in upper primary (primary 4 - 6),

the drop-out rate increases and becomes more pronounced in the JSS. Schoolgirl pregnancy has been suggested as a major cause of drop-out.

3.3.5 Achievement

The curriculum at the JSS level consists of 10 compulsory subjects. These are English, Ghanaian Language, French (where a teacher is available), General Science, Mathematics, Agricultural Science, Pre-Technical Skills, Pre-Vocational Skills, Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education. At the end of JSS, these subjects are examined by the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). In order to enter Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) students must attain aggregate scores between 6 and 30 in their best six subjects (1 is the highest grade in each subject).

Table 3.8: Students Qualifying for SSS Entry in Ghana by Gender (1996-2001)

Year	Number presented	% Qualifying for entry to SSS	% Boys	% Girls
1996	209983	80.9	82.6	77.8
1997	216906	81.2	83.3	78.7
1998	229432	60.4	62.9	57.8
1999	233741	60.2	63.5	58.4
2000	233741	60.5	61.5	57.6
2001	247699	60.4	61.9	57.4

Source: GES (2001)

Table 3.8 shows that there has been a gradual increase in the numbers entered for the BECE and at the same time a decline in those qualifying to enter SSS. Over the past four years this has hovered around 60%. The proportion of girls qualifying remains consistently lower than that of boys.

Table 3.9: Ghana Regional BECE Performance in Selected Subjects by Gender (2001)

Region	Mathematics		English		General Science		Pre-Technical	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Gt. Accra	68.9	75.1	77.6	81.9	71.5	68.0	76.3	72.0
Eastern	47.7	44.9	54.5	54.3	51.9	47.7	54.4	46.6
Volta	47.7	45.8	52.3	47.6	49.4	43.6	46.1	38.6
Central	48.2	45.7	42.3	44.8	48.6	45.3	53.5	52.6
Western	59.0	54.4	54.8	52.1	58.7	47.1	54.9	47.6
Ashanti	57.8	52.5	49.9	47.7	74.0	49.9	55.9	52.8
Brong Ahafo	53.1	45.0	47.7	33.7	54.6	41.2	48.9	36.4
Northern	57.0	47.9	56.8	45.9	67.7	47.3	38.0	26.3
Upper East	49.5	74.4	58.1	53.5	75.7	53.0	41.0	32.2
Upper West	56.4	46.8	57.0	49.5	63.0	51.2	44.9	33.5

Source: GES (2001)

Further inspection of performance in the BECE provides more detail about the nature of the gender gap in achievement. Table 3.9 presents the percentage of students who obtained Grades 1-5 in four subjects across ten regions in 2001 by gender. The table provides convincing data of the higher performance of boys in all four subjects nationally. In General Science and Pre-

Technical Skills the boys dominate in all regions. In Mathematics and English girls manage to outperform boys in only two regions, with girls in Greater Accra outperforming boys in both subjects. The overwhelming dominance of boys cuts across traditional subject associations and these data provide strong indications that the same trends would be found in most subjects.

In summary, the educational profile of Ghana presents a poorly resourced system, still a long way from achieving UPE, with a significant gender gap in which boys have greater access to schools and outperform girls across all curriculum subjects in nearly all regions.

3.4 Country Comparisons

A number of differences distinguish Botswana and Ghana historically, geographically and economically. It is important to underline these differences, especially as they are often homogenised within the regional descriptor of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and to some extent with international policy directives and target setting. Ghana has been independent longer, with a much higher, denser population, and a much lower GDP than Botswana. This history is evident within the case studies (see Appendices 2&3), with the oldest Ghanaian case study school established in 1858, some 130 years before the oldest Botswana case study school, established in 1989. At the same time, however, both are ex-British colonies and are part of the Commonwealth, with education systems founded on the British pattern of schooling.

Adult literacy, a commonly used indicator of development, is slightly higher in Botswana (77.2%) than in Ghana (71.6%), although this comprises a gender gap of 5.3% in favour of women in Botswana and 17.1% difference in favour of men in Ghana. Data on the 15-24 age-group show higher literacy rates and a reversed country order, with Botswana at 88.3% and Ghana at 91.1%. This is nevertheless still underpinned by gender gaps in the same directions for each country, which have increased to 7.6% in favour of women in Botswana and decreased to 5% in favour of men in Ghana (UNESCO, 2002). In both countries, women remain under-represented in national politics and in the management of business and civic organisations. Traditional cultural practices, for example of inheritance, continue to marginalise women and the incidence of gender violence against women remains a significant concern in both contexts.

3.4.1 Enrolments

Net enrolments in primary school (99.5%) in Botswana, with equal gender representation, indicate the imminent achievement of UPE. In Ghana, the comparable data for girls (71%) and boys (82%) shows some way to go and a persistent gender gap (MoE, 2002). At JSS level, the gender gaps in enrolments in Ghana increase and are exacerbated by a higher drop-out of girls at both levels (see Table 3.7). In Botswana, retention from standard 7 to JSS I is high, at 96.1% in 1999, although, based on the Standard 1 entry, this figure would be reduced to around 80%, with a higher proportion of girls (85.6%) progressing through education levels than boys (75.8%). In both cases, transition to Senior Secondary School (SSS) is dependent on examination performance.

3.4.2 Drop-out

In both countries, drop-out is proportionately higher for girls but it is of a significantly greater magnitude in Ghana, with nearly 20% of females dropping out over the JSS cycle. In Botswana, it is 2.4%, with higher rates for girls (3.2%) than boys (1.6%). In both countries, pregnancy has been identified as the major cause of girls' drop-out. Interestingly, in Botswana boys are subject to exclusion if implicated in a pregnancy. Both countries have re-entry policies, although this has

not been successful in either context, predominantly due to difficulties or reluctance in implementation at the school level and the intimidating social context experienced by returners.

3.4.3 Achievement

Examination performance for 2001 shows that Botswana had a pass rate of 82.2% at the end of JSS although only 40-50% of those passing could progress into SSS. The gender breakdown was not available. In Ghana in the same year, 60.4 % qualified to enter SSS, with a gender breakdown of 61.9% males compared to 57.4% females. Exact data on retention to SSS was not available but it was unlikely to include a large proportion of those who qualified. The better male performance was sustained across all subjects with the small exceptions noted in 3.3.5. In Botswana, the comparative performance of girls was better as they significantly outperformed boys in Setswana, English and Home Economics. The reverse was the case for Science and Design & Technology. Mathematics however showed no significant gender difference, although for the first time in 2000 the girls' average score was higher than the boys'.

3.4.4 Teachers

The teaching force in Botswana at Junior Secondary School level (JSS) has slightly more males (53.2%), which is quite different from the female dominated (81.9%) primary sector. By contrast, both sectors in Ghana are male dominated, with females comprising only 37% of primary and 25% of JSS teachers. In Botswana, over 20% of teachers are untrained, with a higher proportion of females (52.7%). In Ghana at JSS a slightly higher proportion (83.7%) of teachers are trained, with higher levels (97.4%) of training among female teachers. Untrained teachers include national service personnel who as graduates spend short periods of time teaching in JSS. The increased proportion of female teachers in urban schools was common to the two contexts. Nationally instituted systems for promotion in each country take into account both qualifications and experience but have not been developed to address the gendered distribution regionally or by subject. There were some limited suggestions that favouritism by the school management affected this process in both countries.

3.4.5 Curriculum

The systems of schooling had the same basic structure of primary, junior secondary, senior secondary schooling but a slightly different distribution. The 7-3-2 structure in Botswana with the school year commencing in January compares to the 6-3-3 structure in Ghana that starts in September. Both countries operate a core curriculum with the expected subjects. In Ghana, ten subjects are taken, although French was not offered in all schools. Apart from a different local language and French, the subjects offered are comparable in the two countries. In Botswana, seven core subjects are supplemented by a choice of a practical subject (Home Economics or Design & Technology) and a general subject (Religious Education or Art) to make nine in all. Additional subjects were offered in some schools e.g. Business Studies and Computer Awareness. The subject options in Botswana added a further dimension of differentiation, in which boys tended to opt for Design & Technology and Art while girls chose Home Economics and Religious Education. Examination entry and performance also reflected the gendered preferences.

3.4.6 Educational Policy

In the context of evident gender differences in aspects of the educational provision and outcomes in both countries, this final section reviews the educational policy context. The Botswana Government has allocated around 9% of its GNP to education compared to 4.2% of a much lower GNP in Ghana. In both cases, although many recent initiatives have focussed on more

equitable education provision, not all have an explicit gender dimension. In Botswana the focus has been on the provision of ten years basic education to all with educational expansion as a key strategy. The removal of school fees, a school feeding programme, the provision of learning materials and expansion into remote villages has been sponsored by a concern with equity. Ghana, after a series of structural reforms in the late 80s, introduced FCUBE in the mid 90s to address both access and quality issues in basic education, including the JSS level.

In both countries a key area with gender specific guidelines relates to schoolgirl pregnancy. There are recommendations concerning the withdrawal, transfer and re-admittance of pregnant schoolgirls in which the head teacher is instrumental. While in Ghana the focus is upon the schoolgirl, in Botswana the policy includes a period of school absence for both the male and female students involved. Neither addresses the process of re-admittance or strategies for the re-integration of the excluded students into school life. The issue of sexual relations between teachers and students is covered by the broader legal framework although this is contrary to some traditional practices e.g. early marriage in Botswana. In Ghana education specific sanctions (e.g. transfer, suspension and dismissal) may be imposed on offending teachers and corporal punishment on students. In both countries the guidelines for discipline delineate who should administer corporal punishment and its severity. In Botswana this is gender specific, with more restricted corporal punishment for girls.

The more restricted educational access and greater gender gaps in Ghana have prompted renewed efforts by the Ghana Ministry of Education to push towards UPE, with an international target of achieving gender equity by 2005. The establishment of a Girls Education Unit in the late 90s was an explicit step to address the greater gender disparities in education. In Botswana the policy context is characterised by a more general reference to equity rather than the specificity of gender. The unavailability of gender disaggregated data, e.g. on SSS entry, may be one consequence of this general tendency. Such data is likely to be critical to an understanding of the continued under-representation of women in the powerful civic / social / business organisations in Botswana.

In summary, this chapter has provided an outline of the two country cases that represent different national configurations of gender retention and performance in junior secondary schooling. Ghana is characterised by higher male participation and performance while in Botswana there is slightly higher but fluctuating male performance despite higher female participation. As a first stage in the research we have brought together related data (e.g. teacher numbers, the curriculum) at the national level, highlighting the gender dimensions and providing comparisons. It is evident that the higher retention of girls in Botswana and their higher achievement compared to Ghanaian girls (although generally slightly lower than boys in Botswana) occurs within a system of greater financial investment in public education, with a longer primary cycle of seven years, that has just about achieved UPE, has higher proportions of female teachers with a gender sensitive policy framework for dealing with schoolgirl pregnancy. These and other external factors (e.g. traditional cultural practices, family forms etc) are likely to have some influence on retention and achievement although stronger causal links are beyond the scope and focus of this study. Nevertheless, this chapter has provided important background to the key focus of the research upon the ways in which schools themselves work to produce gender differentiation in retention and achievement. With the location of the research arena at the local level, our efforts were to provide ethnographies of selected case study schools to explore the ways in which the experience of schooling was gendered and trace the influence on the key indicators of retention and achievement. At the same time this would work to expose the

heterogeneity of the school contexts and introduce different kinds of data which are not visible when dealing with national level data only or are not susceptible to statistical analysis.

Chapter 4: Discussion

4.1 Introduction

Despite differences at the national level, the data from the case study level revealed a remarkably similar set of gendered experiences for both teachers and students across all 12 schools in the two countries. The overwhelming sense of educational experiences across two quite different national contexts taking place within an almost universalised institutional culture and *modus operandi* worked to subvert the research intention to connect experiences of schooling with retention and achievement data. The absence of much systematic research that provides a baseline description of the gendered experience of schooling and the efforts of this research to address that gap similarly softened any causal connections to retention and achievement. Nevertheless the gendered accounts provided by this study of ‘what is going on’ at the school level can make a significant contribution to our understandings and strategies that will help to realise the international development goal of gender equity.

In the face of the striking similarities, however, the selection of the case study schools, although not completely satisfactory did provide important opportunities for some useful comparisons. There were some key differences distinguishing high achieving from low achieving schools and rural from urban schools that contributed to differing levels of achievement and retention. It is largely based on this work that we discuss how gendered school experiences are associated with patterns of achievement and retention.

The discussion below sets out the commonalities and differences following a similar pattern to the case studies (see Appendices 2&3), with the more technical quantitative data being presented first, followed by the ethnographic data; this latter provides more qualitative understandings of the contexts and experiences inside the institutions.

4.2 Case Study Contexts

4.2.1 Achievement

As expected all the high performing schools produced better pass rates than low performing schools in a similar location (urban, peri-urban or rural). The range of pass rates across the samples showed a 70 and 30 percentage point difference in Ghana and Botswana respectively. This is borne out by comparisons of high and low achieving schools by location which showed greater differences in Ghana, with for example a 35% point difference in the peri-urban schools. In Botswana the rural schools showed the greatest performance gap with more than 25% point difference and the urban schools the lowest gap at just under 7% points. The greater spread of pass rates in Ghana indicates greater diversity in that sample. In both countries the high performing urban school and the low performing rural school were top and bottom of the range; there was however not a distinct performance / location hierarchy. In particular, the low performing urban schools came higher in the order, achieving better pass rates than the high performing rural school in Ghana and the high performing peri-urban school in Botswana. Nevertheless the rural schools with one exception presented the lowest pass rates within their performance category. In Ghana the high performing rural school performed more than 15 percentage points below the low performing urban and peri-urban schools. Although based on a small number of case studies, this research indicates that the locational variable that encompasses complex gender and socio-economic relations acts as a proxy in which poor school performance is a function of poverty.

Table 4.1: Case Study School Examination Performance by Gender (2001)

Botswana					Ghana			
High performing schools								
	% pass	F	M	gender gap	% pass	F	M	gender gap
Urban	94.3	93.0	95.9	2.9	82.7	82.7	82.8	0.1
Peri-urban	79.6	75.8	82.5	6.7	89.2*	82.6	97.3	14.7
Rural	88.4	81.6	93.8	12.2	34.4	30.0	41.7	11.7
Low performing schools								
Urban	87.4	87.2	87.5	0.3	50.0*	44.0	53.2	9.2
Peri-urban	64.7	73.6	57.0	-16.6	53.7	44.4	60.9	16.5
Rural	62.6	71.6	52.7	-18.9	13.0	10.7	16.7	6.0

Source: Republic of Botswana (2002) & Ghana Education Service (2001)

* data from 2000

Across the twelve case studies, seven schools, three in Ghana and four in Botswana, performed at the national average or above. In Ghana, this included the low performing peri-urban school but not the high performing rural school, which was ranked 5 out of 6 by performance in the sample (see Table 4.1), just above the low performing rural school. In Botswana, the urban school performed best and the high performing rural school had the second highest pass rate. In general, the performance of the schools had improved in recent years in Botswana with only the high achieving rural school showing a small 1.6% drop. In Ghana, interestingly, the low performing schools had improved their pass rates while all three high performing schools had shown drops of around 10% - although in the case of the peri-urban school this was from a high of 100% pass rate.

In Table 4.1, the gender gaps in performance from the most recent examination results showed lower pass rates for girls than boys in ten of the twelve cases. In both countries, the gaps were lowest in the urban schools except the poor performing urban school in Ghana, the only urban school to have less than the national average pass rates and a lower proportion of female teachers compared to other urban schools. It was however the only school in the study that showed an increase in female and male examination performances and a drop in the gender gap.

The two cases where girls out-performed boys were both in Botswana, in schools with lower than the national average pass rates, the poor achieving peri-urban and rural schools. The remaining low performing school in Botswana, the urban school, was the only school in the country sample to show a decreased gender gap. Interestingly in the results shown it had turned around a gender gap in favour of the girls in the previous two years to a marginal gap in favour of the boys. It is in these low achieving schools that the relative performance of the girls was better than the boys. The low achieving Ghanaian schools all performed below the national average with gender gaps in favour of the boys. There were decreases in the gender gaps by as much as 20 percentage points in the peri-urban school due to improvement in the female performances. Across both countries there was a marked tendency in these low achieving schools for the girls to improve their performances relative to the boys. One contributory factor may be the noted lower attendance rates of the boys in these particular schools.

Of the eleven case studies with data over time (i.e. not the low performing rural school in Ghana) seven showed increased gender gaps. Three of the four schools with decreased gender gaps were low performing schools. The high achieving urban school in Ghana with a decreased

gender gap was the result of a plummeting male pass rate down by 13.5% to just above that of the females. The other high performing schools in Ghana in common with all the Botswana schools, except the low performing urban school, showed increased gender gaps. Greatest gaps were in the rural areas, with a 25% point gender difference in the Ghana high performing rural school. In Botswana, on the whole the gender gaps were smaller and in both directions. The current dominance of the boys in four out of the six case studies had fluctuated over time. In three of the four cases where the boys currently dominated, this had changed from the previous year in which girls were in the ascendancy. In Ghana, these patterns of better performance by the boys have been sustained such that data on the case studies over time show only two years out of thirteen when the girls outperformed the boys. This would suggest that in Ghana a key strategy to improving school performance and closing the gender gap should focus on improving female pass rates while maintaining the good performance of the males.

Greater exploration of the pass grades exacerbates the Ghanaian picture in which girls have gained much lower pass grades, with only very few higher grade passes in the high performing urban and peri-urban schools. There is then a gendered distribution of high and low pass grades even in schools that perform above the national average pass rates. This strongly suggests that in the low performing Ghanaian schools where the gender gap is closing, it is due to the girls achieving low grade passes. In Botswana, a similar pattern emerges with five of the six schools showing more higher grade passes (merit, A & B) by the boys. The only school where girls have higher grade passes is the poor performing peri-urban school in which the gender gap is in favour of the girls. Even in this case only it was a difference of around 10% in B grades as only one girl had achieved an A grade in the last three years. Across the whole study, boys gain almost double the number of Merits and A grades than girls do. In the spectrum of achievement it seems that girls in both contexts persistently under-perform, with the lower level passes tending towards rather minimal pass grades. The goal of gender equity in these terms demands efforts that focus on improving the pass grades of the girls. This has important bearing on retention into senior secondary school and beyond, with its significance for future social and civic participation in addition to the personal and psychological benefits for women and men.

Retention to senior secondary school is based on performance at JSS. In Botswana, the higher pass rate of 80% realised between 40-50% enrolment in SSS. In Ghana, nationally around 60% qualified for SSS entry although no data was available on actual retention. In the Ghanaian case studies, these figures ranged from 0% in the low performing rural school to over 50% in the high performing urban school. In both countries, the higher pass rate and the higher grade passes obtained by boys especially in the high performing and urban schools would suggest that SSS places were more accessible to them. In Botswana, however, the national data shows that gross progression rates into Form 5 are 2% higher for girls. Further exploration of the data lies beyond the scope of this study but it clearly points to issues of post-JSS occupations which seem to vary by gender, location and poverty.

4.2.2 Subject Specific Achievement

Further analysis of the examination data provides information on performance in curriculum subjects. Although in Ghana all subjects offered were compulsory, in Botswana there was a subject choice system. This demanded that students took seven core subjects and selected one each from the two general subjects, Art or RE, and two practical subjects, HE or D&T. Both nationally and in the case study schools, this resulted in gendered choices, with males opting for D&T and Art and females for HE and RE. The greatest gender polarisation of teachers and students was in HE and D&T. Across the case studies there was no female teacher of D&T and only one male teacher

of HE. Interestingly in Ghana too, the only school that did not offer the HE equivalent of Pre-Vocational Studies Catering option was the all-male teacher poor performing rural school.

Student options in the Botswana schools showed that the highest proportion of females opting for D&T (19.4%) was in the low performing peri-urban school. The highest proportion of males who had opted for HE (10.8%) was in the low performing urban school. The low performing schools had higher proportions of students choosing across this gender divide. Within these performance categories, the urban schools showed greater gender mixing in which more females took D&T than males taking HE. All the case study schools showed lower proportions than the national data. The male preference for Art, and female preference for RE, were reflected in the school data. Females comprised less than one third of Art students and males between 30% and 42% of RE students. The Art teachers were over one third female but there was only one male RE teacher across all the schools. The students generally performed better in options that were dominated by their own gender. Where the data was available, the boys out-performed the girls in D&T and the reverse was the case for HE, except in the low performing peri-urban school in which one boy achieved very well in HE.

Core subject performance in Botswana showed that girls consistently out-performed boys in Setswana and English. Boys predominated in Science and in Mathematics, albeit with a reduced margin, in the high performing urban and peri-urban schools and the poor performing urban school. In the low performing peri-urban school, there was no evidence of better male performance and only in Agriculture in the low performing rural school. Both these latter schools had a gender gap in favour of the girls. Both rural schools showed better female performance across all subjects except in D&T in the high performing school and Agriculture in the low performing school.

In Ghana the achievement gap was much more marked. All subjects were compulsory at JSS level and students sat all ten subjects (where they are all taught). Nationally, boys do better than girls in all subjects, with the exception of both English and Mathematics in two of the ten regions. The greatest gender difference in achievement by subject was in Science and Pre-Technical skills. In 2001, boys outperformed girls by over 20% in general Science in three regions and by over 10% in Pre-Technical skills in a further three regions. Although there were no options, students did express preferences, with males preferring Mathematics, Science and Pre-Technical skills and females preferring languages and Pre-Vocational skills (Catering option). This follows very stereotypical lines that are reflected in the teaching force: most teachers in Ghanaian JSS were males and very few female teachers taught Science and Mathematics. The subject teachers and student preferences reproduce gendered curriculum norms as a further aspect of the gendering of schooling, which in this case seems to disadvantage girls.

In Botswana, despite a gender gap, there were more trained teachers and more female teachers in JSS than in Ghana. This has provided greater exposure of female students to female teachers of the predominantly 'male' subjects of D&T, Science and Mathematics. To a certain extent, the gradual movement of female teachers into these subjects is evident in Ghana in Agriculture and Mathematics, but it is more apparent in Botswana, with at least one female Mathematics and/or Science teacher in the majority of the case study schools. Although difficult to make correlations, the higher number of female language teachers parallels the higher performances of female students in these subjects. Similarly, the movement of female teachers into the 'male' subjects of Mathematics and Science in Botswana seems to have taken place in advance of a rise in female student performance in Mathematics, in particular such that in one or two cases they have outperformed the boys in school and they perform equally at the national level. The improved

performance of girls in Mathematics is significant to access to teacher training which is dependent on passes in Mathematics. This is particularly acute in Ghana, where girls perform less well, such that the cycle of gendered exclusion persists in teacher training as well as in schools.

A slightly more encouraging picture of girls' performance was provided in the focus classes. In both countries, teachers commented on the girls' seriousness with their studies. In Ghana, school examination records showed that in some cases the girls out-performed boys in languages in particular, although Mathematics remained a male dominated subject. According to teachers in the high performing peri-urban school, girls were better in all subjects except Mathematics whereas the boys took the bottom positions in all other subjects. The high performing urban school recorded another fairly typical gender pattern, with boys occupying the top and bottom positions in all subjects except Fante and girls in the middle range. In a further example, most teachers interviewed in the low performing peri-urban school, including the Mathematics teacher, felt that girls were better in all subjects. Although this combination of school test results and teacher opinion has not yet been manifest in the national results, it provides encouraging evidence of the better engagement of girls in education, which is an important step towards gender equity.

4.2.3 Enrolment

Intake statistics for the case study schools provided in Table 4.2, shows much larger JSS schools in Botswana, with a range from well over 600 students in the urban areas to just below 250 in the rural high achieving school. This contrasts with the largest case study school in Ghana of just over 300 students and the smallest with 104 students. In both countries, the smallest school was the high achieving rural school, which in the case of Botswana was less than half the average size of the other case study schools. Urban schools had the lowest class sizes, with peri-urban schools among the highest, with an indication that class size relates more to location than performance. Associated population patterns are important here but go beyond the scope of the study. A complex of traditional settlements, increasing urbanisation, population density and available work opportunities are likely to be influential. The related indicator of student – teacher ratio (S:T) shows an interesting contrast, in that in Ghana rural schools tended to have higher numbers of students per teacher while in Botswana it was the opposite. As the same curriculum is offered in smaller schools, higher S:T suggests that teachers are required to teach more than one subject in the school. This had a possible impact on performance at the national level, where the percentage pass rate is much lower in Ghana where smaller schools predominate.

Table 4.2: Case Study School Enrolment by Gender (2001)

Botswana					Ghana			
High performing schools								
	Intake	%F	S:T ratio	Average Class size	Intake	%F	S:T ratio	Average Class size
Urban	660	56	15.3	33.7	227	44	16.2	37.8
Peri-urban	500	53	16.2	55.6	305	49	27.7	50.8
Rural	235	55	13.0	39.2	104	42	26.0	34.7
Low performing schools								
Urban	579	49	14.5	32.0	224	53	17.2	37.3
Peri-urban	623	50	16.4	41.5	132	54	18.9	44.0
Rural	500	51	11.1	41.7	128	55	25.6	42.7

The highest proportions of female students in Botswana were seen in the high achieving schools, whereas in Ghana they predominated in low achieving schools. In two of the three high achieving schools in Ghana, the figures were below the average national proportions. In Botswana, the higher proportions of girls in both high and low achieving schools were in schools which had female Heads. This was not the case in Ghana where the highest proportions of female students attended the school with an all male staff, the low performing rural school.

4.2.4 Attendance and Drop-out

In terms of increased enrolments, only the poor performing schools in Ghana showed increases in the enrolment and proportion of female students; the opposite trend was observed in the high performing schools in Ghana. If the nationally acclaimed increases in female enrolments are realised only within poor achieving schools, the threat to gender equality remains significant. It suggests that issues of quality related to increases in girls' enrolment need to be taken into account alongside the bare numbers of the access data. In Botswana the higher enrolment of girls remained a general characteristic of all the case study schools but was more marked in the high performing schools.

All the high achieving schools showed good attendance and punctuality compared to the low achieving schools. Generally girls were more punctual than boys except in the poor achieving rural school in Botswana. Travel to school was an important factor. In recognition of student difficulties over distances to school, the high achieving peri-urban school in Botswana had changed the school session times.

In both countries, attendance across all schools except the three high performing in Botswana showed higher levels of female attendance. The low performing schools in particular were characterised by much poorer male than female attendance rates. The exception was the rural school in Ghana with an all male staff in which female rates were low, with only around 75% attendance. Low male attendance was particularly poor in the urban poor achieving schools, in Botswana male non-attendance was double that for females and in Ghana it was less than 70% that of female attendance. Explanations of the low urban attendance were related to available work opportunities for the boys. Seasonal poor attendance by males in rural Ghana was similarly related to work opportunities associated with fishing.

Although drop-out rates were widely different in both countries, with 17.6% in Ghana compared to 2.4% in Botswana, both show higher female drop-out rates, a pattern that was sustained in the cases studies. The predominant reason for female drop-out was cited as pregnancy, which was a major concern at both national and school level and was common to all schools. Despite the difficulties in the identification of reasons for drop-out, in Botswana data on drop-out due to pregnancy was collected and presented separately. Both Ministries of Education had developed a policy related to this issue and the re-admittance of schoolgirl mothers. As a result of the policy in Botswana, male students were also required to 'drop out' if found to be implicated in a schoolgirl pregnancy. In both countries, schoolgirl pregnancy was directly related to family migratory life styles and the consequent vulnerability of girls. The high female drop-outs due to pregnancy in the peri-urban schools (particularly in the high achieving) of Botswana were cases in point. Interestingly, its prevalence was never expressed in terms of male behaviour or responsibility within the schools.

In both countries, urban schools had lower drop-out rates than others. In Ghana the higher drop-outs were in the poor performing schools and in the rural areas. Although the drop-out

remained high for girls, the figures showed that in the peri-urban and rural schools male drop-outs reached more than double the national average of 16%. This was again related to work opportunities for boys. This was acknowledged by the boys, who also added poor quality schooling as a ‘push’ factor.

Accommodation of returning drop-outs, especially mothers, was covered in national policy directives. However, across all the case studies there was only one successful case of a re-integrated schoolgirl mother cited. Difficulties in the school environment accentuated social embarrassment such that even where efforts had been made to implement the policy they usually failed. School strategies for dealing with the in-school conditions and causes of poor attendance and drop-out as well as the failure to re-integrate returning students were not well developed. Counselling services, for example, were rather ad hoc and intervention in student interaction minimal, even in cases of abuse and violence.

4.2.5 Student Background

The case studies were of schools that covered rural, peri-urban and urban contexts as well as relatively high and low achieving schools. This selection drew in student populations from across the socio-economic spectrum in each country. It is clear in both contexts that the higher achieving schools, especially in the urban areas, included students from higher socio-economic backgrounds than the lower achieving schools and schools in the more rural contexts. In both the urban and peri-urban high achieving schools, the parents included medical and educational professionals as well as minor civil servants, all of whom had at least post secondary school education, including some at university level. In the low achieving schools, predominant occupations were artisans (e.g. carpenters, masons), traders or primary producers (e.g. farming, fishing). Levels of poverty increased in the move from urban to rural. It would seem that the greater mix of traders with primary producers differentiated the high achieving from the low achieving rural schools. As in other global contexts, educational differentiation was an effect of social stratification and also productive of it. Socio-economic status (poverty) and gender are important structures that are produced by and reproduce educational and social differentiation.

Interestingly, in both country contexts migratory life styles and working conditions were characteristic of the students’ backgrounds. In Botswana, the tripartite settlement and farming practices meant that parents moved between the rural centre/village to their arable lands some kilometres away and to their cattle posts sometimes hundreds of kilometres away. In Ghana, those involved in fishing migrated with the fish stocks up and down the coast into neighbouring countries and beyond. Both fathers who fished and mothers who smoked and sold the fish moved away together to make their livelihood. In both countries, this left the children either with relatives, who were often elderly, or friends, or to their own devices. This situation was most prevalent in the peri-urban schools in Botswana and the peri-urban and rural schools in Ghana. The impact on the students’ lives and their experiences in school was significant in terms of their progress, achievement, attendance, truancy and drop-out. Although to a certain extent this was normalised for some students within their respective communities, the effect was an increased vulnerability to others in the community (e.g. to older men or exploitative relatives) and to the demands of the school; for others the impact was seen as a loss of discipline and control. As the case studies have shown, the students’ response to their conditions was gendered, in the more extreme cases with a higher incidence of schoolgirl pregnancy and with the formation of predominantly male youth gangs in Botswana peri-urban schools. Generally these were attributed to family background, levels of home care and ultimately to poverty. At the same time, the

migratory lifestyles were cited as responsible for poor school - community communication and to the inactive and poorly supported school - community bodies like the PTA.

Time taken to travel to school was also important to the students. A combination of distance, road conditions and available public transport made travel times range from less than 15 minutes to more than two hours. In the rainy season, some schools in both countries demanded travel by canoe or boat in addition to poorer transport on unmade roads. In the urban areas, problems of travel were less acute than in the peri-urban and rural schools. The immediate effect of these travel difficulties was on punctuality, which added to the fear of corporal punishment and provided the motivation for latecomers to play truant. In Botswana, the twice-daily distribution of food was one incentive that bolstered attendance, even if only for half the school day.

School uniforms were compulsory in both countries, although in Ghana this was specified by gender. Girls wore pinafores or skirts and boys wore short trousers. In Botswana, the schools enforced uniform to different degrees, to the extent that the high performing rural school did not allow girls to wear trousers (which was against national policy). The effect of household poverty was made visible in the uniforms, particularly in Ghana where it was not uncommon to see patched and worn uniforms. Similarly, in some schools students did not have shoes; this was particularly apparent in the low performing schools. Uniform was often adapted or added to in both contexts and again this was tolerated to different degrees depending upon the school management. Girls, for example, often cut their skirts short. In the Botswana high performing rural school, students were sent home if they came in untidy uniforms.

4.2.6 Teachers

The teaching force in Botswana has a much higher proportion of females than in Ghana, where teaching across all levels including primary is a male dominated career. At a general level there is a parallel with female examination performance – more female teachers and higher female achievement are both characteristic of Botswana compared to Ghana. The reverse is the case in Ghana. In concert with the teacher numbers by gender, half the Botswana case study schools had female Heads while in Ghana there were only two females out of the six Heads. Three of these five female Heads (60%) were in high achieving schools compared to three out of eight (37.5%) male Heads. In confirmation of the promotion procedures, these Heads tended to have extensive experience in teaching of around 20 years or more and were all qualified teachers. In Botswana, two of the six Heads had Masters level qualifications.

The predominance of female teachers in urban schools was evident in the case studies, with much higher proportions than the national averages in both countries. In rural and peri-urban areas, these proportions were reversed to the extent that there were no female teachers in the poor performing rural school in Ghana. However, as shown in Table 4.3, there was one exception to the predominance of males outside the urban setting. The poor achieving peri-urban school in Ghana, located in an established settlement with good communications, not only had double the national proportions of female teachers, it also had a female Head.

In general, the schools were male dominated institutions, even in Botswana where there were more female than male teachers in the schools. In eight of the twelve cases studies, male teachers dominated the staff, even though two of these had female Heads. In a further three schools, there were more female teachers and two also had female Heads. In the final school, there were equal numbers of male and female staff with a female Head; this was the high performing urban school in Ghana.

Table 4.3: Case Study Schools Teachers by Gender (2001)

	Botswana				Ghana			
	Teachers		Head		Teachers		Head	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
High performing								
Urban %	27 62.8	16 37.2	X		7 50.0	7 50.0	X	
Peri-urban %	16 47.0	17 53.0		X	2 18.0	9 82.0		X
Rural %	8 44.0	10 56.0	X		1 25.0	3 75.0		X
Total	51	43	2	1	10	19	1	2
Low performing								
Urban %	30 75.0	10 25.0		X	4 30.8	9 69.2		X
Peri-urban %	17 45.0	21 55.0		X	4 57.1	3 42.9	X	
Rural %	22 46.0	24 54.0	X		0 0	5 100.0		X
Total	67	56	1	2	8	17	1	2
Grand total	118	99	3	3	18	36	2	4

The data on teacher qualification is patchy but nevertheless there seemed to be high proportions of trained teachers in the high performing schools. In Botswana, there were no identified untrained teachers in the high performing schools but in Ghana, where there were a few, none were female. The poor performing schools had more untrained teachers, up to 13% in the poor performing peri-urban school in Botswana, of which a high proportion were female.

A comparison of the length of teaching experience in high and low performing schools in both country contexts indicates that this is a significant variable in school quality. All the high performing schools had teachers with extensive experience, obtained either within the school or from the teaching service generally, or both. The poor performing schools on the other hand tended to have many young, inexperienced and often untrained teachers. The poor performing urban schools in Botswana and Ghana have many teachers with less than one year's experience. In the poor performing rural school in Botswana, this characterised up to half the staff in the school, around 20 teachers. Often these teachers were working while waiting for further education opportunities and they tended to be male. Across all schools, women tended to stay in teaching longer.

In both country cases, the gendered structures in education and family / domestic arrangements have contributed to the predominance of females in urban schools, to their longer experience in teaching and the longer occupation of their current posts. The transfer out of the urban setting often required in the process of promotion added further difficulties to career development for female teachers. Despite the disincentives, both rural schools in Botswana had female Heads. Greater hardship in the rural areas and poorer communications also deterred female teachers in seeking promotion, such that in the poor performing rural school in Ghana there was no female

teacher and the only female teacher in the history of the school had stayed only one school year. This clearly has an impact on the promotion prospects of female teachers, as well the gender balance of school staffing, which in turn affects the student population and their experiences in school, including their experience of the physical environment. One obvious example of the latter is the all male staffed rural school in Ghana in which the toilets were clearly unsuitable for female use.

In terms of curriculum responsibility, both countries demonstrated the tendency for female teachers to teach languages, Home Economics, Religious Education and Moral Education. Males tended to teach Science, Mathematics and Design & Technology/Pre-Technical Skills. This pattern was repeated in all schools. There were some examples of female teachers beginning to enter some of the male dominated subjects like Agriculture, Mathematics and more rarely Science. This was more in evidence in Botswana than Ghana. In the Botswana urban high achieving school, three out of the five Mathematics teachers and two out of the four Science teachers were female, whereas in the high performing peri-urban school, with almost equal numbers of male and female teachers, there was only one female Science teacher out of six and no female Mathematics teachers. The only clear case where the subject tradition was reversed was the low performing rural school, where unusually four out of the five Mathematics teachers were female; and three out of the five English teachers, three out of the four Social Studies teachers and the one Home Economics teacher were male. In contrast to the latter, in Ghana in the rural poor performing school where there was no female teacher at all, Pre-Vocational Studies, Catering option (Home Economics) was simply omitted from the curriculum. There were few exceptions to the traditional pattern, although the higher numbers of males in secondary teaching in Ghana has meant that male teachers of English in particular and Social Sciences were not uncommon. However, in the rural poor performing school in Ghana very unusually there was a male teaching HE. Across the case studies, there were three examples of females teaching Agriculture and one where unusually a female teacher taught Mathematics. The very strong male or female association of particular curriculum subjects powerfully communicated appropriate student identifications as an aspect of constructing and reaffirming their gendered identities. This was clearly evident in the student options discussed below.

Teachers also perform extra-curricular duties which are similarly highly gendered. In a mirror of traditional domestic divisions of labour, the males had the greatest responsibility in administering corporal punishment, sports and school ground work, while the females were patrons of religion-related school clubs and were often responsible in some way for cleanliness and attending to the reception of guests. Again institutional practices provided clear classifications of gender appropriate concerns and activities both for teachers and students, which were rarely contravened.

4.2.7 School Environment and Community Participation

Among the 12 schools, only one was not in a poor state and in need of significant repair to classroom buildings, furniture or toilets: this was the rural high performing school in Botswana, which had very well maintained and resourced facilities. This school had a female headteacher. Overall, the school buildings in Botswana were newer, larger and better constructed than those in Ghana. The largest secondary school in Ghana had six classrooms compared to 18 classrooms plus laboratories in Botswana. Even when taking into account these differences and the better equipped classrooms, specialist laboratories and offices in Botswana, with the one exception referred to, all were in a poor state of repair. They had broken windows and doors, cracking walls, leaking roofs and inadequate student lockers. The poor state of the classroom furniture in

Botswana stood out within the relatively newly built classrooms. In both countries this was in nearly all cases inadequate, with students often sharing broken desks and chairs. The situation was so bad in Ghana that, in the high achieving rural school, students were required to bring their own furniture to school. Toilets were frequently in a poor state of repair and hygiene. In some Ghanaian schools, there were no facilities, in others these were only shared urinals that were partially enclosed and particularly unsuitable for female use. Only the high achieving urban school in Ghana had adequate toilet facilities and the rural schools were most poorly catered for. Although aspects of the poor quality of school infrastructure were evident in high performing schools as much as the low performing, in both countries it was noticeable that *all* the low achieving schools were particularly poorly maintained and neglected, in terms of the state of the classroom buildings, the furniture and the toilets.

In both countries, the classroom setting was remarkably similar. The focus of the class was the teacher's desk at the front, with student desks in 5-7 rows facing the front. The ubiquitous chalkboard, usually the only teaching aid, was often old, cracked and difficult to write on. The walls of the classrooms were mostly dull and bare; there were very few visual aids to be seen, let alone used. Nevertheless, in both countries a national policy addressed the distribution of textbooks. This seemed to operate fairly well in Botswana, with all except the rural low achieving school reporting satisfactory textbook supply. In Ghana, with the exception of the high achieving urban school, all schools suffered from inadequate textbook supply, which left students sharing one textbook between perhaps four, or in some cases with only a teachers' copy for reference. In such cases, extensive note taking from the board dominated the lesson time. The lack of books was extended to the absence of a library in all the Ghanaian schools. The few available resources were usually kept in the Head's office and rarely used. In contrast, all the Botswana schools had libraries, which with the exception of the low achieving rural school were well stocked. Even here systems of access to the libraries were difficult and irregular.

All the schools across both countries had some form of community committee intended to support the school. Both had Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) as well as community involvement in school management through the School Management Committee (SMC) in Ghana and the Board of Governors (BoG) in Botswana. There was an expectation that both these organisations would contribute to the upkeep of the school in some way. Only the high achieving urban schools in both countries reported activity in both organisations. On the whole, community involvement was low and contributions minimal or non-existent. One exception was the Ghanaian low performing peri-urban school attached to a Catholic church, in which the PTA was described as vibrant. Interestingly, despite the low performance of this school, its buildings were in a better state than most other case studies. This was related to the recent support of this school by USAID, which was apparent in a new school building programme. Apart from this exception, the expectation of community contributions was not realised in either country.

4.3 Life in School

4.3.1 School Management

Variations in school management and the institutionalisation of school procedures and practices contributed significantly to the experiences of both teachers and students. The high achieving schools were largely characterised by good discipline and management of staff and students. There were relatively high levels of professional behaviour, which were manifest in low teacher absenteeism and punctuality to school and class. Management efforts to sustain these high standards included the requirement for teachers to produce reasons to legitimate their absences

in the high performing urban schools in both countries and, in the Botswana high performing peri-urban school, class prefects were asked to keep a log of teacher attendance and punctuality to lessons. This was checked daily by the senior management. Similarly within these high performing schools, student attendance and punctuality was closely monitored and punishment given to latecomers. The high achieving rural school in Ghana was an exception: here the male Head was often absent or late and this had led to a breakdown of teacher discipline, in which other male teachers absented themselves or arrived late. Sometimes, the only female teacher in the school would have to perform all extra-curricular duties in the absence of the male teachers. This rural school, although in the higher performance category and better than the other rural school, was still poor relative to the national picture.

In contrast, in all the low achieving schools, discipline was poor and there were high levels of both teacher and student absenteeism and lack of punctuality. In some cases, even if teachers arrived in school they often did not go to their lessons. This kind of teacher slackness and unprofessional behaviour signalled a breakdown in staff discipline. In one case, the male Head blamed discipline problems on the high number of young inexperienced teachers, who tended to disrespect management, were more likely to arrive late, to miss classes and to disregard advice. The use of teaching as a stepping stone to something else rather than as a career was not uncommon, especially in Ghana, and it brought with it differential respect and compliance with management and professional codes of conduct. Additionally, in both countries the urban schools in particular had relatively high proportions of female teachers who, due to domestic responsibilities, were unlikely to apply for promotion and risk transfer. The lack of career prospects for these women, although not referred to directly, no doubt influenced levels of commitment to their work.

The school management was viewed as crucial to teacher discipline. The idealised vision of the head teacher was one that provided strong even authoritarian leadership. This was closely associated with a disciplinarian approach to students. In one case, teacher and school discipline under the previous African expatriate female head teacher had deteriorated to a state described as anarchy. Importantly, this failure of management was blamed largely on her reluctance to allow teachers to make liberal use of corporal punishment. The new male Head was a strong disciplinarian and teachers felt that the situation was much improved by his endorsement, against the national policy recommendations, of widespread corporal punishment. On the other hand, in cases of poor performance by teachers, all the Heads said that they dealt with this by meeting with the teachers individually and advising them. It was not possible to find out to what extent this was effective.

Poor management and staff indiscipline had knock-on effects in the student populations. The poorer staff discipline in the low performing schools was accompanied by poorer general student attendance and punctuality. Boys in the low performing schools had poor attendance and punctuality. Only in the rural school in Ghana with the all-male staff was the girls' attendance and punctuality worse than the boys. Both teachers and students in these poor school environments spoke of their intention or desire to transfer from the school, with inevitable effects on commitment and retention. One gendered consequence of poor management and discipline in the schools was that girls were more often the target of aggressive behaviour, while teachers, especially female, were also exposed to disrespectful and intimidating behaviour from male students. The insistence on high standards of school uniform was another aspect of student discipline that was led by the school management. All schools had uniform but there were different practices related to adaptations and additions to the students' clothing. In the Ghanaian

poorer achieving schools with students of lower socio-economic status, many had worn, faded and pinned uniforms, and, although shoes were included as part of the uniform, many students did not have footwear. The prescribed uniform in each country was gender specific; although in Botswana this included trousers for girls, the Head of the high achieving rural school obliged the girls to wear skirts. The poor performing schools were less stringent with uniform, with more students wearing adapted or alternative clothing.

In both countries there was a dominance of male teachers in senior and management positions, even though in three of the case study schools in Botswana and two in Ghana were headed by females. Despite the sense of fairness associated largely with the promotion procedures in both countries, there was resistance to female Heads even by female teachers. It was striking that in Botswana there was strong resistance to female leadership, even in high achieving schools with a female Head. Both rural schools had female Heads and in both, regardless of performance and the number of women in senior positions (in the high achieving school the Head, Deputy and all five senior teachers were women), it was reported that male teachers were disrespectful of the female Head. This male resistance to female leadership was attributed to cultural expectations, which in their stereotyped form cast men as leaders and women as followers.

Only the new female Head of the high achieving peri-urban school in Ghana appeared to be well received. Here, the male teachers believed that she treated them more equally than had her male predecessor, who they claimed had tended to favour the female teachers. On the whole, however, both female and male teachers seemed happier to work under a male Head and were of the opinion that a female Head does not meet with the same level of cooperation as a male. Where a female Head decided to tackle under-performing male teachers, this could prove to be particularly difficult, as was illustrated by the high achieving peri-urban school in Ghana. Here, the new female Head had begun official disciplinary procedures against three male teachers who had not submitted the required school records. It was only after an investigation by the district office that they finally submitted them. This was interpreted by the teachers as a protest by the male teachers against a female Head, although the Head herself saw it merely as laziness.

The experience of most female teachers was that theirs was a gendered institution. However, this was accepted as ‘natural’, not as an issue that needed to be addressed. The majority of female teachers felt that male teachers were given most decision-making roles and that they were left in subordinate roles, which mirrored their domestic gender relations. Even where the Head was female, they felt they had less influence on management issues and were generally marginalized and treated unsympathetically, while male teachers were given more ‘floor’ time and treated with more respect. One female teacher pointed out that when she had first arrived at the school, she was not allowed to teach Science to the higher classes because she was a woman (*‘people do not trust women on technological matters’*), and it was only when there was no male Science teacher available that she was allowed to teach Form 3 classes. In this school, too, women were given the task of supervising the cleaning and arranging entertainment, while the male teachers kept to the sports field.

Neither the presence of a female Head nor the predominance of female teachers in schools appeared to have an impact on the gendered nature of the school, or on the overall impression that gender was itself not an issue. Female Heads had to lobby the support of male teachers to gain legitimacy. Although teachers in both countries referred to cordial relations among colleagues, observations showed gender segregated staff and staffrooms with rather minimal teacher interaction across the gender boundary. In both countries, only female teachers

complained of having been overlooked for promotion. A variety of explanations for this from across the case study schools included specific criteria like female failure to attend committees, to generalised comments about female teacher laziness, to male feelings of superiority and their inability to envisage or accept female leadership. Despite the oppressive conditions and inequitable gender relations, the female teachers tended to 'naturalise' their situation.

A final aspect of school management concerned community relations. These were variable and systems to encourage involvement were undefined. On the whole there was more evidence of supportive community activity in the higher performing schools. It was only in the high performing urban schools in both contexts that the PTA and the governing/management body were both reported as active. Even in these cases, the depth and breadth of the parental or community involvement was unclear although contributions were often in the form of funds or labour. Clearly an emphasis on fund raising would have acted as a disincentive to many lower SES households in the lower performing schools. There were, however, examples where the work of either of these bodies had made a significant difference to the conditions of schooling in the physical sense through, for example, the provision of toilets or furniture. Other forms of community involvement included handling serious disciplinary cases; in Botswana, for example, these were heard by a community committee that then prescribed action, often some form of punishment. In less direct forms also, the local community influenced the school, for example in Ghana adverse community response to the re-admittance of schoolgirl mothers had jeopardised the implementation of this policy. In Botswana too, a family request to keep out of a sexual abuse case between two student cousins compromised the school stance on this case and its ability to acknowledge and care for the victim and deal with the perpetrator. The victim returned to school alongside the aggressor with little or no special attention paid to her continued vulnerability.

In terms of the school contributing to the community, the only reference to this was in the high achieving urban school in Ghana. In an annual event students worked at cleaning and clearing up in the nearby hospital. This study suggests that school-community relations are variable and assumptions of positive, constructive relations as a strategy for improving school provision are not substantiated. An example of unsolicited community intervention on behalf of a student who was being excessively beaten by a teacher in Ghana had caused very fragile and antagonistic relations between the school and the community. Such latent demands for some form of accountability from the community are a potent and yet unrealised source of energy that can positively influence the conditions and experiences of schooling. One caution, however, is that these may reproduce gender differences.

4.3.2 Gender Duties

Students

Male and female prefects were usually appointed in equal numbers but with different responsibilities and power. Male prefects had more authority and took the lead in joint activities, while female prefects were usually made responsible for domestic duties e.g. seeing that classrooms and offices were cleaned. In particular, high status public duties were usually performed by boys, for example ringing the bell between lessons and in assembly a male prefect would lead if a teacher was absent. This would almost never be a girl. One exception was in a Ghana school, where a girl prefect managed the Scripture Union club very competently while the female teacher was absent; usually a boy would have been expected to step in but in this case the club was dominated by female students. This perhaps shows that female students are only willing, or invited, to take on public roles in front of other females.

There was also a clear tendency for male prefects to be responsible for male students and female prefects for female students, for example when lining up for assembly or, in the case of Botswana, for food. This was explained by teachers as an appropriate arrangement: girl prefects would have problems instructing or controlling male students, especially the older ones.

In terms of general school duties, in all the schools in both countries girls were usually responsible for cleaning classrooms and offices, and also fetching water. Boys did weeding, picked up papers, cleaned windows and performed heavier duties like tree cutting. They were rarely observed using brooms or mops. Boys also tended to have a supervisory role, e.g. inspecting the plots rather than cleaning them. Whereas in some instances girls helped boys, e.g. by raking and bagging weeds for them to take to the dump, boys did not help girls out. They concentrated on completing their own duties, which they usually did reluctantly; and as soon as they had finished they would sit down. In one rural school in Botswana the boys did concede that they might do certain tasks if there was no girl around. On the whole, however, they restricted themselves to the minimum required, whereas some girls in the same school said it was empowering to have multiple roles.

It is interesting that the students tended to 'police' these gendered duties themselves. Both parties claimed that this strict segregation of duties was to avoid ridicule. Boys as well as girls would laugh at boys who sweep or do other 'female' activities. Girls were particularly active in this. For example, female class prefects in one school drew up a roster for classroom sweeping that excluded boys. They said that this was because it was not proper for boys to sweep; on probing, this was underpinned by their views that the boys would not complete the task adequately.

It was also the case that, as a result of the dominant classroom seating pattern, with girls usually sitting at the front, girls were more likely to be selected for miscellaneous jobs. In some cases, this view of students, especially girls, as helpers was extended to teachers using them to carry out personal duties, e.g. cleaning their houses, buying food or running other errands for them.

In conclusion, highly gendered duties were apparent across all schools, regardless of whether they were managed by a female or a male Head, or whether they were staffed predominantly by female or male teachers. Girls performed domestic type labour and boys took on public roles and acted in positions of authority. This segregation was reproduced by girls in particular, who tended to delineate their duties more rigidly than boys. There was very limited recognition that students could carry out all types of tasks regardless of gender.

Teachers

In addition to the curriculum subjects, teachers' extra-curricular duties were also gendered. Male teachers supervised male students' queues at assembly and, in the case of Botswana, at mealtimes; female teachers likewise with female students. Female teachers tended to fulfil social tasks such as greeting visitors, offering seats etc, whereas male teachers took responsibility for sports, school grounds and sanitation, i.e. tasks that required physical exertion. Male teachers also tended to deal with issues of discipline, especially corporal punishment. As for school clubs, female teachers appeared to be particularly active in Scripture Union clubs; in some schools this was the only active club.

4.3.3 Gendered Space

In all schools across both countries, the implicit and explicit organising principle of the school day was one of gender. As already explained, there was explicit segregation of students during

assembly and on other occasions where lines were formed. In Botswana, where students received two meals a day, the teachers justified separating boys from girls in the queues to prevent them from stealing the girls' food or taking more than their fair share. They also organised the queues by year group, so as to prevent older boys stealing from younger boys and girls. Moreover, the students segregated themselves informally, for example when entering the school in the morning, buying food and socialising at break time. Whereas girls gathered together in small groups, mostly on the periphery, the boys often took up more space in the playing field. School duties were also heavily gendered, as already noted. Significantly the teachers also tended to mix in gender segregated groups, occupying separate spaces in the staff room and there was little evidence of more mixed interactions.

In both countries, the dominant pattern of seating was for girls to sit at the front and boys to sit at the back and along the sides, as if surrounding and 'entrapping' or 'controlling' the girls. Boys tended to determine how space was organised in the classroom and teachers rarely intervened in these gendered seating arrangements. The only exceptions to this general pattern were in Science lessons in the low achieving urban and high achieving rural schools and in the high performing peri-urban school in Mathematics lessons in Botswana. In these classes the girls sat furthest from the teacher, thus reducing opportunities to contribute to the lesson, while boys sitting towards the front participated more enthusiastically. This manipulation of classroom space perhaps helps to explain their persistent dominance in Science and Mathematics. Physical distance from the teacher clearly had an effect on participation and discipline in class, especially that of males. There were however contradictory effects evident in Botswana poor performing schools, where the boys' distance was a form of self-exclusion, with consequent poor performance relative to the girls.

There were very few instances of a girl and a boy sitting together. Both gender groups actively segregated themselves from each other. Boys even avoided sitting on chairs usually occupied by girls, supposedly because they feared that when girls menstruated, they might mess up the seat. One exception to the segregation was to be found in a high performing rural school where in one class the two highest achieving girls sat at the back among the boys. Boys tried to defend the classroom seating position, saying that they were taller and would block the girls' view if they sat at the front. However, teachers believed boys stayed at the back because they could more easily misbehave, engage in disruptive conversations and eat snacks. Girls were considered more compliant and obedient, and, because they usually sat at the front of the class, teachers found them more attentive, less troublesome and more co-operative. Indeed, most teachers expressed the opinion that girls were performing better than boys in lessons, even though this is not borne out by national examination performance, especially in Ghana.

There were only two instances observed, one in each country, where the teacher tried to mix groups for the occasional group activity, but the new groupings were not sustained. The students drifted back to their old formations as soon as possible. In one school in Ghana, when a male teacher tried to mix the students, they protested. The explanation given by the girls was that they wanted to avoid being teased while the boys said that they found the girls quarrelsome. This feeling about appropriate seating was so strong that teachers could use it as a form of punishment, e.g. moving a misbehaving boy to sit with the girls. If a boy and a girl were forced to share a desk, they would avoid each other and speak to the student of the same sex nearest to them. The very noticeable segregation of female and male students and their reluctance to enter mixed social groups even when encouraged or instructed by the teacher was explained by both groups as being a reluctance to be labelled as being in a special (i.e. sexual) relationship with a

member of the opposite sex. This was influenced by a culture in both countries that discouraged social interaction between girls and boys after puberty. If a girl was seen with a boy, it was always assumed that they had formed a sexual relationship and they then became the subject of gossip.

Alongside their command of physical classroom space, boys also dominated verbal space. They were usually the most vocal in the class. They frequently made attempts to dominate lessons by shouting answers to the teachers, being impatient when girls sought to answer questions or to participate actively in the lesson, interrupting them and jeering and shouting ‘shhh’ to silence or distract a girl. They ridiculed girls if they got the wrong answer. By demanding attention aggressively, the boys discouraged girls from participating in lessons. With only few exceptions, teachers did not make specific systematic efforts to control the use of physical and verbal space. On the contrary, examples of the participation of a few vocal students, predominantly boys, are common. Intimidation of girls by male teachers’ questioning was observed in both countries. In Ghana, for example, a prize for solving a mathematics problem was given to the male class prefect even though he failed at the first attempt and after a girl developing the correct solution was harangued by the teacher and dismissed back to her seat. In a French lesson too, the male teacher persistently asked a female student to repeat the pronunciation of a phrase in front of the class and simply passed over boys who were as unclear or even worse. Some girls were picked out for special attention, especially by male teachers who tended to call them by name while others were addressed as ‘You’. Whether in the effective exclusion of the first examples or the ‘special’ attention of the latter, the predominant response by the girls was to avoid participation or engagement in the public space of the classroom.

In conclusion, there was a remarkable similarity in classroom seating and behaviour in all the schools. There was some indication that where there was variation it was in the subjects where the boys outperformed girls, i.e. Science, technical subjects and to some extent Mathematics. The imperative to public performances of masculinity left the boys with conflicting pressures in the social and academic spheres. In addition to the control of physical and verbal space, there were also the strenuous efforts to remain distant from both female students and their teachers, especially female teachers. The girls on the other hand were much more subdued and restricted in the classroom space and interactions. Neither the teachers’ pedagogy nor classroom organisation addressed the fundamentally gendered conditions of learning for the students. Common to both countries, this scenario not only worked to reproduce a gendered curriculum but it constituted the informal, hidden learning in a context of identity formation and affirmation that offered little or no challenge to the dominant social patterns and clearly constrained the educational opportunities and future aspirations of all the students.

4.3.4 Gender Violence

The gendered use of space provided the basic conditions that produced and reinforced gender segregation. The gender boundaries were actively ‘policed’ by some of the intimidatory tactics described in the previous section, on occasion through acts of gender violence. These included acts of physical and symbolic violence, differentiated by gender, that were exercised as forms of control and coercion. In most cases, these interactions were normalised within the institution as ‘natural’ aspects of human behaviour. The use of violence represents the more severe manifestations of the gendered institution that perpetuates and further entrenches gender as a major structure of the social world, which in turn creates and reaffirms differential experiences and outcomes. The effects relate to the immediacy of an incident of gender violence or differentiation and in a cumulative way as individuals learn their gendered place in the school and

beyond. Schools play a part in this process through the official curriculum, e.g. in subject choices, as well as in the hidden curriculum, e.g. school duties. These experiences have a bearing on longer term educational and workplace opportunities and material rewards and more insidiously upon the psyche, which, shaped by gender segregation, sets consequent limits and possibilities on gender identity. A more textured understanding of the sets of relations and interactions within the institution is the first base in efforts to address the gender gap in schooling and its consequent social, political and economic impacts in these two African contexts.

Within all the schools in both countries, there was widespread use of corporal punishment. This responsibility was de facto delegated to teachers by school Heads but it was not monitored or applied on a case by case basis as required by the policy regulations. Rather, it was observed to be meted out at the whim of the teacher in an unregulated manner. In Botswana, the official policy dictates that corporal punishment should be administered only on reasonable grounds and only by the head teacher unless he/she delegates this to another. No male teacher except a head teacher can administer corporal punishment to a female student, and for girls it is restricted to caning on the hand whereas with boys it can be applied to the back. In Ghana likewise, national policy dictates that only the head teacher should administer corporal punishment and it should be proportionate to the offence; caning should not exceed four strokes and 'on rare occasions when the head teacher delegates this responsibility, he/she must supervise its administration'. Illegal punishments are considered a criminal offence and beating children for poor performance is prohibited.

Despite this, in all the schools in both countries there appeared to be a large amount of unauthorised and random beating. A small degree of difference in these practices was indicated in the research, with a reduced prevalence of disciplinary physical violence in the higher performing schools. Beatings were sometimes extremely violent. For example, in the low achieving rural school in Botswana, male students reported punishments which included being lashed on the buttocks, having their head hit against a wall, and being beaten with fists, broomsticks and electric cords. Interestingly, despite the severity of these acts of physical violence, the students described the verbal abuse they were subjected to as more damaging, expressing a preference for corporal punishment.

On the whole, it was reported that boys received more corporal punishment than girls. This was a major source of grievance for boys, who felt that the girls were let off lightly and that boys often received a harsher punishment than girls for the same offence. They clearly considered this as inequitable and would in some cases refuse to accept the punishment, especially if it was from a female teacher. Teachers explained that boys were beaten more often because they misbehaved more than girls. Being beaten for failing a test was considered as particularly unfair by all students. The tendency to employ random or excessive corporal punishment in class by male teachers was cited by boys as a major factor in truancy or absconding for a lesson or part of the day.

Female teacher and male student relations present an interesting interaction of gender, age and authority relations. Female teachers usually confined themselves to symbolic violence through verbal insults or sometimes the physical violence of pinching. Alternatively, they might report the student to the head teacher or just ignore the misbehaviour, or ask a male teacher to beat a male student for them. For the female teachers, it would seem that acts of physical exertion around the school were defined as 'masculine'. The extra-curricular duties of the teachers and the division of student duties by gender all provide evidence of this. Female teachers asserted their

authority in disciplinary strategies that often included less demonstrative forms of physical violence e.g. pinching rather than caning, in addition to the symbolic violence of verbal abuse. In this way, they were insisting on their age and authority relations while affirming their femininity. The boys, however, in the public affirmation of their masculinity within a male dominated institutional setting, attempted to traduce the teachers' femininity with challenges to their authority and refusals to accept punishment from females. At the same time, some boys expressed a particular dislike of female teachers; in one Botswana school, for example, boys referred to them as 'pompous and showy', in another as moody, emotional, 'hormonal' and inconsistent. They claimed that they did not take these teachers' lessons seriously – if girls performed better in these subjects, this did not appear to trouble them. The pattern of contestation of teacher authority by male students that emerged from the schools was reminiscent of findings from research studies in the West. It would seem that the threat of corporal punishment from a male teacher had greater effect, since the boys did not attempt to intimidate them or refuse punishment. As the female teachers remarked, they were not accorded the same authority or respect as male teachers by the students and often not by their teacher colleagues. As such, their gendered experience within school made their working environment uncomfortable.

On the whole, relations between teachers and female students appeared to be much more amicable, as they did not engage in contestation as boys did and were more attentive in class. Boys however claimed that teachers showed preferential treatment towards girls and were unduly 'soft' on them. Male teachers were said to favour girls because they wanted sexual favours; some students reported 'love affairs' between teachers and students in their school. This description naturalises and softens these heterosexual relations that may be more appropriately classified as gender violence and against both education policy and the law. Although national policies were in place to guard against this, several examples were informally referred to in both countries. In contrast only one case of a teacher disciplined through the policy was provided. The case study observations indicated that some male teachers engaged in more personally loaded, sexist and even sexually suggestive interactions with the girls in a range of explicit and more subtle ways. Female students faced with the asymmetrical power relations, especially with male teachers, tended to act in ways that reduced their visibility in the public arena. The following are examples of the ways in which the mainly male teachers positioned the girls through acts of symbolic violence. At the same time they exemplify the ways in which girls responded to the oppressive conditions. For example, the non-problematic reproduction of gender stereotypes and sexist behaviour presented in the English Language texts in both countries by male and female teachers was escalated in some cases by male teachers who wished to emphasise and even sexualise these gender differences and to 'tease' the female students within the lesson. In this 'double whammy', the effect was to underline female subordination as represented in the text and to act this out in the lesson to which the female students responded with silence.

Another set of incidents related to the motivation of boys through negative comparison by teachers to the expected low standards of girls' work – 'even the girls can do it better than that'. Class participation was used alternatively to marginalise, embarrass or degrade the girls. Repeated questioning, for example, was used sometimes to harangue a girl or as an indication of favour from the male teacher. Associated with this, with which names to address a student within and outside the lesson were significant to levels of familiarity. This contrasted with the usual somewhat distant teacher – student interaction, which tended towards the impersonal and authoritarian. In one case, while a lesson was in process, a male teacher passing by loudly greeted a girl by referring to her as his 'wife'. The explicit attention paid to girls by male teachers

elicited different responses, from those in which girls visibly shrunk with head and eyes down and hunched in the corner of their seats to avoid further public attention, to those who 'glowed' from the attention and later even boasted to their female friends. The framing of appropriate gender behaviours left the girls with limited response strategies in the public arena. This was precluded by its challenge to the dominant and largely internalised versions of femininity. In contrast, public performance for the boys, for example in contesting the female teachers, was an affirmation of their masculinity or even the construction of a form of hyper-masculinity.

Within the student population, male students engaged in routine intimidation of girls in all schools, even in high achieving and well managed schools. As already explained, they dominated both physical and verbal space in the classroom by shouting out answers and distracting or intimidating the girls. Acts of humiliation resulted sometimes in girls crying in class. The effect of the intimidation on girls was described as affecting levels of concentration and performance. Poor performing girls experienced this more intensely, which no doubt further contributed to their poor performance. Returned schoolgirl mothers were also subject to these forms of gender violence perpetrated by the boys, the intolerable classroom conditions being cited in interviews as contributing to the minimal successes in their retention in school. In general, the girls' strategy to deal with this classroom context was to divert attention away from themselves, whether from teachers or male students, by being 'studious' and 'serious' in their studies, yet passive and well behaved in class. Male teachers and students attributed girls' minimal classroom participation to shyness, but the girls themselves attributed it to the oppressive gender regime. Given the generally hostile classroom context the girls did well and some managed surprisingly good examination performances.

On the whole teachers did not intervene, although where discipline and management in the school were poor, the boys' disruptive behaviour tended to be worse. They would play truant, refuse punishment, not do their homework, come late to lessons, and in some cases drop out permanently. The reversal of the gender gap in favour of the girls in the Botswana low performing schools indicates one set of consequences from poorly managed gendered school environments. So, although unregulated gendered interaction in the class and school produced poor conditions for, and performance by, girls in the more extreme cases, this was also detrimental to the boys in terms of attendance, drop-out and examination performance.

In several schools, widespread bullying was reported, in particular older boys snatching money or other property from girls or from younger boys. Although boys openly admitted that girls were maltreated by boys, they did nothing to stem it. Ironically, at the same time, boys felt aggrieved that they were the ones targeted for harsh treatment. Outside lesson time too, in efforts to maintain the traditional gender order, boys consistently attempted to control and discipline the girls. In Ghana, girls who were provoked into outraged response in resistance to the boys, were described with the derogatory label of 'quarrelsome'. This was an implicit demarcation of inappropriate female behaviour. In a further expression of their masculinities, it was commonplace for boys to sexually harass girls by touching or pinching them on their breasts and buttocks. In some schools, they boasted about this to the researcher. They also wrote 'love' notes and claimed ownership of girls and would verbally, physically and sexually abuse those who even indicated a refusal of their advances. In both countries, more serious cases of sexual abuse of girls were revealed. In addition to the incidence of junior secondary school girl pregnancy, there were reported cases of sexual assault and rape.

In summary, across all cases, the school context was characterised by gender violence. This reinscribed gender differentiation that had immediate and long term effects on all those within the

institutions. It influenced the experiences and outcomes of schooling in terms of participation, attendance, retention and performance. It worked to reproduce the hegemonic gender identities that constitute the fundamental structures of the social world. Gender relations were more significant to an understanding of many in-school interactions than age and authority relations. Gender boundaries were maintained and policed by physical and symbolic violence which was effected in more antagonistic terms in the lower performing and rural schools. In Ghana, it was these schools in particular that had seen the heralded increases in female enrolments, and in both Botswana and Ghana these were the sites of most male disaffection.

4.4 Institutional Responses

In all the schools it was remarkable that gender issues were not seen as a matter of concern. The official gender blindness was universal in this research. Gender was not raised as a matter of concern by management or used as an explanatory variable. The very obvious gendered nature of much of the behaviour by students, and differentiated treatment of students by male and female teachers (and to a certain extent vice versa) was taken for granted, as 'natural'. Any noted differences were not problematised; instead they were attributed to biological difference and the consequent socialisation process. The notions of an active process of social and institutional construction of gender could not find accommodation in an explanatory framework that was founded on implicit theories of 'natural' difference. In these terms, the school is seen as a neutral institution without gender bias. Differences in participation, performance and promotion were thus related to these natural attributes rather than gendered structures within school organisation. Gendered behaviour was largely put down to 'teasing' or 'playfulness' and sexism was downplayed or denied. There was no formal institutionalised response to sexist incidents and no legitimacy attached to any suggestions to address them through policy. Problems of poor performance or student discipline were not understood as gendered and therefore no gender strategy was developed to address them.

One conscious effort towards gender equity was the selection of equal numbers of male and female class monitors and prefects. However, the allocation of prefect duties by gender produced the contradictory effect of explicit gender demarcation and a consequent re-emphasis of difference. The female prefects experienced similar confrontation and disrespect from male students as the female teachers did, albeit more severe. The gendered allocation of school duties, the division into male and female queues and gender segregated seating arrangements in class were all considered normal and largely left untouched. In this way, perceptions of traditional gender roles were perpetuated. Schools were not pro-active in trying to change this. Even in curriculum terms, there were no efforts reported, for example, to encourage students to take subject options associated with the opposite gender.

In both countries, policies concerning sexual harassment were in place but rarely successfully implemented. In none of the case study schools was there an explicit and enforced school policy on sexual harassment or violence. Teachers and head teachers reported that they received frequent complaints about sexual harassment and verbal abuse of girls by boys. In most cases, incidents were ignored or trivialised; they were regarded by teachers as 'a necessary part of growing up' and not of great importance. At times, their response was to refer the matter to the guidance and counselling teacher, who would merely 'counsel' them. This usually meant reprimanding the guilty party. The process of guidance and counselling appeared to be vague, ill-defined and poorly institutionalised in these schools. This would seem to be an area that needs development, definition and incorporation in the school setting.

Similarly, at the government level in both countries, gender considerations have been taken into account in the new policy to allow re-admission of girls after giving birth; this, however, has had limited success. Despite the policy, there continues to be a great deal of prejudice and reluctance. Within the school and classroom, it was reported that the girls themselves were teased and bullied in more extreme ways than their female classmates. Outside the school, the local community response could work against its implementation. In the high performing peri-urban school in Ghana, for example, the male Head was troubled by adverse community reaction to the re-admittance of schoolgirl mothers. He had therefore decided to ignore the policy but after consultation with the researcher he did re-admit the girl.

Complaints appeared to concern boys' harassment and intimidation of girls both within and outside the lessons and school. In only one school (high achieving peri-urban in Botswana), was there a serious attempt to address such problems, with a member of staff appointed to follow up discipline or attendance cases, to contact the parents or explore the students' domestic circumstances e.g. if living alone or with elderly relatives. All schools had disciplinary committees intended to deal with particular cases; these rarely took the student's views into account and usually ended up recommending a new punishment. There was one exception in which students were represented and involved in discussion through a School Council. In other schools there was the widely held view among teachers that greater publicity and institutional accommodation of the rights of children would lead to uncontrollable conditions in schools. Associated with this, the threat and use of physical violence through corporal punishment, especially against the boys, was a mainstay of the discipline in schools, despite its effects on attendance and drop-out. In all schools, the tensions between official policy and practice had been sustained to reserve the teachers' powers to physical coerce or punish students in unaccountable ways. According to the teachers, the boys remain the cause and, according to the students, the main victims of this situation. Due largely to teacher resistance, few attempts have been made to change disciplinary practices even though they are outside the policy framework. Corporal punishment, often in extreme forms, is an integral part of these institutions.

Male teacher harassment of female students and teachers was far less reported in the research. Only one example of official disciplinary sanctions against a teacher by school management was cited.

This was a case of a male teacher in a rural high performing school coercing female students to accept his advances. The teacher was eventually dismissed with no further legal proceedings indicated, even though this was likely to be a prosecutable offence. On a few occasions, female staff complained of the overtly sexist behaviour of male teachers. For example, in the low performing urban school in Ghana when a female teacher reported 'some of the male teachers also do things that we the unmarried ones do not like - touching or invading our privacy', no action was initiated. These incidents point to rather hollow policy contexts in which appropriate policy mechanisms are rendered ineffective through insufficient awareness or the 'naturalisation' of asymmetrical gender relations on the ground. There is clearly scope for both in- and pre-service teacher training about the principles and implementation of the gender policies including special training for Head teachers. Dominant gender relations among the staff coloured the institutions, providing an important reference point for young people as they were inducted into and acted out appropriate masculine and feminine behaviours in affirmation of their gender identity. This plays a vital part in the social relations of the institution and the experiences of female and male students and teachers in school. This *laissez-faire* approach to managing mixed gender schooling had specific consequences for the differential educational experience of males and females, which link ultimately to future social, political and economic development.

In conclusion, teachers on the whole did not see the gendered school environment as problematic and therefore there was little evidence of a concerted institutional response to inappropriate behaviour, sexual harassment etc. In contrast, the students were more aware of how it constrained their school lives and they responded negatively. It was interesting that a common refrain across both countries was that boys considered themselves unfairly treated in school (largely by receiving more punishments) and were therefore the more disadvantaged. The girls felt it was they who were more constrained in all aspects of their schooling experience, particularly by the boys.

4.5 Examples of Good Practice

At the national policy level, both countries have introduced revised policies on schoolgirl pregnancy, allowing schoolgirl mothers to continue their education until close to the time of birth and to return to school afterwards. The Botswana policy states that female students who drop out of school due to pregnancy can return to school once they feel fit to do so. This is an improvement on the previous policy which stipulated that girls must wait a year after giving birth before returning to school. Related to this in Botswana is the raising of the marriage age in 2001 from 14 to 16 for girls and from 16 to 18 for boys. However, implementation of this policy has not been effective. In the 12 case study schools, there was only one example of a schoolgirl mother who returned to school. Factors contributing to the failure of implementation are: limited knowledge by school management and staff of the policy and the procedures to follow, community resistance (as in the case in Ghana) and reluctance of the girls themselves for fear of being singled out in some way for victimisation, bullying or ridicule.

Both countries also had policies which provided sanctions against teachers who engaged in professional misconduct, including sexual relations with students. In Botswana male students implicated in a schoolgirl pregnancy were also excluded from school. Similarly there were also national policies in both countries concerning the use of corporal punishment. Although these were introduced to address some critical aspects of life in school, in neither case had the policies been implemented with any measure of success.

The collection and disaggregation of data by gender at national level has been a sustained effort that has provided important insights for monitoring and development purposes. Although there remain some significant gaps at the national level, the need for disaggregated data has started to permeate the education system. With a little further encouragement it could be treated as a matter of course at the school level too. As such it would provide an important basis for further educational development at local and district levels and create a rationale for more contextually sensitive policy and practices.

At the school level, examples of attempts to ensure gender equity were limited. The appointment of equal numbers of male and female prefects at both school and class levels took place in both countries. In Ghana, however, it was common to appoint boys as prefects and girls as their assistants and in Botswana although less explicit the situation was in effect the same. As we have seen in Appendices 2 and 3, the duties attached to these roles and the authority that they commanded varied considerably by gender.

In the case of Botswana, another example of good practice related to uniform, where in five out of the six schools girls were allowed to wear trousers. This was significant for a number of reasons and in practical terms helped them to keep warm in winter and preserve their personal privacy in a more manageable way than allowed with a skirt. In both countries, students

expressed their embarrassment at inadvertent exposure of underwear. Continuing the theme of presentation there were obvious attempts in all schools to work on and clean the school environment. The maintenance of the school buildings, furniture, grounds and resources was important irrespective of the differences in their quality. Schools with better discipline tended to more successfully maintain higher standards in the physical environment. This had knock-on effects in which the students also seemed to treat the available resources with greater care and respect. In the reverse case, in some of the newer schools in Botswana, furniture that was only a few years old was broken and left in a corner of the classroom.

School initiatives on counselling, where they worked effectively, did make a difference. In the three high performing schools in Ghana, a guidance and counselling officer had been appointed and in Botswana every school had a counsellor. However, this did not work particularly well, with this role seen as less important than that of teacher of an examinable subject and 'counselling' often taking the form of reprimands or punishments. Implementation of counselling services was patchy: in some schools, teachers would refer truants and drop-outs as well as pregnant girls to the counsellor. In an extension of the pastoral / welfare role, the high performing peri-urban school in Botswana had appointed an 'outreach' teacher who had the responsibility of visiting the homes of absentee students and investigating cases of truancy etc.

The important bearing of social issues on the students' lives as a whole was recognised in one school which engaged in hosted talks etc. For example, a peer counselling programme called PACT in Botswana was involved in some schools to make the students aware of issues such as sexuality, pregnancy, drug abuse and HIV/AIDS. In some Botswana schools, suggestion boxes for students had been introduced and in one school a School Council had been established. Such initiatives went some way to offering the opportunity for both girls and boys to raise issues of concern, including gender concern, either publicly or privately.

As further example of the school's consideration for the students the low performing peri-urban school in Botswana had instituted a more flexible timetable. The school started later in the morning in recognition of the poor communications to the school and the difficulty that students had travelling long distances to school in the early morning.

Management strategies to encourage professional teacher behaviour although well-motivated were sometimes stringent and rather inspectorial. The use of student reports on teacher attendance was one example. A range of strategies to address the professional habits of teachers is certainly an area in need of development, although the adopted strategies would need to be thought through and developed probably in more positive and collegial terms.

The importance of community involvement in the school was apparent not only in the schools in which the parents were assisting with buildings. In the urban high performing Ghanaian school the students reciprocated by working for a day a year within the community, in this case in the local hospital. This was one way in which the relations between school and community might be enhanced and expanded to include and value non-financial contributions and to engender more local interest in the schools.

There were some isolated cases in which girls were more actively encouraged to engage in sports. In Botswana the schools in theory offered all sports, except football, to both girls and boys and teachers were expected to participate in sporting activities irrespective of gender. In

Ghana the rural low achieving school staged school sports even though these repeated the gender segregation that typified school life with girls' versus boys' football matches.

Finally there were some efforts by the teachers to spread participation to all students, engage in group work and otherwise intervene in the gender segregated environment that characterised all the classrooms. Even though these were met with different levels of compliance, these efforts would need to be strengthened and encouraged. In a similar way isolated examples of student communication and co-operation across the gender boundaries could be encouraged rather than punished by others in the same context.

Sadly, the schools were characterised much more by examples of poor practice with regard to gender, e.g. differential (and excessive) corporal punishment, flouting of the procedures on the administration of corporal punishment (by the head teacher etc) with no examples of teachers being prosecuted under the law for 'illegal punishment' or 'brutal acts' against students (Ghana), widespread verbal abuse by teachers, especially female, failure to deal with clear cases of sexual harassment and bullying, failure to recognise the gendered nature of the school, dismissal of manifestations of gendered behaviour as 'natural', in Botswana lack of encouragement of girls and boys to opt for subjects other than those associated with their gender, acceptance of inappropriate teacher behaviour with regard to girls in particular, stereotyped views of girls and boys' attitudes to schooling and their aptitudes and shortcomings, and allocation of duties on strict gender lines. There was limited resistance by female students to their gendered environment, while some male students chose to contest it by refusing to be beaten by female teachers and employing intimidating tactics; also inactive PTAs and other SMCs / BoGs which among other matters failed to address issues of gender inequality, discrimination and violence.

Chapter 5: **Conclusions and Recommendations**

5.1 **Introduction**

The objectives of this study were:

1. To engage in an intensive study of the way in which the learning experiences of students aged 12-14 are gendered at the school level and the impact that this has upon their retention and achievement.
2. To use these data to explain and qualify already available national statistical data on retention and achievement.
3. To study the institutional culture that supports these gendered experiences, both in terms of the formal and informal structures of the school.
4. To gather national data together to allow cross-national comparisons for dissemination and policy recommendations.
5. To highlight and disseminate examples of good practice and recommend appropriate school-focused strategies to address existing inequities.

The national (quantitative) data and the school level (largely qualitative) data from the 12 case study schools have been presented and discussed in Chapter 4, with the full case studies being provided in Appendices 2&3. The school level findings provide a wealth of evidence around the gendered experiences of both students and teachers (Objectives 1 and 3) and show how these contribute to the contrasting national data gathered from the two countries (Objective 4). While the qualitative school level data provide important insights into the overall impact of a highly gendered environment on student participation and achievement, the differing degree of impact between schools on retention and achievement and on the gender gap is not clearly defined and so the link between the school level data and the national data has been difficult to explain in more than very general terms (Objective 2). There were a number of reasons for this.

Firstly, the research team faced constraints, already referred to in 2.6, in the selection of case study schools. The lack of nationally available gender disaggregated data of school level examination performance prevented the selection of schools according to the original criteria, which was to identify one school in each location (urban, peri-urban, rural) with an average gender gap and one with a below average gender gap (i.e. where girls' performance was closer to that of boys) compared to national figures. Unfortunately, in Botswana the national examination results were not gender disaggregated and in Ghana only regional comparisons of retention to Senior Secondary School (SSS) were kept rather than examination subject performance data by gender. This limitation meant that the research team had to be satisfied with a less precise sample made up of one relatively high achieving and one relatively low achieving school in each location, regardless of the size of the gender gap.

Secondly, the sample revealed an unexpectedly wide range of achievement between the highest and lowest achieving schools across each country, especially in Ghana, where the pass rate in the school leaving examination in the rural high performing school was below that of both the low

performing urban and peri-urban schools. This meant that the criterion of relative high and low achievement applied within each category of location (urban, peri-urban, rural) but not necessarily between locations. Moreover, and most alarmingly, in seven out of the eleven schools for which data was available over time (a two - three year period), the gender gap appeared to be actually increasing. With such a small sample of six schools in each country, this greater than expected variation in performance made it difficult to establish a clear pattern of cause and effect in gender terms, while at the same time suggesting that school location, level of discipline, leadership and quality of teaching all played a prominent part in determining retention and achievement levels of both boys and girls.

Thirdly, in contrast to the wide variation in achievement noted above, all the schools revealed an overwhelmingly uniform gendered environment, regardless of the level of achievement and the size of the gender gap. It was therefore not easy to identify in-school factors that contributed to a smaller or decreasing gender gap. For example, the presence of female teachers and/or a female head teacher did not appear to have any impact on girls' achievement levels. This made the identification and dissemination of good practice (Objective 5) problematic as the institutional culture tended to encourage poor practice, with respect to both formal and informal school structures. At the same time, the better resourced school system in Botswana had paid dividends in terms of high enrolments in JSS and a small gender gap.

With these limitations in mind, the main findings from the study are laid out in this final chapter, together with relevant recommendations. These have been organised according to different categories of potential audiences and/or users, with the intention of making their significance more accessible and immediate to those responsible for addressing the particular issues. The categories are: policy makers, school managers, teachers, students and parents/communities. Examples of good practice are noted in the relevant sections.

5.2 Policy Makers

5.2.1 Gender awareness training and continuing professional development

It was most notable that in all the schools there was an almost complete failure by teachers to recognise the gendered nature of the teaching and learning environment and the impact that this had on female and male students. The presence of female Heads appeared to make no difference to this and there were very few attempts to break the stereotypical division of duties by gender, or to encourage girls to take traditional 'male' subjects and boys to take up those labelled as 'female'. There were few attempts by teachers to intervene in any way. Very few teachers taught non-conventional subjects and there was little appreciation of the power of the hidden curriculum and the ways in which institutional processes construct gendered behaviour by teachers and students.

There appeared to be very little staff development available apart from attendance on higher education courses, even in Botswana where the educational system was better resourced. When opportunities are limited, female teachers are more likely to miss out.

Recommendations

- Ministry departments responsible for overseeing teacher training need to ensure that the college curriculum provides awareness raising in gender issues, so that newly trained teachers make a conscious effort once in school to treat male and female students and colleagues equally and to encourage more mixed participation and sharing of learning tasks and school responsibilities.

- Gender needs to be integrated into all aspects of the school curriculum. In particular, textbooks need to be audited for negative gender images and messages; all new editions should ensure that gender stereotyping is eliminated as far as possible and that positive messages encourage girls in particular to consider life choices that go beyond the conventional anticipation of marriage as their only option in adult life (and boys to see domestic and child care duties as not exclusively a female responsibility). Presenting females in professional, economic (e.g. as business leaders) and decision-making roles provides powerful role models for girls, highlights positive examples of female authority figures and could help create a strong girl-friendly school environment (the research shows that female teachers and heads aren't necessarily sympathetic to girls so this is not self-evident).
- Ministries can raise gender awareness among school Heads and teachers through in-service training for teachers and headship training. Ministry campaigns can focus on gender relations in the formal and informal curriculum. The findings of this study can be disseminated through national and local workshops and meetings of education personnel.
- Teachers should be encouraged to work through setting their own example as well as through school policy to promote a gender-sensitive environment where female and male students and staff are equally valued.
- Guidance and Counselling teachers need to be provided with improved training and more school-based support so that they can carry out their role more effectively.

5.2.2 Teacher recruitment, retention and career development

There were clearly issues of teacher recruitment and retention with gender implications in both countries. In both cases, female teachers were over-represented in urban schools and under-represented in rural schools; in Ghana, one rural school had an all-male staff and had only ever had one female teacher for one year. In addition to the gendered school environment, reluctance to accept postings outside urban areas because of family commitments made female teachers' promotion prospects difficult, because promotion usually meant a transfer. In Botswana, both rural schools had female Heads and this may have been the consequence of promotion.

It was also the case that the under-performing schools tended to have teachers who had not been long in the school or where there was a high turnover of teachers. This usually meant that these schools had a large number of young or inexperienced teachers, and/or untrained teachers. Rural schools tended to have more untrained teachers, which also affected pupil performance. In Ghana most untrained teachers were male, in Botswana slightly more females were. In both countries, female teachers tended to stay longer in teaching.

It is possible that female teachers are disadvantaged in securing promotion by the expectation that individuals enhance their prospects by accepting additional responsibilities, e.g. membership of committees. Female teachers are more likely to be constrained than male teachers in taking up such duties by domestic and family duties, and may therefore be reluctant to volunteer. If female teachers in urban schools have few promotion prospects, this is likely to influence the quality of their work and commitment.

Recommendations

- Ministries need to work harder to retain teachers and to ensure a more equitable distribution of teachers in schools by gender, age and experience. They should provide clear career paths and consider incentives for good performance.

- In both countries, but more so in Ghana, teachers need to be encouraged to move into non-traditional subject areas, with more female teachers opting for Mathematics, Science and technical subjects and more male teachers offering Home Economics, Religious Education and languages. In Ghana, female secondary school leavers who do not meet the entry requirement for teacher training in the Mathematics examination could be provided with additional support during their period of training so as to bring them up to the required level by the time they qualify.
- In Ghana, there is a need for greater access to teacher training opportunities for females; lower female performance in national examinations leads to female under-representation in higher education generally, including teacher education, when teaching in many countries is a female-dominated occupation.
- Ministries should ensure the appointment of conscientious and energetic head teachers and to provide them with appropriate training in leadership. Incentives should be available to ensure that good Heads remain in leadership positions and that they do not get moved sideways into senior Ministry posts.
- There should be a review of promotion policy and staff development opportunities, with systematic staff review and appraisal, and more professional development opportunities for teachers, e.g. study leave linked to taking on new responsibilities.
- Requirements for promotion need to be made flexible in the light of difficulties experienced by female teachers with regard to family obligations. Identifying alternative routes to promotion may be one possibility.

5.2.3 Quality of learning and student retention

In both countries, the quality of schooling in rural areas was especially poor. Even the highest performing rural school in Ghana is only fifth in the hierarchy of six schools (after both urban and peri-urban low and high performing schools). In Botswana, the low performing rural school was particularly poor (although the high performing rural school was the second highest of the three). Truancy and drop-out were particularly high in rural schools and in low achieving or poorly managed schools.

The study found that in Ghana the increase in female enrolments as a result of a major Ministry effort to increase numbers has been most evident in the poor performing schools; in high performing schools, the proportion of girls has in fact decreased. This is an alarming finding. It indicates how important it is that quality considerations be incorporated in reports that focus on quantity. The increased enrolment of girls is praiseworthy but it is important to know which schools they go to and how they perform there. In Botswana, as girls consolidate their academic gains, increased numbers of boys from low SES backgrounds may end up in poor performing schools, and this needs to be monitored through quality as well as quantitative indicators.

In both countries, some data are still not disaggregated by gender, which makes it difficult to draw a complete picture.

Recommendations

- Ministries need to address the particular difficulties of recruiting and retaining teachers in rural schools, so as to attempt to raise quality and to address issues of student truancy and drop-out.

- Ministries should establish a gender-sensitive national and school monitoring system so that Heads and teachers can be alerted about gender gaps in their school and act accordingly.
- The conditions of teacher service and standards of professional conduct should be clarified with all Head teachers and teachers. School management and Head teachers should be advised and supported in enacting consequent disciplinary measures.
- All education-related data should be gender disaggregated.

5.2.4 Physical school environment

The physical condition of all the schools was surprisingly poor in both countries, with one exception (the rural high performing school in Botswana). Buildings were poorly maintained, toilets were often unsanitary and there was no imaginative use of displays on classroom walls for teaching and learning purposes. In Ghana, there was an acute shortage of furniture and textbooks in all the schools; this was worse in the rural schools and the low performing schools. Given prevailing conditions and the inequitable gendered distribution of classroom time and space, the lack of texts is likely to impact more negatively on girls.

There was some evidence that there is an optimum size for a school and that this has an impact on attendance and achievement. In Botswana, schools are much larger than in Ghana but with a lower student – teacher ratio. In Botswana, the rural high performing school was smaller than the others (less than half the size) but a conscious decision had been taken not to expand and accept more students. This clearly had a beneficial effect on performance. By contrast, in Ghana some schools were too small to allow for the full range of subjects to be taught or for a specialist teacher in all subjects. This was exacerbated by comparatively high student - teacher ratios. Teachers' workloads increase if they have to teach more than one subject especially to large classes. This can have a negative effect on student participation.

Recommendations

- Ministries need to emphasise the importance of well-maintained physical facilities, however basic.
- School size and student – teacher ratios needs to be taken into consideration during enrolment, when locating new schools or merging existing ones.
- The appropriate education authorities need to ensure an adequate supply of textbooks to Ghana schools.

5.2.5 Community involvement

In both countries, the level of activity by the PTA and other bodies such as School Management Committees in Ghana and Board of Governors in Botswana was patchy and their impact on the school was also not particularly obvious. In none of the 12 schools was there clear evidence of any intervention that had had a dramatic impact on the school. Where there had been some, it was largely in terms of improved buildings and furniture. Even active groups appeared to have little influence on the learning environment in terms of improved management, teacher commitment, pupil attendance or achievement. This questions the assumption, widely subscribed to by the international development community and governments, and the basis of many educational reform programmes, that communities are willing and interested in participating in school development.

In communities that are characterised by poverty and migration, as was the case in all our schools with perhaps the exception of the two Botswana urban schools, it is unrealistic to expect high levels of sustained commitment. Furthermore, where students were not living with their parents because of migratory patterns (in Ghana) or the tripartite settlement pattern (in Botswana), it may well be unreasonable to expect other relatives to contribute. In many cases, especially in Botswana, children were found to be living on their own for much of the time.

Recommendations

- Barriers to community participation in education need to be taken seriously by policy makers and action taken to strengthen community roles where possible. Alternatively, assumptions and expectations that community support can be in any way taken for granted need to be modified by both ministries and development agencies.
- Ministry as well as district officials need to consider ways of fostering school-community relations and encouraging school Heads to work to develop strong, positive and trusting relations with parents and other community members.

5.3 School Managers

5.3.1 Teacher retention

As already noted, the study found that there were more inexperienced and/or untrained teachers in the low achieving schools, and that teacher turnover was also higher there. These schools also had a poor quality of physical environment and relatively poor management. There was evidence that strong leadership, well maintained facilities and high expectations of student and staff attendance and performance, can all make an important contribution to retaining teachers, as can opportunities for professional development such as in-service training and study for higher degrees.

Recommendations

- School Heads need to try to create a positive working environment for teachers, including opportunities for professional development, so that they will not look for a transfer to another school.
- School Heads should set high standards and expectations, which teachers can feel motivated to achieve.

5.3.2 Gender equitable representation

It was remarkable that in none of the schools was gender seen as a significant problem by the teachers, and the clearly gendered structure of the school day went unnoticed. Yet, in all the schools there was a clear delineation of duties and responsibilities by gender among both staff and students. Gender specific duties for school prefects and class monitors, extra-curricular duties for female and male staff, stereotypical student choice of subjects, and the predominance of male and female teachers teaching conventional 'male' and 'female' subjects were observed in all 12 schools. There was also strict segregation of students in lines and queues, and very little interaction between female and male students and between female and male staff in the school. Both teachers and students appeared to want it to remain this way, although a few teachers regretted that female students were not given sufficient opportunity to excel.

This gendered pattern of behaviour was consistent across all the schools, regardless of whether they had a male or a female management, or a majority of female or male teachers in the school.

It was also noticeable that, even with an all female management as in the Botswana high performing rural school, the Head still felt obliged to consult male teachers. The male dominated environment persisted, with higher status attached to male responsibilities.

There was also, perhaps surprisingly, no clear link between a strong presence of female teachers and a female Head and the relative achievement of girls. Even when there was no subject choice to be made, as in Ghana, students still performed according to traditional gendered expectations. While the importance of Mathematics and Science for girls is known, the importance of good language skills for boys must also be acknowledged. In Botswana, boys are far behind girls, who build on their early advances in language to do better in Mathematics and Science in the later years of schooling, while in Ghana, boys do better in all subjects and tend to downplay the importance of language. In a global market, good communications especially in English, are crucial for both males and females.

School policy on uniform also had a gendered dimension, with a more explicit differentiation in Ghana, where girls had to wear pinafores, than in Botswana, where girls were allowed to wear trousers (although one female Head did not allow this in her school). Students used uniform as an expression of gender identity through adaptation and addition, where this was allowed. Strong management tended not to tolerate mini-skirts and hair ornaments for girls and loose shirts for boys. Where schools insisted on students wearing clean and appropriate uniform, even if patched, this appeared to help maintain good discipline.

Recommendations

- Duties for both teachers and students should be made as non-gender specific as possible and more mixed group activities should be encouraged. Female and male prefects should have identical roles, or change on an equal basis (e.g. the girl prefect should also ring the bell for lessons). Queues for assembly, meals and other activities need to be adjusted. Where duties remain segregated, they should be given equal value.
- In sports, all activities should be available to both groups and these should be with mixed teams as far as possible.
- Subject departments should be strengthened and more teacher collaboration and communication encouraged between departments. This would promote good pedagogical practice and well planned lessons, with teachers learning from each other. A more supportive working environment for teachers and greater collaboration between male and female staff is likely to enhance staff motivation, and would set a good example to students.
- Heads could set up a forum among teachers and students to discuss and address issues of gender in the school. Both groups should receive induction into school policies of gender equity and strategies to deal with cases of gender violence and abusive behaviour.
- More effort needs to be made to include School Councils and other mechanisms for student representation in the school structure with gender balanced representation. The only example of a School Council was in the peri-urban high performing school in Botswana; this appeared to have brought benefits in terms of a more flexible school day, students' monitoring of teacher attendance and teachers checking up on absent students.

- Where uniform continues to be a requirement, it should be seen as playing a positive role in fostering school ethos and identity; uniform adaptations which accentuate gendered identity, e.g. mini skirts for girls, should be discouraged.

5.3.3 School discipline and punishments: students

All the schools in both countries had problems of discipline but this was more marked in the poorly managed schools. Corporal punishment was widely used in all the schools and always in contravention of the strict regulations surrounding its use. In Botswana there is a gender differentiated corporal punishment policy (girls can only be beaten on the hands, boys on the back) whereas in Ghana there is no differentiation. However, in practice in both countries the use of corporal punishment was gendered in that teachers punished girls and boys in different ways or to different degrees; female teachers would often resort to verbal abuse rather than physical beating, or ask a male teacher to beat a student on their behalf. Gender was used by teachers as a weapon to embarrass, humiliate or degrade both girls and boys. They also used gender distance as an alternative punishment strategy, e.g. a teacher may move a boy who has misbehaved to sit with girls as a form of punishment.

Corporal punishment constituted one form of violence in these schools. Another form was student use of violence to intimidate and coerce, usually boys against girls or other (younger) boys. In the schools with poor discipline, gender violence tended to be more widespread and clearly it had an effect on its victims, whether female or male, and negatively influenced their performance. Not surprisingly, the level of violence was more marked in the low achieving schools and, as it was disproportionately directed at girls, it was their achievement levels that were likely to suffer most. Conversely, there was some evidence that in the high performing and better managed schools, it was less prevalent. However, it was the case that across all the schools bullying and sexual harassment tended not to be treated by teachers as seriously as other misdemeanours such as failing tests or being late. Such behaviour was seen as a 'natural' part of adolescence and therefore need not incur sanctions.

Male truancy in both countries was generally higher than female truancy, especially in poor performing schools with less disciplined staff, but female drop-out was higher. In the better managed high performing schools, truancy was less prevalent, with latecomers being checked and punished. Most of these schools had a teacher on duty at the gate to report and punish latecomers. Male truancy was largely due to the availability of casual jobs, which was no doubt important to low SES households and could lead to permanent drop-out for boys. Female absenteeism and drop-out were largely associated with domestic responsibilities or pregnancy/early marriage. In Botswana in particular, students staying on their own were more likely to attend irregularly and to drop out, with girls risking pregnancy and boys joining gangs.

The very poor record on schoolgirl mothers returning to the school after giving birth suggests that the national policy on re-admission is not working. In both countries, there is little evidence of this happening automatically. Heads seemed reluctant to take teenage mothers back, and in one case the Head was only convinced after talking to the researcher. The social stigma and the mocking and intimidating behaviour of fellow students also deter teenage mothers from returning to school. Among the 12 schools studied, there was only one successful case of a returned schoolgirl mother reported.

Recommendations

- School Heads need to develop clear policies on corporal punishment and to enforce them. A structured system of sanctions could be introduced and all teachers provided with induction as to the circumstances under which a particular range of sanctions could be applied.
- Alternative disciplinary strategies should be developed so that the need for corporal punishment can be minimised. These could include detention, extra duties, warnings, letters to parents, short suspensions and additional tasks around the school. Penalties for lateness among students should not necessarily be in the form of corporal punishment.
- Heads need to develop a gender-specific policy to address gender violence in their school and to provide guidelines to parents and students, e.g. in the school prospectus, on how to identify cases of abuse and violence, and the importance of reporting incidents.
- Incidents of gender violence need to be considered a serious offence and appropriate sanctions handed out. A strong message that all members of the school are valued and respected will help create a conducive learning environment.
- Better monitoring of male and female students by school management and the community would result in improved quality of teaching and learning; this could persuade boys in particular of the benefits of attending school.
- School Heads might consider as one strategy the setting up of a student welfare service, which is able to check on students' domestic circumstances, and a stronger pastoral system, which ensures that vulnerable students remain in school. Also life skills education for boys and girls taught together, building on initiatives in HIV/AIDS education, and stronger school-community links could be valuable.
- Head teachers need to improve attempts at the integration of returning schoolgirl mothers and other drop-outs. School structures are needed to provide support, with the counsellor playing a key role and the class teacher ensuring that the student's re-introduction into the class goes smoothly.

5.3.4 School discipline: teachers

Teacher discipline as well as student discipline varied in the schools. Where there was strong management by the head teacher, there were few cases of teacher absenteeism and lateness, which in turn had a positive impact on student attendance. Unusually, in the Botswana high performing peri-urban school, class prefects kept a log of teacher attendance and passed it to the head teacher to check daily. Not surprisingly, this school had very little absenteeism.

In schools with poor management, teachers were frequently absent or late, or even refused to teach their class. This together with more prevalent use of corporal punishment affected student attendance adversely, in particular male students who often decided that it was not worth coming to school in such circumstances and that they could engage in casual income earning instead. All the low performing schools were characterised by poor management to varying degrees.

Another form of gender violence that occurred in some of the schools was the practice of male teachers propositioning girls for sex. Male teachers' interaction with female students was often full of sexist or sexually suggestive language, which they saw as disparaging and offensive.

Recommendations

- Heads need to establish high expectations regarding teacher attendance and punctuality and discourage the excessive use of corporal punishment and teacher misconduct with students. Teacher punctuality should be the norm and Heads should take action where there are cases of frequent absenteeism. This will in turn set an example for students, for whom lateness and absenteeism should also not be acceptable.
- Heads could implement a series of incentives to reward high standards of teacher professionalism.

5.3.5 Physical environment

Although only one school out of the 12 was in a good physical condition, generally it was noted that the schools with good management had a better state of physical infrastructure than those with poor management. All the low performing schools were characterised by their particularly poor physical infrastructure, as well as by varying degrees of poor management.

Care of school grounds, buildings and furniture are all important signals of a disciplined and sustainable learning environment. Head teachers need to appreciate the importance of well-maintained physical facilities, however basic. This includes buildings, classrooms and toilets. Adequate and clean toilet facilities are particularly important for keeping girls in school.

Recommendations

- Head teachers should work to create a conducive learning environment for students by ensuring that buildings are in good repair and are as well equipped as possible given financial constraints, and that textbooks are available for all students. They should encourage the imaginative use of space, e.g. classroom displays, to promote a positive learning environment.
- Head teachers should ensure clean, working toilet facilities.
- Head teachers should encourage and reward care of the school environment (classroom, textbooks, furniture) by students, perhaps through prizes.

5.3.6 Community relations

There was little evidence of strong relations between schools and local communities, and, even where there was a dynamic PTA, little evidence of a major impact on the school environment. The more active PTAs were associated with the church or were represented by parents in professional jobs with higher SES, i.e. in urban areas. In Ghana, one head teacher sent students home to collect parents for PTA meetings so as to ensure a good attendance and to signal the importance of community involvement in school issues; however, the benefits of this were not apparent in the school's physical infrastructure, which remained dilapidated.

One example of good practice in relation to school-community relations was found in the high performing peri-urban school in Botswana, where Heads of Department had the responsibility of investigating cases of truancy by visiting the homes of absentee students and discussing the importance of attendance with parents or carers. Another school made the timetable flexible in recognition of the difficulty that students face when travelling long distances to school in the early morning.

It is unfortunate that the concept of community involvement has all too often been interpreted by head teachers as a licence to demand donations and fund-raising, rather than an invitation to

become involved in processes of decision-making and accountability within the school (including teacher and manager performance). A school which is transparent about what it does with funds and provides evidence of how they have been used to improve teacher performance and the learning environment is likely to meet with more cooperation. A negotiated and reciprocal form of involvement is also likely to be more productive than one in which community members are told what they must do. This reciprocity might include schools also looking to be of assistance to the community. For example, in one school (the high performing urban school in Ghana) students went once a year to help out in the local hospital.

Recommendations

- Heads need to encourage support from the community by being more open and flexible about what support they require, providing accounts of how funds have been spent and how the outcomes are of benefit to the learners.
- Schools should devise alternative forms of community support to funding e.g. talks, reading clubs, classroom help and special events.

5.4 Teachers

It has been noted that in all the schools male and female teachers rarely mixed, both in the staff room and in other settings. This reinforced the gendered nature of the school environment and in turn influenced student patterns of interaction. Teachers maintained separate queues of boys and girls in all the schools, e.g. for assembly, and in the case of Botswana for meals. Boys were always supervised by a male teacher, girls usually by a female teacher. Teachers explained this in terms of boys being unruly and harder to discipline, so that mixed queues would have meant that girls were pushed aside. Teachers also almost always allocated tasks to students according to gender.

Gender differentiation was also reinforced through corporal punishment. Female and male students were punished in different ways (e.g. in Botswana, policy dictated that girls could only be beaten on the hands but boys could be beaten on the buttocks and back) and also for different offences. Female teachers tended to resort to verbal abuse, male teachers to beatings. Although there were high levels of student violence observed in all the schools, mainly male violence against female students, teachers usually shrugged it off as a 'natural' feature of growing up and rarely took action to control or punish a student.

Some teachers were said to pick on particular students, either for excessive punishment or out of favouritism. It was claimed that some girls were picked out for special attention by male teachers who were interested in them for sexual relations. Inappropriate male teacher behaviour towards female students encourages boys to engage in intimidating and insulting behaviour towards girls and undermines girls' opportunities for learning and for improved self-esteem. Female teachers' use of verbal abuse undermines self-confidence of both girls and boys and distracts them from learning. In schools with high levels of teacher lateness and absenteeism, this encouraged student truancy, especially by boys.

Recommendations

- Teachers need to recognise the school as a site of social learning for students, which includes learning about gendered identity. If teachers understand the importance of intervention in student participation and interaction, it is likely that there will be improved performance by

both girls and boys. In the case of girls, this would come about through enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence, in the case of boys through greater attention to learning tasks and less compulsion to 'perform' such restricted forms of masculinity.

- It is important for teachers to set a positive example to both boys and girls, e.g. through punctuality and even-handed treatment of students. Teachers need to earn the trust and respect of their students. Incidents of gender violence should be dealt with firmly.
- Interaction between girls and boys should be encouraged so that these become standard, normalised and de-sexualised, and so no longer worthy of comment. In the classroom, there should be more mixed group activities and seating arrangements to encourage collaboration and shared duties. This would in turn influence the allocation of duties outside the classroom. Teachers need to set an example through their own interaction and less obviously gendered segregation of duties.
- Teachers need to ensure that textbooks and furniture are used with care and they themselves should be encouraged to use the classroom space for displays to stimulate student interest and learning.
- Teachers should actively encourage female and male students to opt for non-conventional subjects.

5.5 Students

In all the schools across both countries, the implicit and explicit organising principle of the school day was one of gender. As already explained, there was explicit segregation of students during assembly and on other occasions where lines were formed, and a gendered allocation of school duties. In the classrooms, boys largely determined how space was organised, taking their own seats at the back and along the sides and obliging the girls to sit at the front. Teachers rarely intervened in these gendered seating arrangements or tried to get the students to work in mixed groups. They believed boys stayed at the back because they could more easily misbehave, engage in disruptive conversations and eat snacks. Girls were considered more compliant, attentive and obedient. Both girls and boys resisted any attempts at mixed groupings.

Alongside their command of physical classroom space, boys also dominated verbal space. They were usually the most vocal in the class and tried to ridicule girls if they got the wrong answer. By demanding attention aggressively, the boys discouraged girls from participating in lessons. Despite this, none of the teachers saw the gendered use of space as problematic and did little to try to control the boys.

Despite this dominance by boys, some teachers expressed the opinion that girls were performing better than boys in their class work. In other cases, they said that girls had greater potential, but were prevented from achieving the highest grades because of the boys' disruptive behaviour. Girls themselves complained of this oppressive and intimidating atmosphere and explained their better performance, where applicable, as a result of their cooperative and serious approach to their studies. They contrasted this with the boys' tendency to discourage each other and dodge homework.

The conscious segregation of female and male students meant that there was very little interaction between them inside and outside the classroom. The students explained this as a

reluctance to be labelled as being in a 'love relationship' if they were seen with someone of the opposite sex. Interestingly, the gendered allocation of duties was 'policed' by the students themselves, who feared being ridiculed for doing something that was considered inappropriate for their gender.

The male domination of space in the school sometimes spilled over into aggressive and violent behaviour, usually towards the girls, but also by older boys towards younger boys. Boys used it to affirm their masculinity and to show that they had control over the girls. This violence was both physical, e.g. beatings, pinching, unsolicited touching of the body, assault, and symbolic, e.g. shouting insults, preventing a girl from passing or having free movement around the school. Girls complained of being constantly threatened and physically abused when they did not act in the way demanded by boys.

There was some variation between schools as to whether the students preferred male or female teachers. Somewhat ironically, in a number of the schools, male students appeared to dislike their female teachers more than the male teachers, even if the latter beat them more. Some boys refused to be beaten or to take other punishments from female teachers, and declared that they did not respect them. This challenge to female authority is a largely unreported phenomenon and illustrates the extent to which in some respects gender is a more defining concept than authority in the school context. Both male and female students declared that they found verbal abuse more damaging and hurtful than being beaten. Boys felt that they were beaten more often than girls but teachers said this was because their behaviour was worse. The fear of corporal punishment was a major cause of absenteeism among male students.

Recommendations

- Students, both male and female, should not hesitate to complain about incidents of violence to the appropriate authority, e.g. school prefect, form teacher, parent or head teacher, and to make sure that their complaints are followed up.
- Students should encourage their parents to become more involved in school affairs and in the case of complaints to be prepared to support and represent them to the school management.
- Girls should support each other more, in particular in opposing and reporting aggressive male behaviour, e.g. moving around the school in groups to avoid being singled out for intimidation by male students and propositioning by male teachers.
- Students should request a forum where they can discuss issues and air their views, e.g. a formal School Council, so that they have a collective voice through which to express their concerns to the school management. They could form discussion groups among themselves to address issues relating to peer pressure, anti-social behaviour and desired changes in school life. These concerns and strategies to address them could be fed to the school management through the Student Council.

5.6 Parents and Communities

There was very little active participation by parents and communities in the schools that featured in this study. The greatest level of participation was to be found in the urban schools. In the case of the rural and peri-urban schools in both countries, the communities that they served had migratory lifestyles and it was difficult for parents to become involved. There were no examples

of efforts by the schools to encourage participation of the extended family, especially grandmothers, with whom the students often lived. As with other representative / public bodies anticipated participation is likely to be gendered.

Recommendations

- Parents /Guardians need to be encouraged to become involved in school affairs in a variety of ways, e.g. helping in lessons, encouraging enrolment and attendance, helping with maintenance of buildings and grounds, giving talks, organising events. In exchange, they should expect a more accountable and transparent school management and reciprocal support for community development.
- Parents and communities need to become better informed on Ministry regulations and teacher codes of practice, so that they are able to take effective action when required.
- More imaginative use of school buildings, e.g. for local meetings and community events, will bring the community closer to the school and facilitate mutually beneficial relations.

5.7 Future Research

1. There is a need for a more systematic and larger study of gender relations in schools, which could more easily accommodate the widely observed patterns of achievement and retention than the current small-scale study (six schools in each country).
2. Similar studies need to focus on gender issues at other levels of education from pre-school to higher education as well as following leavers into the labour market. Such studies could contribute to the international efforts for gender equality.
3. More research is required into the gendered nature of subject choices and curriculum content, and in particular into the impact of female and male teachers on students' curriculum choices and performance, also into the gendered structures of school (gendered duties, space, violence, widening horizons, counteracting stereotypes). Importantly this research needs to be informed by more sensitive theoretical frameworks that move beyond essentialised gender categories and explore the interactions of gender with for example socio-economic status.
4. The introduction and monitoring of controlled interventions to address the gendered structures in schools could provide the examples of good practice that were in such short supply in this study.
5. The process of dropping out needs to be better understood both generally and in specific local contexts. It is clear from this study that boys' attendance, their interest and commitment to schooling and their levels of achievement could also be much improved. The assumption that the problems of under-participation relate only to girls is a dangerous mistake. In many developing countries, girls are now outperforming boys, either nationally or in selective environments (e.g. urban schools) and this may be a global trend. This study shows that many boys are disaffected, play truant, drop out and engage in anti-social behaviour, even in Ghana where their achievement nationally is much higher than that of girls. Boys' attitudes to schooling, their behaviour in school and their academic performance need to be fully researched.

6. A study of management practices in African schools could help raise awareness of the importance of leadership in reducing gendered school environment. The practices within, and influence of, local / district education offices should be incorporated as a specific dimension of school governance. In particular this may help to explain and address issues of poor policy implementation in given local contexts.
7. The career trajectories of teachers need to be mapped by gender to inform locally relevant strategies to enhance school quality and professional development and improve promotion procedures.

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Secondary School Questionnaire

Section A: About You

1. What is your age? _____

2. Are you a Boy Girl

3. What form are you in? _____

4. Have you ever repeated a grade in Primary school? Yes No

5. If **YES** , what was the reason(s)? _____

6. Have you ever repeated a form in Secondary school? Yes No

7. If **YES** , what was the reason(s)? _____

8. Have you ever stopped attending to school for one term or more?
Yes No

9. If **YES** , what was the reason(s)? _____

10. Which Village / extension / block / phase do you come from? _____

11. How long does it take you to get to school everyday? _____

12. How do you get to school? _____

Section B: About your parents /guardians

13. Which of your parents are alive?

Mother only

Father only

Both Parents

None of them

14. Who do you live with most of the time?

Father and Mother

Father only

Mother only

Other relative or person

Elder brother or sister only

Younger sister and brother only

Alone

Grandmother or Grandfather only

15. How far did your Mother go in school?

Never been to school

Some primary

Finished Primary

Some Secondary

Finished Form 5

University

Other (specify)

17. How far did your Father go in school?

- Never been to school
- Some primary
- Finished Primary
- Some Secondary
- Finished Form 5
- University
- Other (specify)

18. How far did your Guardian go in school?

- Never been to school
- Some primary
- Finished Primary
- Some Secondary
- Finished Form 5
- University
- Other (specify)

19. What is your Mother's job? Describe where she works and what she does in her job

20. What is your Father's job? Describe where he works and what he does in her job

21. What is your Guardian's job? Describe where they work and what they do in their job

Section C: Your Chores at Home

22. Put a tick in one of the boxes for each of the following chores to show how often you do that chore.

Household Chore	Everyday	3 times a week	2 times a week	Weekend only	Never
Cooking					
Fetching water					
Looking after your brothers or sisters					
Cleaning the house					
Washing the family car					
Stamping corn					
Sweeping the yard					
Taking care of the garden					
Washing laundry					
Other (mention them)					

23. This year, how many times have you missed school because your parents / guardian needed help?

Several times every school term

Once or twice by now

Never

24. This year, how many days have you missed school? _____

25. This year, how many times have you missed school for each of the following reasons?

My parents / guardian needed my help at home

I had no development fees or school uniform

I was sick

I did not want to go to school

Individual Student Interview

School	Date	
Name	Sex	Age

1. What do you think about schooling?
2. Is it important to you?
3. Do you enjoy being in this school?
4. What do you like most about this school?
5. What do you dislike most about this school?
6. Which subjects do you like? Why?
7. How do you perform in these subjects?
8. What would help you perform better?
9. What prevents you from performing better?
10. How do your interactions in school influence your performance?
(girls, boys, male teachers, female teachers, the principal)
Give examples of positive and negative influences
11. How do your interactions in school influence your behaviour?
(girls, boys, male teachers, female teachers, the principal)
Give examples of positive and negative influences
12. How do your interactions in school influence your attendance?
(girls, boys, male teachers, female teachers, the principal)
Give examples of positive and negative influences
13. How does the way in which a teacher teaches influence your performance, behaviour and attendance?
Give examples of positive and negative influences
14. Relate an incident that embarrassed you (or another student) the most in school.
15. Relate an incident that pleased you (or another student) the most in school.

Focus Group Interviews

School	Date
Number of respondents	Sex

Names: 1. _____ 2. _____
 3. _____ 4. _____
 5. _____ 6. _____

1. What do you think about schooling?
2. Is schooling important to you?
(Do you enjoy school? Do you enjoy being in this school?)
3. What do you like most about this school?
4. What do you dislike most about this school?
5. Do you think that being in school is different for girls and boys? How?
6. How would you react if you saw a boy doing a girl's job /activity or a girl doing a boy's job /activity?
7. How are your grievances addressed in the school?
8. If you have a grievance, who would you tell about it?
9. Do you think that either boys or girls perform better in school?
Why? In which subjects?
10. What do you think of your male and female teachers?
*What do you think about how you are treated by female and male teachers?
 Do you think that teachers treat boys and girls similarly / differently?*
11. How do girls and boys relate to one another?
*What do girls talk to girls about and what do boys talk to boys about
 What boys and girls talk to one another about?*

12. Do your interactions / experiences with teachers influence your performance, attendance, behaviour?
How? Give examples

13. Do your interactions / experiences with other students influence your performance, attendance, behaviour?
How? Give examples

14. Do you know of any boys or girls who have dropped out of school?
What were the reasons for dropping out?

15. What is your attitude to students who are re-admitted to school after dropping out?

Teacher Interview 1

Teacher Name:	School:
Date:	Time:

1. Introductory questions – Personal background
2. What are your impressions of the ways in which females and males relate to one another generally?
3. How and why does gender influence performance in school?
4. How and why does gender influence attendance / drop out in school?
5. How and why do girls and boys inter-relate in the school and classroom?
6. Do any specific problems arise from the ways in which girls and boys relate to one another?
7. How do
 - you,
 - the schoolhandle any problems arising from these inter-relations?
8. How and why do cultural factors influence
 - performance,
 - retention / drop out,
 - behaviourby gender?
9. Does gender influence the way staff inter-relate with
 - each other
 - the school management
 - the community
 - the students?

Classroom Observation Instrument

School
 Class
 Date
 Time
 Name of teacher
 Sex
 Subject
 Topic
 Number of students
 No of girls
 No of boys

Space and sitting arrangements (by diagram)

Who sits where and why? Are boys and girls seated differently? If so examine the rationale.

When students work in groups, how are the groups determined and why? Are there sex-segregated groups?

Where is the teacher? Do they move around the class?

Time	Teacher Activity	Student Activity	Notes
Start			
10			
20			
30			
40			
End			

Teacher Activity (focus on gender differences)

Position in the classroom

Physical position in relation to students (intimidating / supportive)

Teacher voice (shouting, soft, use of language, abusive language, tone, content)

Feedback to students – praise, discipline (verbal and physical)

Use of questions - types of questions, to whom, how often

Amount of teacher talk

Use of teaching aids (visual, implements for discipline)

Student Activity

Are they working individually or in groups?

What kinds of groups?

What kind of task are they engaged in?

Teacher – student interaction

Does the teacher always initiate interactions?

Do students initiate discussion with the teacher or ask questions?

Which students participate in the lesson?

How does the teacher respond to boys and girls questions?

Student-student interaction

Who initiates conversations?

Who do the girls talk to most of the time?

Who do boys talk to most of the time?

Who asks questions most of the time?

Who is interrupted most of the time?

Who interrupts?

Who asks the teacher questions most of the time?

What kinds of interactions are there between girls and girls; boys and boys and between boys and girls (intimidation, bullying, friendly, teasing, name calling)?

How physically close are those interactions?

Additional Notes

Critical incidences (examples sex differentiated behaviours, expectations, language, abuse etc.)

Quotes

School Observations

These should focus upon

presence and absence of the different sex groups

use of space

student-student interactions

teacher-student interactions

teacher-teacher interaction

incidental conversation

critical incidences

Staff room

Playground / Sports field

Non classroom based activities

Other school routines

School Profile

Performance and curriculum

Examination results (previous 3 years) by gender
Retention rates (previous 3 years) by gender
Destinations of school leavers by gender
Range of curriculum subjects available

Locality and community and history

Establishment / founding (location, when, by whom, what level)
Size of local community
Range of parental occupations / income sources
Local community support (Parent Teacher Association, Board of Governors)
Socio-economic grouping (predominantly)
Average earnings

School Conditions

Number of Classrooms
Physical condition of buildings
Furniture
Learning resources availability (books, teaching aids)
Toilet facilities
Other facilities (eg labs, library, church, sports ground)

Teaching Staff

Number of teachers by gender and subject
Staffing structure ie available posts of responsibility
Teachers with responsibility by gender (including the principal etc)
History profile of the school principal (previous two incumbents)
Length of service (years)
Length of service in current school
Qualifications and in-service experiences
In-service opportunities, academic study
Promotions (over the last 3 years within the school and by teachers)
Absenteeism and Punctuality

Students

Number of students (over previous 3 years) by gender
General appearance of students
Absenteeism by gender
Punctuality
Resources (pens, books, bags etc)
Socio-economic status of pupils (through brief questionnaire of the year group)
Demographic information (living with whom family income etc, as above)

School policy / rules and practices

Staff promotion policy and practices
Staff discipline and procedures
School policy and practice on corporal punishment by gender
School policy and practice on other punishment by gender
School admissions
School uniform
School rules
Fees / contributions policy and practices
School community/parents inter-relations
School clubs and participation by teacher leader, student gender and year
School activities / routines (eg assembly, cleaning)

A2.0 **The Case Studies**

The six case study schools featured in this chapter are public JSSs. As outlined in the methodology chapter, they were selected to represent different levels of achievement (high and low) with respect to both the national picture and their own location. As the following data will show, location is an important variable in examination performance. The presentation of the six case studies follows the same format, with a short introduction to the school's immediate locale, community and physical conditions. This is followed by a section on teachers, enrolment, drop-out and achievement. These technical descriptions are supplemented by qualitative descriptions and preliminary analysis of aspects of the daily life and ethos of the institutions under the headings of school management, gendered duties, gendered space and gender violence. Some variation in the presentation of the case studies is due to differences in practices of record keeping and also the different opportunities and responses to be expected in ethnographic style data collection. The high performing schools are presented first, followed by the poor performing schools. Each series starts with the urban school, then moves to the peri-urban and finally the rural school.

A2.1 **Babusi School**

Babusi School was a **high achieving urban** community junior secondary school in Gaborone. Established in 1989, both the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and the Board of Governors (BoG) were very active and it was well supported by the local community. The parents engaged in a wide range of occupations across the socio-economic spectrum, from the casual self-employed such as street vendors, to professionals such as doctors.

The school had a total of 18 classrooms and equipped specialist rooms for HE, D&T, Art and computing. The school library was not well stocked. Due to the lack of a sports ground, the school relies on the community sports grounds. The buildings were in need of general renovation and refurbishment. The boys' toilets, which were in particularly poor condition, were under repair. On a positive note, the head teacher expressed satisfaction about the laboratories as well as the condition of learning resources such as textbooks.

Teachers

The female Head held a Masters degree and had been in the school for six years. Her Deputy and the majority of the teachers were also female. This was typical of urban schools: 27 out of the 43 (62.8%) teachers were women, far above the national average. The range of teaching experience was between one and 23 years, although most were in their first three years of teaching. The majority of staff in the school were diploma holders with a few degree holders. The student – teacher ratio was above the national average at 15.3:1.

Teacher attendance and punctuality were good. Teachers were required to provide a reason and evidence for absences. Alongside subject teaching, all teachers undertook other school responsibilities e.g. library, sports, counselling. Subject responsibilities, shown in Table A2.1 below, followed traditional gender patterns to some extent, with only female teachers in Setswana, HE and Religious Education (RE), and only males in D&T and Business Studies. Interestingly female teachers comprised half or more of the Mathematics (3/5) and Science (2/2) staff.

Table A2.1: Babusi School Teachers by Subject and Gender (2001)

Subject	Female	Male	Total
Setswana	5	0	5
English	3	1	4
Mathematics	3	2	5
Science	2	2	4
Social studies	3	1	4
Agriculture	1	2	3
Art	2	1	3
Design & Technology	0	3	3
Home Economics	3	0	3
Moral Education	1	1	2
Religious Education	4	0	4
Business Studies	0	3	3
TOTAL	27	16	43

Enrolment and Drop-out

There were over 660 students in the school with slightly more girls than boys. Good attendance, punctuality and the neat appearance of students was ensured by staff effort. Insistence on good appearance sometimes resulted in students being sent home and punctuality was heavily enforced by teachers waiting to administer corporal punishment to late students at the school gates. Generally, the school had a very low level of drop-outs. During the years 1996, 1997 and 1998, there were no school drop-outs at all.

Examination Performance

Examination results for 1999-2001 are shown in Table A2.2 below.

Table A2.2: Babusi School JCE Results by Gender (1999-2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES					Total	FAIL GRADE
			M	A	B	C	Fail		
1999	Total	228	2	17	86	100	205	23	
	%		0.9	7.5	37.7	43.9	89.9	10.1	
	Female	130	1	11	45	60	117	13	
	%		0.8	8.5	34.6	46.2	90.0	10.0	
	Male	98	1	6	41	40	88	10	
	%		1.02	6.1	41.8	40.8	89.8	12.0	
2000	Total	227	1	10	95	99	205	22	
	%		0.4	4.4	41.9	43.6	90.3	9.7	
	Female	129	0	4	57	56	117	12	
	%		0	3.1	44.2	43.4	90.7	9.3	
	Male	98	1	6	38	43	88	10	
	%		1.02	6.1	38.8	43.9	89.8	10.2	

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES					FAIL GRADE
			M	A	B	C	Total	Fail
2001	Total	211	3	20	98	78	199	12
	%		1.4	9.4	46.4	37.0	94.3	5.7
	Female	114	2	8	54	42	106	8
	%		1.8	7.0	47.4	36.8	93.0	7.0
	Male	97	1	12	44	36	93	4
	%		1.03	12.4	45.4	37.1	95.9	4.1

The results showed no significant gender differences, although girls had consistently gained more than a 90% pass rate between 1999 – 2001 and have outperformed the boys. The school pass rate was around 10% above the national average. More specifically the school had far more A and B grades than the national average by a factor of 4 or 5 in 1999 and 2001. This indicated that a high proportion of the students qualified automatically for SSS places. Grade C passes are not guaranteed a place but students may be able to continue into SSS if there are available places.

With respect to subject options, the Babusi students in the focus class showed an exaggerated gendered polarisation compared to the national data. Only four girls (11.7%) opted for D&T and three boys (8.8%) for HE. In terms of performance between 1997 and 2000, girls outperformed boys in English, Setswana and HE, while boys generally did better than girls in Science and D&T and had a slight edge in Mathematics. These data mirror the national trends exactly.

School Management

As indicated by low teacher absenteeism and involvement in activities other than their teaching duties, levels of professional behaviour were high in the school. There were some reports from the male teachers that females were favoured in the school although examples of this were not articulated. Student matters were dealt with entirely by the teachers without consultation; this included the use of corporal punishment as the teachers felt appropriate. The management and teachers expressed concern that, if children were made aware of their rights, they would not be controllable and that many of them would fail in school.

Gendered Duties

Given that it was a predominantly female staff, there were no obvious gendered patterns in terms of responsibility. Both male and female teachers were for example reported to actively participate in sports. However, the supervision of meal queues was gendered, with the boys' queues supervised by male teachers, while female teachers supervised the girls' queues. Student responsibilities were also allocated on the grounds of gender. Boys removed weeds and cleaned windows while girls swept and mopped the classrooms.

Gendered Space

Observations in the school showed that the use of space around the school was also gendered. Firstly, classroom seating arrangements demonstrated the typical pattern of girls sitting at the front while boys occupied the back seats. Outside the class too, during break times, the segregated pattern was evident. Boys and girls lined up separately and once students had collected their food, they associated with each other according to gender.

Despite this, the interviewed teachers saw the gendered use of classroom space as unproblematic. In connection with the meal queues, they explained that at meal times boys 'naturally' ate more than girls and so they had a tendency to skip the queue in order to eat first and get a second

serving sooner. They also referred to the general disrespect that male students held for female teachers which made it necessary for male teachers to control the boys' queues.

Gender Violence

Both the classroom seating arrangements and the female teacher/male student dynamics were treated as part of the taken for granted daily condition of the school. The gendered use of classroom space allowed for more dynamic forms of gender violence. Observations revealed the constant intimidation of girls within the classroom. Firstly, boys actively discouraged girls who attempted to participate by raising their hands or standing to attract the teacher's attention. The boys would say 'Shh...' to silence the girls. Secondly, if girls got the answer wrong, the boys laughed openly to disgrace the girls, who then acted as if ashamed. Neither strategy was conducive to the participation of girls. Despite its prevalence, the teacher did not intervene in the boys' intimidating behaviour. Students reported bullying especially by the older boys, who forced girls and younger boys to give them money. These were identified as older Form 3 boys. The knock-on effects were described as affecting levels of concentration and performance.

Other forms of violence that were ingrained in institutional life included the teachers' recourse to corporal punishment and verbal abuse. Teachers administered beatings as they saw fit, in contravention of the rules which required the head teacher or another delegated person only to carry out the punishment. The differentiated use of corporal punishment by gender, which was prescribed by national policy, was widely practised, with boys beaten on the hands, back and buttocks, and girls only beaten on the hands and only by female teachers. Teachers explained this as a response to the more challenging 'naughty' behaviour of boys, who on occasions even refused corporal punishment. Girls rarely engaged in such poor behaviour. Verbal abuse or insults were also prevalent in the school, particularly from female teachers. All interviewed students expressed a strong dislike for these kinds of insults, which they claimed caused embarrassment and anxiety that affected their performance. They even expressed a preference for beating as the effects of insults remained longer.

In summary, this school was characterised by low drop-out, high level of achievement, especially of girls. Female and male students did particularly well in subjects perceived as suited to their gender. There was a predominance of female teachers with some teaching Science and Mathematics. The school was actively supported by the community and had a relatively strong management. At the same time the strong discipline was enforced through high levels of corporal punishment. Gender segregation was evident in duties, use of space and in the use of both symbolic and physical violence.

A2.2 Masilo School

Opened in 1996, Masilo School was a **high achieving peri-urban** school. It was located on the outskirts of a large village with an intake from as much as 30 kilometres away. Despite this, the school had no boarding facilities, so many students lived alone in rented accommodation in the village. Some parents were lecturers from the local college of education but most were peasant farmers. In general, they lived far away working on their lands and showed little interest in the school. Nevertheless the PTA executive was very active.

The three relatively new classroom blocks indicated poor workmanship and had already started to show cracks. Although the number of classrooms was adequate and there was no shortage of learning resources, the furniture was inadequate. Toilet facilities were available but were too close to the kitchen. The school had a sports ground but was too rocky for friendly use.

Teachers

The 34 teachers comprised 16 females and 17 males which replicated national averages. The proportion of trained teachers was higher than the national picture as all teachers within the school were trained. The senior management consisted of a male Head and Deputy and three female Heads of Department. As shown in Table A2.3 below, consistent with traditional gendered subject teaching, Setswana, RE, HE and Moral Education were taught by females only, and D&T, Agriculture and Mathematics by males only. Only one of the six Science teachers was female.

In addition to subject teaching, the staff were engaged in a range of extra-curricular activities including sports, debating and cultural activities. The student - teacher ratio was higher than average at 16.2:1.

Table A2.3: Masilo School Teachers by Subject and Gender (2001)

Subject	Female	Male	Total
Setswana	5	0	5
English	2	2	4
Mathematics	0	3	3
Science	1	5	6
Social studies	1	2	3
Agriculture	0	2	2
Art	1	1	2
Design & Technology	0	3	3
Home Economics	2	0	2
Moral Education	4	0	4
Religious Education	2	0	2

N.B. Some teachers teach 2 subjects

In the focus class, both the English and Mathematics teachers had three years' experience, all in this school, the Science teacher had five years' experience with more than one year in the school, and of the Science teachers' seven years of experience, five were in the school.

Enrolment and Drop-out

In 1999–2001, the intake of the school had been around 500 with a roughly equal number of boys and girls.

Table A2.4: Masilo School Enrolment by Form and Gender (2001-2002)

Year	Gender	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Total
2001	Female	90	72	66	228 (46.5%)
	Male	105	76	81	262 (53.5%)
	Total	195	148	147	490
2002	Female	122	90	67	279 (50.6%)
	Male	91	105	76	272 (49.4%)
	Total	213	195	143	551

As shown in the table above, in the transition from Form 2 to Form 3, the school saw five girls drop out, three due to pregnancy. This 4.2% Form 2 female drop-out due to pregnancy was

more than double the national proportion for Form 2 girls for 1999. Similarly female drop-out due to ‘other reasons’ in Form 2 in this school was 2.7%, higher than the 1.47% in the national data for 1999. The school data for boys shows that none dropped out. In summary girl drop-out was much higher than national averages and conversely there was no male drop-out, which was lower than the national data.

The Form 2 focus class records showed that the attendance of the girls was more erratic than that of the boys. Available data showed that non-attendance in Form 1 in 2000 was 2.5% for the girls and only 1.8% for the boys. In Form 2 this average decreased to 1.2% for both gender groups, with 85 days of absence out of 7104 pupil days. Problems with access to the school in the rainy season, bad weather and sickness accounted for more than 50% of absences. Although not recorded in the register, the teachers noted that the majority of the school truants were boys, who sometimes dropped out simply by continued absconding. Similarly, student punctuality was reported to be problematic and said to be due to the distances some of the students had to travel.

Examination Performance

This was a high performing school when compared to other peri-urban schools, and among the best in the country in this category. During 1999-2001, the pass rate was around the national average, with boys marginally outperforming girls. In 1999, pass rates were 10% lower than the national level at around 70%. Interestingly, although the girls’ performance was consistent over the three year period, in 1999 they performed better than the boys. Across all three years, however, higher proportions of boys achieved the higher grade passes.

Table A2.5: Masilo School JCE Results by Gender (1999-2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES					FAIL GRADE
			M	A	B	C	Total	Fail
1999	Total	132	0	2	26	65	93	39
	%			1.5	19.7	49.2	70.5	29.5
	Female	80	0	1	14	43	58	22
	%			1.3	17.5	53.8	72.5	27.5
	Male	52	0	1	12	22	35	17
	%			1.9	23.1	42.3	67.3	32.7
2000	Total	188	2	8	44	98	152	36
	%		1.06	4.3	23.4	52.1	80.9	19.1
	Female	104	1	4	24	53	82	22
	%		0.96	3.8	23.1	51.0	78.8	21.2
	Male	84	1	4	20	45	70	14
	%		1.2	4.8	23.8	53.6	83.3	16.7
2001	Total	142	2	1	40	70	113	29
	%		1.4	0.7	28.2	49.3	79.6	20.4
	Female	62	0	1	15	31	47	15
	%			1.6	24.2	50.0	75.8	24.2
	Male	80	2	0	25	39	66	14
	%		2.5		31.3	48.8	82.5	17.5

A survey of Form 3 option choices showed typical gendered subject options. In the practical subjects there were only three girls out of 56 students (5.4%) who chose D&T, and three boys out of 50 students (6%) doing HE. These proportions were more exaggerated than at the national level. The general subjects were less polarised but nevertheless highly gendered. Only 37% of the RE class were boys and 32.6% of the Art class were girls. As in Babusi School, there were no male teachers of HE or RE and no female teachers of D&T.

Table A2.6: Masilo School JCE Results by Subject and Gender (2000)

Subject	Girls			Boys			t-test
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n	
Setswana	93.4	19.61	104	89.59	19.41	83	1.33
English	92.57	29	104	84.89	31.08	83	1.74
Mathematics	61.3	24.8	104	63.19	25.05	83	-0.52
Integrated Science	54.12	22.73	104	57.8	24.33	83	-1.07
Social Studies	77.88	22.35	104	79.59	24.88	83	-0.49
Agriculture	162.97	35.65	104	165.4	37.5	83	-0.45
Design and Technology	86.54	33.55	13	115.18	33.52	82	-2.86
Home Economics	97.76	22.44	91	101	-	1	-0.14

Similar but less marked trends in better female performance than males in Setswana and English were evident in 2000 as shown above in Table A2.6. The boys' better performance in D&T, Science and to a reduced extent Mathematics were also indicated. The D&T difference was the only one of significance.

Using results from the 2001 end-of-year examination, differences in performance by subject were further explored in the Form 2 focus class. These showed that girls had higher mean scores in all subjects except D&T. The differences were most pronounced in Setswana, English, Moral Education and RE.

School Management

The Head and Deputy Head in the school were both male. The Head had over 20 years' experience in education and had become the first Head of what was a new school in 1996. During this time, four teachers, three of whom were females, had been promoted. In general, the teachers expressed satisfaction with the management team although there had been some complaints of favouritism towards male teachers (in contrast to Babusi School, where male teachers had complained of favouritism towards female teachers!). In response the Head explained that these were un-promoted, under-performing teachers who did not take part in committees etc. He claimed to have counselled them but to no effect. There were few reported problems with teachers' professional behaviour, and interestingly students were involved in monitoring the teachers (as explained below).

There were prevalent gendered views held within the school. Firstly, both male and female teachers spoke of their apprehension about female Heads. They depicted them as dictatorial, non-cooperative and prone to harass teachers, especially other females. They commented that the notion of competent female leadership positions was not widely held in Botswana. Secondly, and perhaps related to the favouritism described above, the Head characterised female teachers as lazy, with poor punctuality and therefore slow career progression. He added that the only teacher to be absent from duty without a convincing reason was a female.

Unique to this school out of the six included in the study were overt efforts to value the students and to provide an environment in which they were welcome and respected. A School Council was in place to allow students greater voice and to circumvent the shortcomings of the prefect system as the only form of communication between students and staff. In the same vein and as an expression of good relations, school parties were arranged and supervised by the staff for those leaving after exams in Form 3. Collaboration between the school and the Botswana Young Women's Christian Association (BYWCA) was made in efforts to encourage pregnant students to return to school. This initiative had enjoyed some success with a number of students continuing to secondary school. In another initiative, Heads of Department (HoDs) were appointed for student welfare in each year. These HoDs were required to follow up the parents of truant students, monitor student attendance and performance, and if necessary support students who were detained by the police. Finally there were some concerns over the rise of gangsterism in the school, with named gangs active in the school and community. The Head in concert with the feeder primary school was making efforts to stem this trend. Overall, the discipline of students was described as 'good' in comparison to other local schools, and this was valued by students and staff alike. Nevertheless, corporal punishment was widely used for poor behaviour and poor academic performance.

In broad terms, gender relations were not seen as an area of explicit concern in the school. The common and recurrent sexist incidents were rather treated as 'natural'. The only efforts to promote gender equity were found in the appointment of equal numbers of female and male prefects.

Gendered Duties

The 36 (18 girls, 18 boys) school prefects and class monitors (one girl and one boy in each class) were selected to provide a gender balance. Prefects were responsible for supervising the students throughout the school day, reporting any misdemeanour to the teachers. This authority role also extended to outside the school fence. In theory, the prefects had the same powers; however boys often refused the authority of the female prefects. Observations confirmed the gendered practice in which female prefects supervised female students, and similarly male teachers supervised male students, during break-time and cleaning. These duties were also gendered, with girls tending to do more cleaning and boys more digging.

Monitors were expected to check student behaviour within their own class. This included a teacher attendance book which teachers were required to sign after their lesson. This was returned to the Head at the end of each day. The monitors took this duty in turns.

Gendered Space

Within the classrooms, girls and boys clustered together. As in Babusi School, the typical seating pattern saw girls at the front of the class and boys at the back. Reasons for this pattern were described as cultural, with boys also referring to girls' menstruation and the risk of their messing up the chairs as a reason for the segregation. However, there were occasional exceptions, for example, in Mathematics in which, although in clusters, the girls were not always at the front of the class. Gender segregation typified the school not only in class but also at break and in the separate lines during assembly.

Physical distance was created by the boys between themselves and the teachers in most subjects. This contributed to a positive teacher attitude towards girls, with teachers focusing upon these publicly more compliant students. The girls received affirming teacher attention, which was

either in response to their good classroom performance, as in English, or their need of extra support e.g. in Mathematics. Opposing descriptions of students as ‘serious’ and ‘hardworking’ or ‘playful’ and ‘negligent’ tended to be gendered. From the boys’ perspective, this constituted teacher bias, leaving them with feelings of exclusion from participation in the class and from the school. Alongside other factors covered in the next section, this led to cases of occasional and then sustained absenteeism by the boys.

Outside the school, many students were particularly vulnerable as they stayed on their own without any parental guidance or care. This was regarded as the biggest contributor to the high student pregnancy in the school. Many female students stayed with live-in boyfriends, some of whom were men working in the village. There were reported cases of female students being locked up in their homes for days by their boyfriends. This is significant, not only because the students missed school but also in terms of the extent of male power over the domestic space and their partners’ lives.

Gender Violence

In the school, relations between teachers and students were also highly gendered. Despite the supportive mechanisms described above, it was a context in which gender differences within and between teachers and students were accentuated and reproduced and this provided an arena in which gender violence was perpetrated along many dimensions. Boys were the most visible in their rough and intimidating behaviour towards female classmates. In interviews they spoke of the way in which they sexually harassed girls by touching their buttocks and private parts. Teachers confirmed that these were the most commonly reported cases, which they either handled themselves or referred on to guidance and counselling teachers. Female teachers were also subject to rudeness and cheekiness from the boys. Some described their female teachers as ‘pompous and showy’ and prone to off-loading their personal problems in the class. The feminine subjects taught by women and the female teachers themselves were not taken seriously by the boys. They expressed no concern at being outperformed by girls in these subjects, in which their often poor general performance was even worse. On occasions and in acts of further disrespect, the boys refused punishments. It seems that the boys only desisted from these kinds of behaviour in the presence of disciplinarian male teachers.

Female teachers already positioned in deficit by the Head enjoyed ambivalent relations with the students. Not only were they often subject to forms of symbolic gender violence by the boys, e.g. the refusal to be punished, but they were also not favoured by the girls. Although the girls described their relations with their teachers as cordial, they claimed harsher treatment from female teachers and in particular were subjected to verbal abuse. They claimed that female teachers were less severe with the boys and did not verbally abuse them. The Head did confirm that verbal abuse by teachers was a major source of student complaint. In particular, names like ‘*mepakwana*’ (mentally retarded) were regarded as humiliating. In contrast, the girls enjoyed good relationships with male teachers, which they claimed was not characterised by gender violence. Boys on the other hand viewed these female student – male teacher relations as highly gendered, resulting in preferential treatment of girls. The teachers were said to be unduly soft on the girls. The boys also spoke of love affairs between them, citing incidences in which girls spent long hours in storerooms with male teachers.

Corporal punishment was part of the institutional policy and culture, although as elsewhere its use did not conform strictly with government regulations. Boys in particular tried to subvert this institutionally condoned violence by refusing to be punished. This resistance was generally

described as insubordination and taken to be an attack on the authority of the teacher – most commonly the female teachers. Other responses were to accept it, play truant or drop out. Importantly corporal punishment was not reserved only for incidents of poor behaviour but used when students failed in tests. All students regarded this as unfair.

In summary this school had high levels of achievement, with boys consistently outperformed by girls. This was accompanied by high levels of pregnancy and female drop-out. The school management had employed strategies to ensure high standards of professionalism among teachers. Unusually it had set up a School Council for students to express their views on school issues. The school had not enjoyed community support or parental involvement even in relation to the student term time domestic arrangements. In response the school had an outreach pastoral care system to attend to the absent, under-performing and often vulnerable students. The duties, use of space and high levels of violence were gendered and similar to other schools.

A2.3 Chilima School

The high achieving rural school, Chilima, was started in 1993 about 25 kilometres from the capital. Most parents in the locality depended on subsistence farming with a minority operating small-scale businesses that provided cash income. Most students came from the two village primary schools and lived with their parents or relations.

The school buildings and furniture were in good condition. There were eight classrooms and two outdoor classrooms, equipped laboratories for Science, Computing, Art, HE, D&T, a D&T drawing room, a workshop, a music room, and a small, fairly well stocked library. Other buildings included an outdoor kitchen, a dining hall under construction and two toilet blocks. Of all the schools in this study, this was the only one that was well maintained and in really good condition.

The sports facilities comprised a soccer field, netball ground and softball diamond. Each subject had a resources storeroom and teachers used the office photocopying machine for handouts and worksheets for students. Students were always provided with pens, rubbers, pencils, textbooks, exercise books and a locker.

Teachers

The school had 18 teachers, of whom eight (44%) were female teachers, which was a smaller proportion than nationally. The Head, deputy and all five senior teachers were female. The length of service ranged from 7 – 18 years, with women as the longer serving teachers with an average of 9 years. All teachers had been in the school for at least 2 years. There was a tendency for the males to be teachers of Science. In addition to their teaching duties the staff also coordinated a number of clubs including HIV/AIDS Action groups, Scripture Union and Ballroom dance, all coordinated by women, and chess, wildlife, debating, and traditional dance coordinated by men. The student – teacher ratio was lower than nationally at 13:1.

Enrolment and Drop-out

There were 235 students in the school and consistent with national trends there were more girls than boys (129:106). School uniform was strictly enforced and highly specified. It included a tie for both boys and girls and made no allowance for girls to wear trousers. This school was over-subscribed, with just over a fifth of applicants failing to gain admission.

School data showed that the girls had a poorer attendance record than boys. For example in 2001, 72% of all absences were female students. These were recorded as being on the grounds of menstrual pains, looking after siblings or care of the sick. Boys' absences, although far less, were explained as delinquency and irresponsibility. Interestingly, some boys mentioned that the girls encouraged them to come to school.

Table A2.7: **Chilima School Drop-out Rates by Gender (1999)**

Year		Form 1	Form 2
1999	Number of Females	39	38
	Drop-out	2 (5.1%)	1 (2.6%)
	Number of Males	50	41
	Drop-out	2 (4.0%)	1 (2.4%)

Data from the school shows that girls dropped out more than boys. In the last three years between 3% and 10% of the girls dropped out of school, compared with between 1% and 3% drop-out rates for boys. The drop-out for both girls and boys in Form 1 was higher than national data by form in 1999. The Form 2 comparison shows the girls in the school dropped out at lower rates than nationally whereas the boys dropped out at higher rates. The girls dropped out mainly because of pregnancy but also due to arranged marriages, working as maids or poor performance in school.

Examination Performance

This was a high achieving school compared to other rural schools, with pass grades of around 90% between 1999 and 2001. This was better than the high performing peri-urban case study school. As shown in the table below, in 2001 the boys outperformed the girls, which reversed the trend of the previous two years in which the girls had outperformed the boys. Interestingly, both male students and teachers observed that although the girls out-performed boys in Forms 1 & 2, by Form 3 there were minor gender differences in performance.

An analysis of the school 2000 JCE results showed that the girls had higher mean scores in every subject except D&T. This, together with the significantly higher female performances in Setswana, English and HE, was identical to the national picture. With respect to subject preferences, girls attributed the poor performance of boys in HE to attitudes and lack of home-related experiences. Boys in contrast explained that subjects like D&T were not suitable for girls because they lacked strength to lift the heavy equipment used in the subject.

The girls' overall better performance was also evident in their class work. The girls explained this as a result of their cooperative approach, although they were sometimes punished for copying from each other. They contrasted this with the boys' tendency to discourage each other and dodge homework, for which they were often punished.

Table A2.8: Chilima School JCE Results by Gender (1999-2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES				FAIL GRADE	
			M	A	B	C	Total	Fail
1999	Total	80	0	1	29	42	72	8
	%		0	1.25	36.3	52.5	90.0	10.0
	Female	42	0	0	16	22	38	4
	%		0	0	38.1	52.4	90.5	9.5
	Male	38	0	1	13	20	34	4
	%		0	2.6	34.2	52.6	89.5	10.5
2000	Total	75	1	5	28	36	70	5
	%		1.3	6.67	37.3	48.0	93.3	6.7
	Female	33	0	3	14	15	32	1
	%		0	9.1	42.4	45.5	97.0	3.0
	Male	42	1	2	14	21	38	4
	%		2.3	4.8	33.3	50.0	90.5	9.5
2001	Total	86	0	8	34	34	76	10
	%		0	9.3	39.5	39.5	88.4	11.6
	Female	38	0	4	12	15	31	7
	%		0	10.5	31.5	39.5	81.6	18.4
	Male	48	0	4	22	19	45	3
	%		0	8.3	45.8	39.6	93.8	6.25

School Management

The school day comprised eight, forty minute lessons followed by a ninety minute study period each day and two hours study on Saturday. Sporting activities took place every school day after studies. The students were always in uniform and punctual for school, lessons and meals. Most teachers and students commented on the conducive learning environment and the culture of the school, with its emphasis on academic achievement, co-operation, tolerance and accountability.

Male teachers said that they worked cooperatively with female teachers. However, female teachers observed male resistance to female leadership and their comments about the divisive nature of women's organisations like 'Emang Basadi' that promotes gender justice. The female teachers explained this as due to cultural expectations of male leadership.

Commenting on teacher gender relations, a female respondent said:

There are differences because males still want to dominate females in love relations and work. Women are not supposed to make any suggestions or any form of contribution because society still honours the proverb: 'Ga di ke di etelehwa ke e namagadi pele' (Women are followers not leaders).

The female teachers claimed that these differences impacted on the female administration such that there was a tendency to marginalise female teachers, treating them harshly and unsympathetically. This sentiment prevailed despite all the senior posts in the school being occupied by women. They felt the Head paid more attention to male teachers who were treated with more respect. A female Science teacher provided an example:

When I arrived for the first time in this school, the School Head could not trust that I could effectively teach this subject especially in higher classes. This judgement was made on the basis that I am a woman. People do not trust women for technological things. This being the case, the Form 3 classes were taken away from me until there was no man to teach them. It was only when there was no choice that I was given a chance to teach.

There were polarised views of whether the school was gendered, i.e. male teachers and students denied any gender oppression, whereas their female counterparts expressed concern about it. The absence of any school policies or concerted effort to address gender issues indicated that these were not recognized as legitimate issues.

Gendered Duties

In the school, the teachers' extra-curricular duties were clearly gendered, with female teachers assigned to the relatively heavy duties of supervising the cleaning and entertainment while men oversaw the sports fields. The students' duties followed a similar pattern and as one teacher observed:

Boys feel that there are duties, for example general cleaning, in school such as sweeping and applying polish that are supposed to be done by girls only. They feel that they can clear grass and perform other duties that are supposed to be done by males such as lifting desks.

Boy's explanations hinged on perceived biologically determined deficiencies. They argued that some jobs were not appropriate for girls as they were soft hearted and others would be harmful to the girls' reproductive organs.

Interviewer: *How would you react if you saw a girl doing a boy's job/activity?*

Boitshupo: *I would feel ashamed when men are around and we leave women to do our activity.*

Kago: *I would be happy because it would show gender equality*

Tumi: *I would be grieved because I would feel that the women are being oppressed since men's activities are tough. Men's jobs demand men who are strong*

Kitso: *I feel that the woman will be harming herself*

Tito: *Some of the activities will cause the woman to be weaker especially around the waist. For instance childbearing is a woman thing. She has been created for it.*

Gendered Space

Gender segregated space among the staff was evident in the defined seating arrangements in the staff-room and in their gender segregated conversation. This was explained by male teachers as evidence of mutual respect and different interests.

Several classroom observations revealed that male students dominated the corners and the sunnier sides of the class. It was in these spaces that misbehaviour is harder to notice, especially by those teachers who tend to stand still at the front of the class. Observations revealed that boys at the back engaged in disruptive conversations among themselves. The majority of girls sat at the front or the centre of the class.

This general seating pattern did change according to subject. Their proximity to the teacher seemed related to the boys' level of interest and perception of performance in the subject. In English lessons, both girls and boys positioned themselves close to the teacher. In Science lessons, however, the boys tended to sit at the front tables next to the teacher while a number of girls sat furthest away.

Participation in class was also gendered, with the boys showing eagerness or demanding the teacher's attention while only a few girls contributed. Boys took the largest proportion of the interactive classroom space. Male teachers and boys attributed girls' minimal class participation to shyness. The girls however attributed it to the oppressive classroom gender regime. Poor performing girl students experienced more intense gender oppression in the classroom, which probably exacerbated their poor performance. These conditions provided a rather traumatic environment for pregnant girls and teenage mothers who were treated with hostility by some classmates, leading them to be more likely to pay less attention in class. Despite the hostile environment and barriers to active public participation the girls had performed well, probably through greater focus and energy directed towards written work.

Outside class, the use of space was also highly gendered. For example, it was the male teachers that supervised sports. Although theoretically open to all, more boys than girls participated in sports activities, with volleyball and softball teams for the boys but none for the girls. Similarly, during lunch and break times students sat in single gender groups to eat their food. Boys were keen to be served first, jumped the queue and demanded extra, which they then only shared with other boys from their own group.

In explanation of their evident gender segregation, both girls and boys spoke of the tendency for any interactions to be assumed to be a love affair. This left them open to taunting by their classmates.

Gender Violence

The gendered use of space was guarded by forms of violence that were both age and gender related. For example both a gender and grade hierarchy influenced experiences in school. The younger Form 1 girls were victims of oppression by Form 3 boys. They called them 'Mosela' (tail), and would shout out at them 'kuka mogatla' (lift your tail). They gave them different names like, 'Mazwenyane', 'Manxwedika', which implied that they were inferior. They also harassed them while washing plates at lunchtime saying, 'Sutela seniorer e tlhatswe beisane' (move off, let your seniors wash their plates). The boys acknowledged that this was ill-treatment.

Despite this, boys as well as teachers believed their relationship with girls was on the whole cordial. However, the girls complained of indiscriminate touching by boys, insults, physical assault and theft of their property. Constantly, the boys threatened and physically abused girls when they did not act in the ways that they demanded. They were also used as 'game tools'. They exemplified this in a boy's game called 'Space' which involved boys in grabbing/hitting girls to 'possess' them, then taunting and re-possessing girls from other boys. In addition, the girls complained of extensive verbal abuse, through insults with such taunts as 'O raya Rrago a tsose' (Your naked father). Boys and male teachers trivialized girls' complaints about verbal and physical abuse, with one teacher typifying disputes between boys and girls as minor and childish.

The unequal power relations between boys and girls regulated participation in the classroom. The girls also revealed that participation was hampered by boy's disruptive behaviour, inconsiderate remarks, insults, jeering and laughing, when girls made mistakes or when the topic under discussion made reference to women. Boys took the lead often without raising their hands and interjecting when both the teacher and other students were talking, especially if female. Comments like 'That's not what we are talking about' were often directed at girls. Female teachers corroborated girls' complaints against boys, adding that boys often beat girls or threatened to beat them for claimed disrespect towards them by the girls.

Gender differences with respect to discipline meant male teachers were expected to be disciplinarians and administer corporal punishment for serious offences. Female teachers often asked male teachers to administer corporal punishment on their behalf. They dealt with minor offences usually by pinching, shouting verbal abuse or ignoring those students who engaged in unwanted behaviour.

In comparison to girls, boys suffered greater physical violence from male and female teachers. Boys complained of excessive beatings by male teachers: they cited an incident where seven male teachers beat a student three strokes each. They talked about their embarrassment in front of the girls, being labelled as disruptive, the use of abusive language mainly by female teachers and bias against them whenever there was a dispute with girls. They provided examples of differential punishment for the same behaviour; unlike girls, who were listened to, boys were generally treated harshly and inconsiderately. Such discrepancies sometimes led the boys to refuse to be beaten.

Male and female teachers were treated and viewed differently by students, boys in particular. They described some female teachers as moody, emotional, hormonal, ill-tempered and inconsistent. They were of the opinion that, whereas male teachers controlled their annoyance, female teachers unnecessarily reflected anger and hostility. Female teachers tended to speak harshly against students in class, whereas male teachers tended to speak harshly outside in the open to embarrass boys in front of the girls.

In summary, this rural school had a small selected intake and a low student - teacher ratio. Overall, girls had performed better than boys despite the girls' poorer attendance and higher drop-out. The condition of the buildings and resources were good and standards of uniform were also high. Despite an all female management team, however, the gendered nature of the school space and the incidence of gender violence appeared to be as great as in schools with a male oriented management and/or low achievement levels.

A2.4 Mabogo School

This **poor achieving urban** school was established in 1996 in an area of mixed housing including low and high cost residences. It was an eighteen-stream institution with classrooms and laboratories for HE, D&T, Art and Computing. Facilities in the school were reported as unsatisfactory and there was no sports field. There was abundant evidence of the poor quality and conditions of the buildings, e.g. leaking water pipes, and leaking and torn ceilings in some classrooms. Some of the boys' toilets were in poor condition and had been vandalised by the boys themselves. The head teacher described this as their angry response to teacher beatings or when they had been chased out of class for misbehaving. The furniture was also in poor condition, with students' and teachers' desks in need of repair. On a positive note, the head teacher pointed out that learning resources, books, teaching aids and the library were acceptable.

The students were from mixed socio-economic backgrounds in the capital city. Uniform is compulsory, with females permitted to wear trousers. Many adaptations of the uniform were evident, e.g. girls wearing short or cut off dresses.

Teachers

Typical of many urban schools, women predominated on the staff. Of the 40 staff, there were 30 (75%) women and 10 (25%) men. This proportion of women is far in excess of the proportion

of female secondary teachers nationally, which stands at 46.8%. The Head was a male and the Deputy a female. Young teachers were over-represented in the school and only a few teachers had extensive teaching experience.

Table A2.9: Mabogo School Teachers by Subject and Gender (2001)

Subject	Female	Male	Total
Setswana	4	0	4
English	4	0	4
Mathematics	4	0	4
Science	4	0	4
Social studies	3	1	4
Agriculture	1	2	3
Art	1	2	3
Design & Technology	0	4	4
Home Economics	3	0	3
Moral Education	3	0	3
Religious Education	3	0	3
Physical Education	0	1	1
Total	30	10	40

Despite the relatively small number of male teachers, they were in the stereotypically masculine subject areas. Unusually, the school had all female Science and Mathematics departments. The student – teacher ratio was very slightly higher than the national average at 15:1.

Enrolment and Drop-out

Mabogo School had an intake of around 600 students, with very slightly more boys than girls in 2001 (292:284). There was no nearby feeder primary school which, according to the Head, meant it had a downward skewed intake. It took students from primary schools after other JSS schools had selected their intake.

There was a relatively high attendance rate but teachers and students held the view that boys were absent from school more often than girls. This was supported by the available records which showed boys with more than twice the absences of girls. For example, in the first term, 2001 boys had 38 absent days while the girls had 12 absent days. The difficulty of obtaining school records provided a little uncertainty about these figures. There was a similar situation with respect to punctuality which was substantiated in observations. The girls were usually punctual while the boys were often late. In addition, the girls' absences and lateness were for genuine reasons, according to the head teacher, which was not the case for the boys. There was a case of poor behaviour and their dependence on a sister or mother to help them to prepare for school; without this, they ended up arriving late.

The drop-out rate in the school was difficult to trace due to the paucity of school records. Nevertheless, they did show that an initially high drop-out from the school had recently decreased. The drop-out due to pregnancy has been as low as three in one year, around 1%, which is lower than the national school average for JSS.

Examination Performance

Examination results for 1999–2001 are shown in Table A2.10 and indicate that the school had improved to achieve performances just above the national average.

Table A2.10: Mabobo School JCE Results by Gender (1999-2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES					Total	FAIL GRADE
			M	A	B	C	Total		
1999	Total	23	0	5	65	127	197	37	
	%	4	0	2.1	27.8	54.3	84.2	15.8	
	Female	11	0	3	34	61	98	18	
	%	6	0	2.6	29.3	52.6	84.5	15.5	
	Male	11	0	2	31	66	99	19	
	%	8	0	1.7	26.3	56.0	83.9	16.1	
2000	Total	21	0	6	78	96	180	37	
	%	7	0	2.8	35.9	44.2	82.9	17.1	
	Female	10	0	2	47	42	91	9	
	%	0	0	2.0	47.0	42.0	91.0	9.0	
	Male	11	0	4	31	54	89	28	
	%	7	0	3.4	26.5	46.2	76.1	23.9	
2001	Total	19	0	8	65	93	166	24	
	%	0	0	4.2	34.2	48.9	87.4	12.6	
	Female	94	0	0	37	45	82	12	
	%		0	0	39.4	47.9	87.2	12.8	
	Male	96	0	8	28	48	84	12	
	%		0	8.3	29.2	50.0	87.5	12.5	

The scores had improved from the initial years after 1996 when the school first started. These previously poor results were attributed to the intake that was dominated by students from the surrounding low socio-economic area and performance was further hampered by unfinished buildings on opening. New admission practices had contributed to the improved results and stemmed the withdrawal of students by more affluent parents.

The results in Table A2.10 show that the gender gap in favour of the girls had been reversed in 2001 with an equitable pass rate and a very small gender gap in favour of the boys. In the previous two years, girls had outperformed boys achieving a higher proportion of pass grades and fewer fails. Although the school had not achieved any Merits, the boys had consistently achieved a larger proportion of A grade passes; however, across all three years, girls had achieved higher proportions of A & B grades, which were important for access to senior secondary school.

The school records showed that subject stereotypes mirrored the national picture, in which the girls had outperformed boys in Setswana, English and HE while the boys had performed well in Science and D&T. In Mathematics too, boys generally had done well but a few girls had outperformed the boys. The gendered performance was related partly to the subject option system. A survey of the Form 1 & 2 students in 2001 in Table A2.11 shows the gendered subject choice.

Table A2.11: Mabogo School Subject Choice in Forms 1&2 by Gender (2001)

Subject	Females	Males
D&T	48 19.4%	200 80.6%
Art	32 32%	68 68%
PE	37 35.9%	66 64.1%
RE	73 57.9%	53 42.1%
HE	140 89.2%	17 10.8%

These figures replicated national trends with D&T, Art and PE as the masculine subjects and RE and HE as feminine subject choices. The teachers' explanation for patterns of subject choice similarly referred to gendered socialisation and aspirations. The students' explanations revealed how well these stereotypes had been internalised. The girls believed that they could not do D&T because they were not as strong as boys, and they were unfamiliar with handling metals and heavy things. Boys on the other hand believed that HE was for girls, and that they could not do it because they were not used to cooking and cleaning. In interviews, students described the influence of their parents' advice which reinforced the gendering of subject choice. Some girls for example lamented their mothers' belief that Home Economics was a subject that was more suited to girls than boys. This gendering of the formal curriculum was also evident in participation in School clubs, in which Scripture Union for example was dominated by girls. In an extension of this, the boys expressed job aspirations in male dominated medicine and engineering, while the girls aspired to feminised lowly paid jobs in teaching, nursing and social work.

School management

The over-representation of young teachers in the school left it without experienced professionals, which posed challenges for management. According to the head teacher and confirmed by students, the young staff tended to disrespect management, were more likely to come late, miss classes and disregard advice. Observations of the focus class provided further evidence of poor punctuality (arriving as much as 25 minutes late), dismissing classes early (e.g. 10 minutes before time) and missing classes. The lack of enthusiasm and commitment by some teachers was noticeable and produced lax behaviour by the boys in particular, who were sometimes found outside class, even after their lessons had started.

The head teacher reported that his strategy to improve professional behaviour was by individual counselling of particular teachers and by his example. He also went into classrooms to check that teachers were in classes at the appropriate times. From the teachers' perspective, a promotion freeze in the school since 1999 was a cause for concern.

There were no indications that any gender issues were recognised as problematic within the school. Neither management nor teachers intervened in the gender order; they viewed gender differences as 'natural' or as an aspect of socialisation that did not need to be addressed. In one instance, where a teacher attempted to reverse the gender duties of cleaning (described below), this was met with resistance by pupils and was not sustained.

Gendered Duties

In terms of staff curriculum responsibilities, the school unusually had female Mathematics and Science departments but the subjects of D&T and PE remained dominated by male teachers. There were no data on extra-curricular activities by the teachers. At meal times, however, the gender segregated lines were supervised by same sex teachers.

General cleaning in the school involved the girls in sweeping and mopping in and outside the classrooms. Very few boys swept or mopped; their duties were to remove weeds and clean windows. Although boys were observed sweeping in D&T workshop, they said that mopping was not boys' work. Efforts had been made to change this gendered division of labour but this had met with resistance from the students, especially girls. The teacher elaborated:

...Last year, I told girls to clean windows for a change and boys to clean the classroom floor; but after several months, girls told me that they will clean the classroom floor because boys don't know how to do it...

Informal conversations and observations showed that the boys were not co-operative in their duties; they tended to clean windows and then sit down. In contrast, however, girls did help the boys out: the boys removed the weeds using spades, girls raked and bagged them, and the boys then took them to a dumping site in wheelbarrows.

Gendered Space

Similar to other school settings, the seating arrangements were 'chosen' by the students and teachers did not intervene. This resulted in the classroom being a highly gendered space, with girls at the front of the class and boys at the back. The one exception was in Agriculture in which the boys sat the front, participating actively while the girls sat away from the teacher paying little attention. These dynamics led to a situation where the young male Agriculture teacher largely interacted with the boys.

Although the female English and Setswana teachers had difficulties in encouraging student participation, the girls contributed most in class and were given positive feedback, which was rarely given to the boys. Both these teachers described the boys as generally playful and the girls as serious. The responses of the students varied with particular teachers. The boys responded to the lack of commitment they observed in teachers by their lack of punctuality to class, and their respect and enthusiasm for the teachers. With such a high proportion of female teachers, it was difficult to gauge whether the responses from the boys were due to the teachers' gender (as noted in other schools) or whether it was more related to the observed unprofessional behaviour of their teachers.

A differentiated teaching style was evident, with the Science teacher continually promoting participation by frequently asking questions. In the language classes, however, the approach put the students in a more passive role. This in turn led to gender-differentiated participation in class and performance. Interestingly, it was only in the Mathematics lessons that the students competed to participate and the examination performance in this subject reflected this, the boys having a very slight edge over girls in the results.

In terms of the curriculum itself, teachers often seemed unaware of the gendered nature in their teaching. An analytical review of English texts did show little gender bias overall but in contrast the Setswana texts revealed the predominant focus on the experiences of women. Efforts to

address gendered topics were not made by teachers. For example, the absence of information or discussion on heroines in an English lesson about 'Heroes and Heroines' left heroism as identified with males. In addition, teachers often intentionally seemed to accentuate gender differences in stereotypical ways. For example, in a Science lesson on force, the female teacher requested four strong male students to stand in front of the classroom and pull a rope to illustrate how force worked.

Gender Violence

Teachers unanimously felt that the experience of schooling varied for boys and girls. They explained how their interactions were differentiated by saying that generally boys engaged in more challenging behaviour that forces teachers to treat them more harshly than girls. Observations indicated that teachers freely resorted to corporal punishment. Teachers explained gender differences by reference to 'natural' sex differences and socialisation. As one teacher explained:

For example, a teacher may say to a boy, 'How are you talking to me? You don't have manners.' And the boy would say: 'Yes, I don't have manners'. A girl student cannot respond that way to a teacher.

The tendency for boys to be subjected to more frequent and harsher discipline from teachers was mentioned by the boys interviewed. Some boys responded to the harsher discipline by shouting, pushing chairs, refusing to be beaten by female and sometimes male teachers and skipping classes. In return, teachers resisted boys' poor behaviour by chasing them out of class and/or sometimes referring them to the head teacher. The boys connected these aspects of school life to their attendance and performance. As two boys explained:

Student 1: ...I don't like it when they beat us. I mean they beat us everywhere and they don't care whether they hurt us or not because they say we are stubborn....

Student 2: This is not good because it makes some of us to skip classes of teachers who like to beat us.

Three female teachers described how the boys' responses were gendered, with some boys intimidating them and refusing to be disciplined by them. This was not experienced by their male teachers and made the working environment uncomfortable for female teachers. Such intimidation was also directed at female students as the male students attempted to control female student behaviour. One example of this resulted in a female student seeking refuge in the staff room. Her adaptation of her school uniform, cutting it shorter, was met by male students shouting and chasing her. They explained that this girl's behaviour was annoying and disruptive. The response by the teachers was to give her a coat to cover herself.

The female students expressed most concern about bullying and the school rules about jewellery. In the urban school, bullying was largely associated with older boys' intention to get money from younger boys and girls.

In summary, this school was characterised by its overall poor performance rate, especially compared to other urban schools, although this was improving. The drop-out rate however was low. There were persistent problems with student and teacher discipline and boys' attendance and punctuality was especially poor. There were a large number of inexperienced teachers, who according to the head teacher, lacked respect and showed poor punctuality. Unusually, all the Mathematics and Science teachers were female but this did not appear to have made a difference to girls' achievement in these subjects. Efforts by some teachers to break gender stereotypes in school duties had met with student resistance.

A2.5 Mapoka School

This **poor performing peri-urban** school first opened in January 1996 on the outskirts of a large village 50 kilometres west of the capital. It was a regional administrative centre that is also referred to as an agro-town. With a population in excess of 200 000 (Republic of Botswana; 1991), it enjoyed tarred roads and street lights like any urban setting but had an agriculture based economy. The vast majority of the population were involved in peasant agriculture but there was also a sizeable contingent of public servants and a small formal sector. It boasted numerous primary schools, eight community junior secondary schools and one of the two national colleges of education.

The tri-partite settlement pattern, a unique feature in Botswana, was significant here. The majority of families had three homes – the village, the lands (for arable farming) 10-20 km away from the village, and the cattle posts (pastoral farming), which may have been 60 km or more away. People spent most of their time working at the lands and cattle posts only occasionally visited the village for facilities such as shops, clinics etc. As a result school going children either had to travel long distances from the lands to school everyday or, as the majority did, they stayed alone (or if lucky, with relatives) in the village. These settlement patterns also influenced community participation in the school. In this case the school Board of Governors was ineffective and until recently the PTA had been inactive.

The school had two one-story red brick classroom blocks with 12 classrooms. Other facilities included two Science laboratories, a library, which was well-stocked and well-kept, one football pitch, one netball pitch, and two softball pitches. Learning resources, books and teaching aids were available and adequate. The physical condition of the buildings was satisfactory but there were a few broken electric switches and windowpanes. The condition of furniture was also satisfactory, but due to an increased 2002 intake there was a shortage, with some students having to use broken chairs. The maintenance department of the school continually repaired broken furniture. There were 16 pit latrines for students and six for staff. The students' latrines were found to be hazardous to health.

Teachers

The incumbent principal, who had 18 years' experience, was well qualified (Diploma in Secondary Education, B.Ed and MA) and had been in post for 15 months. There were slightly more male (55%) than female (45%) staff, the proportion of males being very slightly above the national picture. Most teachers (87%), more than the national average, were qualified with only five teachers, (three females and two males) out of 38 who were untrained. The student – teacher ratio was higher than nationally at 16.4:1.

Table A2.12: Mapoka School Teachers by Training and Gender (2001)

	Trained	Untrained	Total
Female	14	3	17
Male	19	2	21
Total	33	5	38

Posts of responsibility are those posts at and above the rank of Senior Teacher (Grade II); the distribution by gender is shown below. Since the school opened, there have only been two promotions (to the post of senior teacher), one within the school and the other by transfer.

Table A2.13: Mapoka School Teachers with Responsibility by Gender (2001)

Post of Responsibility (Level)	Female	Male	Total
Principal	0	1	1
Deputy Principal	1	0	1
Heads of Department	1	2	3
Senior Teacher (Grade 1)	3	2	5
Senior Teacher (Grade 2)	0	1	1
Total	5	6	11

Table A2.14 below shows that female teachers predominate in ‘traditionally feminine’ subjects such as Moral Education, Home Economics, Setswana and Social Studies. Male teachers predominate in ‘traditionally masculine’ subjects such as Science, Agriculture, Mathematics, Art and Design and Technology. Unusually the English teachers are all males.

Table A2.14: Mapoka School Teachers by Subject and Gender (2001)

Subject	Female	Male	Total
Setswana	3	1	4
English	0	4	4
Mathematics	2	3	5
Science	2	3	5
Social studies	3	1	4
Agriculture	1	2	3
Art	1	2	3
Design & Technology	0	3	3
Home Economics	3	0	3
Moral Education	2	0	2
Religious Education	1	1	2
Total	18	20	38

NB One temporary (unqualified) female teacher counted twice because she offers two subjects. The head teacher does not teach.

Enrolment and Drop-out

The school enrolment had risen over the years to over 600 by 2001. In a reflection of the national picture, on the whole there were more girls than boys in the school. Students were drawn from the community, a catchment area that was shared with two other JSSs. As the furthest from the community, some students walked long distances to school, which they complained made them late, and also late doing their household chores and too tired to do their homework. Although the head teacher had made efforts to ease the situation by altering the daily schedule, still students arrived late. There was an effect of the distance upon performance, attendance and the drop-out rate. For example, rather than face certain punishment for late-coming, some students missed the early morning lessons (first four periods) only to attend lessons after morning tea-break (10.30 am).

Table A2.15: Mapoka School Enrolment by Gender (1996-2001)

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1996	93 (41.0%)	134 (59.0%)	227
1997	194 (47.0%)	219 (53.0%)	413
1998	304 (48.9%)	318 (51.1%)	622
1999	328 (51.7%)	306 (48.3%)	634
2000	313 (52.2%)	287 (47.8%)	600
2001	309 (49.6%)	314 (50.4%)	623

School attendance records for one class, 1C in 2000, (which became 2C in 2001) show that in Form 1 there was 2.5% absence rate which grew to 3.9% in Form 2. The boys' absences amounted to 3.8% in 2000 and 5.7% in 2001 which was much greater than the girls, with 1.2% and 1.7% respectively. These were recorded as absent due to 'other reasons', the category under which 'truancy' falls.

The tripartite settlement pattern of families also influenced student attendance as children often lived alone for much of the time unsupervised. Some were reported to frequent local pubs, which would have been unlikely if they stayed with their parents. High pregnancy rates and the formation of local gangs or terror groups among the students were consequences of their vulnerable domestic conditions. In 2001 there were 16 drop-outs which rose to 18 in 2002. In both cases the predominant reason given for drop-out was recorded as 'desertion'. The total female drop-out rate in 2001 was 3.8%, above the national average, while those attributed to pregnancy were below the national figures at 1.6%.

Examination Performance

The school's achievement levels are shown below in Table A2.16

The latest results were very low and showed no A passes, around 12% B passes and over 35% D grade fails. Over 50% of students gain a C grade which does not guarantee access to SSS. Consistently the girls had performed better than the boys, a gap that had increased over the last three years.

Table A2.16: Mapoka School JCE Results by Gender (1999-2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES					Total	FAIL GRADE
			M	A	B	C	Fail		
1999	Total	16	0	1	22	81	104	57	
	%	1	0	0.006	13.7	50.3	64.6	35.4	
	Female	68	0	1	8	37	46	22	
	%		0	1.5	11.8	54.4	67.6	32.4	
	Male	93	0	0	14	44	58	35	
	%		0	0	15.1	47.3	62.4	37.6	
2000	Total	18	0	0	35	99	134	55	
	%	9	0	0	18.5	52.4	70.9	29.1	
	Female	87	0	0	21	45	66	21	
	%		0	0	24.1	51.7	75.9	24.1	
	Male	10	0	0	14	54	68	34	
	%	2	0	0	13.7	52.9	66.7	33.3	
2001	Total	18	0	0	23	98	121	66	
	%	7	0	0	12.3	52.4	64.7	35.3	
	Female	87	0	0	16	48	64	23	
	%		0	0	18.4	55.2	73.6	26.4	
	Male	10	0	0	7	50	57	43	
	%	0	0	0	7.0	50.0	57.0	43.0	

Consistent with national results and with the other schools in this study, the girls' performance in Setswana and English was significantly better than that of the boys'. Subject options were also clearly gendered. Table A2.17 shows the Form 3 year group options with boys dominating in D&T, with over 90% of the students, and to a lesser extent in Art, where they comprise over two thirds of the group. The reverse was the case for HE, with an over 90% female group, and RE, with over two-thirds female.

Table A2.17: Mapoka School Form 3 Subject Choice by Gender (2001)

	Subject			
	D&T	HE	RE	Art
Total	90	97	97	89
Female	8	88	67	26
%	8.8	90.7	69.1	29.2
Male	82	9	30	63
%	91.1	9.3	30.9	70.8

School Management

The current male head teacher had been in post for 15 months and was in the process of redeeming the school from a chaotic management situation. Problems within the school included widespread student indiscipline, the harassment of students and teachers, especially females, and the emergence of youth gangs who terrorised other students and teachers as well as local residents. Police were frequent visitors to the school, investigating very serious crimes or assisting in the prevention of mob behaviour in the school. As a result of the indiscipline, many

students had transferred. Explanations for this situation in the school surrounded the former female Head who was said to have tried to implement the Ministry of Education's discipline policy strictly; the administration of corporal punishment only by the Head or under her direct supervision had alienated staff and given rise to staff and student indiscipline, especially among males.

The new Head had re-instated the extensive use of corporal punishment to re-establish order and improve staff and community relations. His disciplinarian stance was viewed favourably by staff, students and the community. The more liberal use of corporal punishment was particularly welcomed by the teachers, who thought this was the only way to regain control in the school. They regarded with some scorn posters about Children's Rights in the staff room, a campaign they held partly responsible for poor student behaviour. They also drew attention to the need to complement rights with responsibilities. Since the new Head had been in post, there had been improved staff relations and the PTA had been revived.

The management and teachers did not see gender relations as an explicit area of concern in the school. Despite the history of the school, its poor performance levels and the general problems of student indiscipline were not understood and confronted as gendered. As in all the other schools, the gendered school space was taken for granted and described as 'natural', thus sexist practices were produced and reproduced in class. Although such practices influenced performance, morale and confidence, the impact was never explicitly connected to retention, drop-out and achievement. In this sense, this school also 'condoned' sexist practices.

Gendered Duties

There were 28 prefects, with equal numbers of boys and girls. The appointment of the prefects included a process in which each class made two nominations and the class teacher also nominated two students. These names then went forward to the whole staff for vetting and final appointment.

As elsewhere, outside the classroom supervision of students was gender specific with female teachers and prefects attending to female students and similarly for males. The meal queue was the prime example of this practice, although the queues were segregated by age (youngest first) as well as by gender to ensure fairness and order. Occasionally, the male teachers would supervise girls but no female teacher was ever observed supervising boys.

Gendered Space

Typical of classes in other JSSs, students sat in rows facing the teacher, who remained at the front of the classroom for most if not all the lesson. The girls and boys clustered in single sex groups, with a general tendency for boys to cluster at the back of the classroom. With the exception of one Science lesson, students in the focus class reported that teachers did not intervene in these seating arrangements. The teachers tended to explain gender differences in terms of their 'naturalness' in Tswana culture, in which separateness was emphasised when children reached puberty. Boys in particular were discouraged from keeping the company of girls through certain common statements such as '*pharamesising*' (Setswana) and '*tje bakadzi nsholo una mbale*' (Ikalanga), meaning 'one fond of girls' company'. They were told that if they kept girls' company they would grow to be gossipers, a quality believed to be the preserve of girls/women. Indeed the majority of the boys interviewed said that they minimised girls' company because the latter were given to gossiping.

The tendency of the boys in this school to sit at the back of the classroom seemed to be a strategy to increase the physical distance between themselves and the teacher. As one of the boys

interviewed stated: *'Sitting at the back minimises the chances of being picked on by the teacher to answer questions'*. Contradictorily, they constantly mentioned that teachers paid more attention to girls. The teachers acknowledged this possibility since it was, in the words of one teacher: *'Natural to be biased towards the more active and serious students'*. It would seem that the combination of the girl's seriousness and the space they occupied at the front of the class encouraged greater interaction with the teacher and the subsequent effect of better performance. The boys argued strongly that it negatively affected their performance and behaviour/attitudes towards teachers in general. They described the perceived favouritism of the girls as demoralising and leading to their inability to cope with academic work. In contrast, the girls cited teacher support as being one of the few things they liked about their school. They connected their behaviour, being hardworking and not troublesome, with the levels of teacher support and attention. Thus, what to the boys was favouritism was positive 'support' to the girls and teachers. They claimed that the boys only had themselves to blame if they had not received as much support as the girls.

Interestingly, the girls were most vociferous about keeping a distance from the boys with comments like: *'There is nothing of value to learn from the majority of them. I keep them at arms' length'*. With the exception of the more serious boys, the girls saw boys as impeding their performance and school attendance. The boys on the other hand recognised that the girls were performing better and were more competitive, and they felt they would benefit from more interaction with them. For the more studious boys, association with the girls motivated them with a positive influence on their attendance. The theme of the boys' lack of 'seriousness' was a pervasive one; confirmed by teachers, girls, boys and the JCE results, which placed girls ahead.

Opportunities to challenge the gendered space within the curriculum were rarely taken up. One exception was an Agriculture teacher, who in a well-intentioned effort to work through mixed gender groups, insisted that in each group there should be at least two girls. The boys formed the 'stem' of the groups and girls came in as additions. The teacher explained this as an effort to get more active discussion in the groups through the inclusion of the more active girls. Although the teacher may have been attempting to mitigate the worst effects of a gendered classroom space in the process, he was in fact reproducing the dominance of the boys as the central structure of the group. Similarly, sexist curriculum content was left unquestioned and reinforced. For example a story in an English lesson introduces Zungu, a young man with a broad chest who attracts the attention of ladies as he walks up and down. This point fascinated the teacher and he explained this behaviour as an aspect of human nature, as 'given'. No attempt was made to deconstruct or challenge the stereotype. For a gender-conscious teacher, such content should offer an opportunity to challenge some of the common stereotypes and open the class for discussion.

At break time too, the school space was gendered. The students were served a cup of tea or sorghum porridge and a slice of bread by prefects. As described in the previous section, this was supervised in separate lines by same gender teachers and prefects. As elsewhere, teacher explanations for the gender order were related to girls' being 'physically weaker'. The girls did not see it as surprising that the boys scrambled for food but accepted that they could not compete with them. They said that they would find it embarrassing anyway. In a replay of so many other aspects of schooling, the girls regulated their own behaviour marked by order and 'femininity' while the boys asserted their masculinity by more disorderly scrambling for food.

Gender Violence

The historical incidence of violent behaviour and serious crime by male youth gangs in the school and neighbourhood pervaded the atmosphere of the school, with female students and

teachers being the most vulnerable to harassment and intimidation. Almost all the students interviewed expressed the wish to transfer to other schools where discipline was valued.

Within the classroom girls did not want to sit next to boys. They spoke of them as detrimental to their progress because they were not serious and disturbed them in their studies. The boys harassed and intimidated them during and after school. Sometimes girls failed to attend school because of the terrorising of the youth gangs.

As in the other case study schools, the practice was for the teachers to administer corporal punishment as they saw fit and without the Principal's permission. It had been the tension between the policy and practice that saw the downfall of the previous school administration. Teachers complained of disempowerment when they had no recourse to corporal punishment as they saw fit. The boys consistently complained that they received more punishment than the girls, providing further evidence of its gender differentiated use.

'Respect' from students seemed to be related to the teachers' ability to thrash students, such that male teachers benefited most from the relaxation of the corporal punishment policy within the school. On the other hand, female teachers, who were often perceived as 'weak' and 'not good at thrashing', had to earn respect. Their authority was further diminished when they referred students to a male teacher for punishment and their refusal to supervise boys at meal times. As confirmed in interviews with the boys, most male students had little respect for female teachers and often threatened them. For the girls, issues of teacher respect were not based on the capacity for physical violence or gender but on individual teacher attitude and behaviour. They disliked both male and female teachers, characterising the latter as 'dictatorial', 'pompous' and 'showy'. In addition they mentioned their disrespect for male teachers who had love affairs with female students.

Students' notions of respect were clearly gender differentiated, as were their respective responses. The girls had not 'dodged' lessons, whereas the boys said they were more likely to dodge female teachers' classes than male teachers'. One male student summed up the attitude: *'I fear and respect male teachers and I ensure that I attend their lessons regularly. I sometimes deliberately miss female teachers' lessons because I do not fear them'*. On the other hand, many of the boys indicated that they often 'dodged' the lessons of teachers who were harsh on them and gave false but convincing reasons for their absence. Dodging lessons and then lying about it were strategies to cope with the 'harsh' environment, which directly influenced attendance and inevitably performance.

The gender-blindness within the school was evident in some of the display material. One poster displayed to sensitise people to the dangers of AIDS showed no men but only an emaciated woman as a victim of AIDS, reinforcing the cultural stereotype that it is women who spread AIDS. Another poster entitled 'Truancy Does not Pay' depicted only a boy playing truant, giving the impression that only boys were truants. Such representations could be damaging and may be regarded as forms of gender violence that reproduce rather than disrupt dominant gender stereotypes.

In summary this school had poor results and a gender gap in favour of the girls. The boys had poor punctuality and attendance whereas the girls' drop-out was high. Long distances to school, unsupervised domestic conditions and low community support were related to these school characteristics. The school had very poor discipline, with youth gangs terrorising staff and

students. The new Head's policy on widespread corporal punishment appeared to meet with teachers' approval and it was claimed that the situation was improving.

A2.6 **Culchi School**

Culchi was a **poor performing rural** school, founded in 1991 approximately 15 kilometres from the nearest town. It had three main feeder schools within a radius of 18-20 km. Due to the distance from home, some students lived with relatives or friends or rented houses nearby. The students' families were predominantly of low socio-economic status, with their parents depending mainly on raising livestock, ploughing field crops and selling traditional beer and crafts like baskets. A few parents worked as cleaners, messengers and security guards in a neighbouring town. The families were characterised by a high dependency ratio, i.e. one parent working to support ten or more people.

The school had 12 general classrooms and 10 specialist labs: two for Science, four for D&T, one for HE, one for Art and two for Business Studies and Computer Awareness. There were also three outdoor teaching areas. All classrooms and specialist rooms except Business and Computing were in poor condition and had insufficient furniture. The administrative block was in relatively good condition, although there were not enough chairs for the teachers in the staff room. The library was also in fair condition, although there was no issue desk, book storeroom or audio-visual resources. Two separate storerooms for books and furniture were in a very poor state with leaking roofs. In general, across the curriculum subjects there were inadequate texts for teachers and students, broken specialist equipment, and an absence of supplementary teaching aids and equipment.

There were eight pit latrines, four for boys and four for girls, one of which was used by the kitchen staff. The boys' toilets had no doors and no water and the four showers were out of order. The kitchen shelter used to store and cook food was in bad shape with cracked walls, leaking roof and no doors. This made the walls look dirty which was made worse by the persistently blocked kitchen drain. The pot stands were broken, which made cooking difficult.

Teachers

There were 45 teachers in the school, 21 females and 24 males, which almost exactly reflected national secondary proportions. The Management team of eight teachers, four females and four males, included the female head teacher and male deputy Head. The Head had the longest teaching service with 24 years experience. In contrast, almost half the teachers had only one year of experience. The time spent in Culchi school ranged from nine years to a few months, with many teachers having spent only a year in the school. Teachers in this school were eager to get a transfer. The student – teacher ratio is far below the national average at 11.1:1.

The distribution of teachers by subject and gender has been presented in Table A2.18 below. Predictably, the D&T department was all male and the Science department was also predominantly male. Art, Guidance and Counselling and PE were all male while RE was all female. One of the three HE teachers was male, with females predominating in Setswana, Mathematics and Moral Education. Males outnumbered females in English, Agriculture and Social Studies.

Table A2.18: Culchi School Teachers by Subject and Gender (2001)

Subject	Male	Female	Total
Setswana	1	4	5
English	3	2	5
Mathematics	1	4	5
Science	2	1	3
Social studies	3	1	4
Agriculture	3	1	4
Art	2	0	2
Business studies	1	1	2
Design Technology	4	0	4
Guidance and Counselling	1	0	1
Home Economics	1	2	3
Moral Education	1	3	4
Physical Education	1	0	1
Religious Education	0	2	2
TOTAL	24	21	45

Enrolment and Drop-out

There were about 500 students in the school with almost an equal number of boys and girls. School uniform was gender sensitive in that girls were permitted to wear trousers. Punctuality was a major problem. The students, mostly the girls, were often late, especially on Mondays. A school survey in February 2002 recorded that 78 students, more than 15% of those on roll, were late for school. Of these, 50 (64%) were girls. Student explanations referred to the long distances, as much as 18 kilometres, travelled to school. It was suggested that these long distances disadvantaged the girls more as they were not able to run as fast as the boys.

Absenteeism was similarly widespread. A school analysis of the Form 1 attendance register showed that boys absented themselves from school more frequently than girls. Reasons given were lack of parental care or supervision, distance from school, peer pressure and sometimes sickness. Girls it was revealed were more likely to absent themselves for genuine reasons.

Examination Performance

The JCE results in 2000 and 2001 are shown below in Table A2.19. The results indicated that the school was performing below the national average. In 2000, the failure rate was more than double the national figure. Although in both years a male has achieved the highest grade, more girls passed and more boys failed. Against the national trend, more girls than boys from this school continued into SSS.

Table A2.19: Culchi School JCE Results by Gender (2000-2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES					FAIL GRADE
			M	A	B	C	Total	Fail
2000	Total	183	0	1	17	74	92	91
	%		0	0.005	9.2	40.4	50.3	49.7
	Female	93	0	0	11	43	54	39
	%		0	0	11.8	46.2	58.1	41.9
	Male	90	0	1	6	31	38	52
	%		0	1.1	6.7	34.4	42.2	57.8
2001	Total	155	0	1	16	80	97	58
	%		0	0.006	10.3	51.6	62.6	37.4
	Female	81	0	0	8	50	58	23
	%		0	0	9.9	61.7	71.6	28.4
	Male	74	0	1	8	30	39	35
	%		0	1.4	10.8	40.5	52.7	47.3

A t-test analysis of students' performance on eight subjects in the 2000 JCE revealed that at the 0.05 level of significance, the mean scores for girls were significantly better than those for boys in Setswana, English, Mathematics, Social Studies and Home Economics. Boys did significantly better than girls only in Agriculture. This contrasted with an analysis of national results, in which there was no significant differences in performance in Agriculture and significantly better performance of boys in Science and D&T.

In general the better performance of the girls was related by teachers to the quality of their class-work, more specifically their ability to concentrate as well as the quality of their work which was 'always neat and well organized'. These behavioural traits were described in terms of the earlier maturity and greater sense of responsibility in girls. The comparatively poor performance of the boys was related to higher truancy, dodging classes, not writing notes and lack of interest in schooling. Gendered subject choices were another element of the performance differences. These, however, were regarded as related to the 'natural' attributes of each gender. Within the school, girls tended to opt for Home Economics and Moral Education, and boys opted for D&T and Art. This was described by a teacher as:

Because girls generally like to read they are suited for doing subjects like English, Setswana therefore they usually outperform boys on these subjects. Boys are suited for doing subjects like Art, Design and Technology because they like painting and doing craft work. For this reason alone boys outperform girls on these subjects.

The 'soft' humanities subjects were also associated with female teachers, adding to the gender specificity of certain curriculum subjects that further contributed to boys' poor performance. This lack of interest was even more marked when the topic within a subject used material related to the female life experiences.

School management

The school day of eight forty-minute lessons lasted from 7:10 to 13:00 in the summer and 7:30 to 13.30 in the winter. After lessons there was a study period from 14:40 to 16:10 and 7:30 to 9:30 on Saturday. There were sporting activities every day after studies except fortnightly on Wednesdays when there was general cleaning of the school.

Half the Senior Management Team (4/8) were female. Both male and female teachers interviewed, however, discussed how some male teachers refused to respect female leadership. The basis of this was explored in the gendered views of some teachers. For example, one male teacher made a general observation that female students and women in general envied men and wished to associate with boys or men. He continued:

Monna o kwa go dimonyana. Mosadi ke ngwana Gape o tswantse wa itse gore mosadi o dirilwe ka legopo la monna ke ka moo basetsana kgotsa basadi ba rata go itsalanaya le banna..
A man is of a higher status than a woman. A woman is of the status of a child. Also, a woman is made from a man's rib – that may be the reason why girls/women would prefer to be closer to boys/men.

At the institutional level, despite its all-pervasiveness, there were no efforts to address problems of gender. The school's formal response to incidents of sexist behaviour within the student population were dealt with almost always by the counsellor. Details of what this entailed were not made explicit. Teachers claimed that they all referred these problems to either the students' parents or the head of pastoral care. Only one teacher talked about getting personally involved by counselling the students themselves before taking the matter further if necessary.

As with the other schools, it would seem that student behaviour in school was based on gendered identities, informed by culture, religion or family values which were not challenged in any significant way within the institution.

Gendered Duties

As part of the school routine, students were expected to perform maintenance duties. These duties were allocated according to gender, for the boys this included cleaning windows, slashing grass and cutting trees while for girls it included mopping and polishing the floors. The female students were not in support of this division of labour, they argued that being able to engage in multiple roles was empowering as it ensured self-independence. Boys however felt that some jobs were not suitable for girls and some jobs boys would do only when there were no girls around to do them. Responses from a focus group interview with boys revealed the boys' biases.

Interviewer: *How would you react if you saw a girl doing a boy's job/activity?*

Boy 1: *I would support it since there is gender equality, but it should always be considered what kind of an activity it is. If it's not a heavy one, then she can do it.*

Boy 2: *It is okay because once my sister is away, I can always help with cooking. It shows that there is unity amongst us.*

Boy 3: *It's a good thing. I have no problem with it. At home I cut wood and I even clean the house.*

Boy 4: *It's not a strange thing. I think the girls should be encouraged to play football.*

School prefects and monitors were chosen by the teachers with deliberate efforts to ensure a gender balance in the numbers chosen and responsibilities allocated.

Gendered Space

Classroom observation revealed that, in common with the other case studies, the way in which students interacted was highly gendered, with boys and girls almost always maintaining gendered boundaries by sitting separately. The common pattern in which boys sat at the back or sides and girls sat in front was prevalent. This was determined by the boys' choice of sitting in

places where they could enjoy making a noise undetected, or enjoy the view, fresh air and the winter sunlight. Again teachers rarely intervened in this classroom arrangement despite the boys' tendency for disruptive or non-attentive behaviour. Clearly the boys were active in reconstructing their masculinity by marking their physical space and distinguishing themselves from the girls and their female teachers. Despite occasional teacher attempts to mix boys and girls, the gendered division of space always re-emerged.

Classroom observations also revealed that most girls did not raise hands to answer questions asked by the teachers nor to ask the teachers questions. In mixed-sex groups, boys were chairpersons, while girls were secretaries and boys dominated the discussions in most cases. Interviews revealed that girls' participation in class was minimal because of the 'oppression' they suffered from the boys. Girls complained that boys laughed at them when they made mistakes and that this sometimes led to girls crying in class. One teacher observed:

If a girl makes a mistake in class, for example, pronounce a word incorrectly, boys will automatically laugh at her. But if a boy makes the same mistake, he is not laughed at. Thus in most cases girls shy away from answering questions or asking questions in class.

With the effective prohibition on girls taking up verbal public space, they devised strategies to cope with the classroom conditions. Despite the unsafe classroom environment for girls, the majority were of the view that girls performed better than boys. One teacher observed:

In classes, girls do not seem to enjoy participating in class activities like answering questions. But when it comes to written work girls do far better than boys even if boys participated excellently during class discussions.

Interestingly, this teacher described this as a characteristic of the girls rather than their response to the learning environment. The girls reported further efforts by the boys to deter their participation including stealing or taking their exercise books, notebooks, books and pens by force. The boys tended to leave their books at home, to dodge lessons and not to write notes or do their homework. Their actions could be understood as attempts to conceal their irresponsibility and assert the gender order.

Gender Violence

Verbal and physical abuse was common in the school. Boys used these forms of violence as a strategy to sustain their dominance in the school. The most common form of oppression was sexual harassment and this took the form of touching, verbal abuse, intimidation, bullying, physically assault and forced relationships. One girl noted that '*The boys really torment us, they forcefully want to embrace us, and touch us any how*'. Boys were observed bullying girls, especially in the area around their lockers, then using abusive language. In one incident a boy was talking to a girl; when she proceeded in the direction she was taking, the boy said: '*ke bua lena oa tsamaya, ke tla go jumpela,*' 'I am speaking to you and you just go, I will beat you up'.

Teachers and girls' interviews pointed to the boys' tendency to claim ownership of the girls through either intimidation or sexual violence and more specifically rape. In a focus group interview, the girls related how a boy would come to a girl proposing love. If the girl tried to refuse, the boy will say: '*Give me ten reasons why you refuse my proposal for love. If you fail to give me the ten reasons why you cannot be my partner, then you are mine. That will imply that you have agreed.*' Another girl pointed out that she was at one point 'walloped' by one of the boys for refusing his proposal. She reported this but no official or informal steps had been taken by the school.

In another incident, a boy took a girl to his house, spent the night with her and locked her up in the house the following morning while he went to school. This incident mirrors traditional ideology embedded in societies' perceptions, attitudes and expectations of men and women. The word *mosadi* (woman) implies 'yo o salang' that is, one that remains at home. *Monna* (man) implies one who is public, outgoing and visible (Chilisa 2002). Thus, the boy saw nothing wrong in locking up the girl while he went to attend the public business of schooling. This act of gender violence was treated as a minor offence, no discipline sanctions of corporal punishment or suspension were taken, although both students were said to have been counselled.

The verbal and physical abuse by boys came out very strongly in the girls' interviews. They cited this as the reason for their 'social isolation' and relative passivity within lessons. Their general negative comments about the boys' intimidating and unruly behaviour suggested that the majority of girls had limited contact with boys and no boy friends in the school; they only interacted with other girls. This reinforcement of gender boundaries was related by some respondents to traditions of local culture. One teacher explained that a boy and a girl together were commonly described as lovers, which students were eager to avoid. In addition he pointed out that in Setswana culture, 'men who associate with women are regarded as weaklings' (*ke bo pheramesesing*). Further, that females are believed to be liars, so a male associating with females may also be taken to be a liar. The combination of these cultural associations and practices resulted in minimal interaction between male and female students.

Other examples of male student indiscipline ranged from dodging lessons, lateness, beer-drinking to false accusations. Gender violence was a significant characteristic of disciplinary sanctions used within the school. Verbal abuse was used predominantly by female teachers, who made students sit on the floor and used abusive language or embarrassed them saying, for example: 'You make noise because you are a donkey, you don't know anything in class. Your mouth is full of your teeth (*meno a tletse ka legano*).' The boys in particular complained about the harsh abusive treatment and false accusations accorded to them by some female teachers. One boy had this to say:

One thing that embarrassed me was when a female teacher said something very negative to me that I could never change. She passed remarks about my dark skin. I did not like it and this did not make me feel good. It has left a scar in me. It did not make me feel good more so because it was made in front of other students. She said this for a minor thing that I had done i.e. seeing me talking.

Almost all the teachers interviewed admitted that corporal punishment was the main method for dealing with incidents of bad student behaviour. This took many forms, which for the boys included being lashed on the buttocks, beaten with broomsticks or electric cords, hitting heads against the wall and being beaten with fists by male teachers. Sometimes they were taken to the Kgotla where the elders of the Kgotla flogged them. One boy described its effects upon him:

I do not like the way some teachers come to class with a stick. It makes it difficult for someone to listen attentively because we become scared and unsettled because we always think we are going to be beaten. If one is scared it becomes impossible to listen because the sight of a stick scares.

In one incident a male teacher was said to have used an electric cord to punish the students in his class; he thrashed the boys thoroughly on their thighs while girls were beaten on the hands. As a result all except two boys dodged his lesson. This was of course reported and he was

ordered to change his method of punishment. Nevertheless, almost all of the boys interviewed blamed their teachers, especially the male teachers in charge of administering punishments, for what they disliked about the school. They added that the harsh treatment made them abscond, dodge classes and become afraid to ask questions in class. At the same time, the boys showed disrespect for female teachers and often refused to be punished by them. There was a sense that female teachers were afraid of male students and often called male teachers, who were fond of beating, to discipline them.

The girls agreed that boys are more often accused even in situations where the girls were responsible for the confusion or the problem. For the male students this was the major way in which the school was gendered. Boys believed that both male and female teachers looked down upon them. The girls interviewed admitted that they received preferential treatment from their teachers. As a girl remarked:

When beating, male teachers become sympathetic to girls. Boys are thoroughly lashed unlike girls. Unlike female teachers who generally pinch as a form of punishment, male teachers slap students.

The teachers explained this as a response to the maturity, seriousness and responsibility of the girls in and out of the classroom. In the words of one teacher:

In my opinion I feel girls mature at an early age hence girls are generally less delinquent than boys, as a matter of fact girls outperform boys in schoolwork. Boys don't seem to have a sense of responsibility; they do not seem to care much about schoolwork. When girls go home and do their home chores which is a traditional expectation, and later do their school work, boys will hang around with their social peers and start playing and get home late to do the home chores and therefore fail to attend to their school work on time.

The boys attributed some of the obvious differential treatment to male teacher/girl student love relationships. Nevertheless it would seem that the avoidance of educational activity is implicated in their active construction and reproduction of certain traditional, hegemonic forms of masculinity alongside intimidation, bullying, physical violence and verbal abuse.

In summary, this school was typified by a gender gap in favour of the girls. They outperformed boys in all subjects except Agriculture. There was poor punctuality on the part of the girls and poor attendance from the boys. The staff were relatively young with little experience in school and all were keen to transfer. This provided little continuity for the school and students. In common with the other case studies, the gendered nature of school duties, use of space and violence were in evidence and, despite some serious abuses, male student perpetrators were not faced with school disciplinary procedures.

A3.0 The Case Studies

These six case study schools were public JSSs. As outlined in section 2.3 of the Chapter 2, they were selected to represent different levels of achievement (high and low) with respect to both the national picture and their own location. As the following data will show, location was an important variable in examination performance. The presentation of the six case studies, which are summarised in the rest of this chapter, follow the same format, with a short introduction to their immediate locale, physical conditions and community involvement, then available data on enrolment, drop-out and achievement followed by a section on the teachers. These technical descriptions are then supplemented by qualitative descriptions and preliminary analysis of aspects of the daily life and ethos of the institutions. Some variation in the case studies is due to differences in practices of record keeping and anticipated different opportunities and responses in an ethnographic style of data collection. The high performing schools are presented first, followed by the poor performing schools. Each series starts with the urban, then the peri-urban and finally the rural schools.

A3.1 Katsir 'B' School

Katsir JSS was a **high performing urban** school originally founded by British and Ghanaian Methodists in 1858. In 1991 the school was divided into two different schools 'A' and 'B', occupying different parts of the same two-storey building but with a completely different management and staff. The school was located in a middle class residential area about 50 metres from the sea, surrounded by several nationally renowned educational institutions. Many students lived outside the locality. Parents worked in a wide range of occupations, including professionals (doctors, teachers), carpenters, traders and farmers. Their mothers tended to have low paid jobs. In educational terms, the questionnaire sample indicated that 30% of the fathers had university education compared to 8.3% of the mothers. Nevertheless, the relatively low fees of 21,000 cedis (£2.10) p.a. still presented some parents with difficulties. Against GES directives, the school had stopped sending students home for fees; instead, they allowed instalments and issued appeals and warnings, for example exclusion from end of term examinations in the case of non-payment. The results of final year students were not released until arrears are settled in full.

Katsir JSS 'B' was a double form entry school. It occupied four classrooms on the ground floor plus a further two classrooms on the far side of the playing fields. A partition between two classrooms was pulled aside to create a hall for assemblies, school bible club and school church services. Water and electricity were available in the school which also had three student toilets. The buildings were in a fairly good condition but very poorly furnished with students sharing desks and sometimes chairs. There was an office for the Head and a staff room but no library. A few books were kept in the Head's office alongside basic subject textbooks, all of which were available except for Social Studies. Some students had their own textbooks and all had their own supply of writing materials and exercise books. There were also some teaching and learning materials e.g. globes, maps and chalkboard drawing equipment.

The PTA was described as quite ineffective with low attendance. Despite this, it had financed the rehabilitation of the student toilets and some limited renovation of furniture. The Board of Governors was very active, with the chair conferring frequently each week with the head teacher.

There was, however, no apparent support from the community. On the school's part, the yearly observation of Wesley Day meant doing voluntary work in the community. In the previous year, students cleaned up and weeded at the District Hospital.

Teachers

With seven female and seven male teachers, the school had a complement of 14 staff including the female Head and deputy. This was double the national proportion of women teachers, but was typical of urban settings. The length of service in the school ranged from 1_ to 12 years and in teaching overall from 1_ to 21 years. The three longest serving teachers were female; this reflected the national picture in which females remained longer in teaching than males.

In terms of their subject responsibility, Table A3.1 showed traditional gendered subject specialisms. Female teachers predominated in Fante and English and males in Mathematics, Science and Pre-Vocational Skills. All the teachers were trained except the male Pre-Vocational skills teacher who had an HND. All staff taught 24 periods, except English and Mathematics teachers, who taught 36 periods.

Table A3.1: Katsir School Teachers by Subject and Gender (2001)

Subject	Female	Male	Total
Fante	2	0	2
English	3	0	3
Mathematics	0	2	2
Science	0	2	2
Social Studies	1	1	2
Agriculture	0	1	1
Pre-Technical skills	0	1	1
Pre-Vocational skills	1	1	2
Religious and Moral Education	1	0	1
French	0	1	1

NB some teachers teach more than one subject

In terms of additional duties, only males had been appointed as responsible for Houses and only two of the Sixth Form teachers were female. These appointments were made by the Head. In stereotyped fashion, male teachers had been given responsibilities for discipline and sports, and the females for welfare, health and sanitation. The School Counsellor was also female. Of the three school clubs, the Good News and Bible Club with a female patron, was the most popular, with boys outnumbering girls.

Seven teachers (three males and four females) had been promoted during their career. Three teachers (one female and two males) were on study leave pursuing further studies at degree and Masters levels.

Enrolment and Drop-out

Students from four feeder Methodist primary schools were admitted automatically to Katsir but others were required to apply formally. The catchment area was large, with 37.7% of the students taking 1-2 hours to get to school. Its two-form entry had a total roll of just over 200 students streamed by ability. The slight predominance of boys reflected the national picture. The boys tended to have a wider age band (12-19 years) than the girls (12-17 years). Most students

were in clean uniforms and each had their own school bag containing pens, pencils and books. A number of them had their own textbooks.

Table A3.2: Katsir School Enrolment by Form and Gender (2000/1-2001/2)

	2000/1			2001/2		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Form 1	37	43	80	37	42	79
Form 2	32	43	75	37	44	81
Form 3	38	42	80	29	46	75
Total	107 (45.5%)	128 (54.5%)	235	103 (43.8%)	132 (56.2%)	235

Overall the drop-out rate for this school was much lower than the national average. Table A3.2 shows enrolments by form in 2000/1 and 2001/2. Across the two years, the number of Form 1 students who progressed into Form 2 increased by one boy, whereas the number going from Form 2 to Form 3 showed no net increase. The table shows, however, that this was made up of a drop-out of three girls and an addition of three boys. The table shows that consistent with the national level, more boys stayed in school than girls. Earlier, in 1998/1999, two girls had dropped out of school, one due to pregnancy. In the following year, one boy dropped out due to repeated poor performance. Inability to pay school fees was one of the major reasons given for drop-out.

Absenteeism was not a very serious issue, although, according to the staff reports and a student survey, boys tended to be absent more often than girls. The focus class register however revealed that boys were more regular, with girls as a whole attending on 81 days fewer than boys during the year. Although equal proportions of boys and girls (40%) reported that they had missed school for health reasons, more boys (10%) than girls (3%) reported that they missed school to help with various jobs at home.

In terms of punctuality, teachers reported that boys were late more often than girls. The headmistress added that girls arrived in school far earlier and did far more work than boys. On a typical morning, students trickled into school from about 6.30 am; by 7 am there was quite a crowd of mostly girls busy sweeping their plots and cleaning their classrooms. At about 8 am the bell was rung for Morning Assembly.

Examination performance

This school consistently performed well, with BECE passes (aggregates 1-30) between 20- 34% higher than the national average. In a further reflection of the national scene, boys consistently outperformed girls. The available school data in Table A3.3 combined the results for Katsir A and B. Although the results dropped across the years which closed the gender gap, the boys attained more passes and more higher grade passes.

Performance by subject was explored in the focus class. Of the four subjects, more boys than girls were in the top ten for English (6:4) and Science (6:4), all the top ten in Mathematics were boys but in French the girls performed better (4:6). In the bottom ten, boys predominated in all subjects except Mathematics, where there were equal numbers of boys and girls. This repeated the national picture in which boys took the lead in all subjects, particularly in Mathematics and Science. However, teachers generally felt that girls were better in all subjects, such that in the languages and even in Mathematics and Science, girls could stand up to boys. This they

explained was due to particular encouragement from the previous Science teacher, who was female. Others also talked of the way girls were more prepared to ask for help. In contrast, they talked of the boys usually playing truant and not being as serious in their studies as girls.

Table A3.3: Katsir School ('A' & 'B') BECE Performance by Gender (2000-2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES					FAIL GRADES
			1-6	7-10	11-20	21-30	Total	31+
2000	Total	166	2	16	74	64	156	10
	%		1.2	9.6	44.6	38.6	94.0	6.0
	Female	57	0	2	20	29	51	6
	%		0	3.5	35.1	50.9	89.5	10.5
	Male	109	2	14	54	35	105	4
	%		1.8	12.8	49.5	32.1	96.3	3.7
2001	Total	162	0	5	61	68	134	28
	%		0	3.1	37.7	42.0	82.7	17.3
	Female	75	0	0	26	36	62	13
	%		0	0	34.7	48.0	82.7	17.3
	Male	87	0	5	35	32	72	15
	%		0	5.7	40.2	36.8	82.8	17.2

All students attributed their poor performance to lack of textbooks, tiredness from walking long distances to school and excessive household chores. They all regarded school as both good and very important. It was related to getting work: '*Without school, you can't get a good job, you can't survive*' and, for the boys, to bring prestige, for example to '*talk intelligently to the white man*'. Although data on student destinations after JSS was not recorded, the head teacher confidently estimated that about 50% of the students enter SSS. Otherwise girls enter vocational schools or become sewing or hairdressing apprentices and boys become carpentry or masonry apprentices.

School Management

Male teachers described relations among the staff as equal and females described them as cordial. They added that in school and more broadly males felt superior. Neither spoke of the influence of gender on their careers or working lives. However, there had been a recent case in which the female head teacher had taken out an official, structured disciplinary process with regard to three male teachers. This was related to their non-production of school records, despite several requests. From the head's perspective this was a case of laziness and not in any way sexist. The male teacher eventually complied and the reports were finally received.

Students, particularly boys, referred to poor teaching, teacher lateness and absenteeism. They also mentioned teachers who absented themselves from normal classes but appeared for extra classes as they would then collect extra allowances. The girls also referred to over-enthusiastic punishment by teachers. None of these was raised by the teachers as issues.

In general the organizational arrangements and practices were not problematised or recognised as gendered. Teachers, both male and female, denied that there were any sexist incidents in the school. There was a 'normalisation' of the gender regime and as such no institutional response to gendered practices and processes.

Gender Duties

The appointment of school prefects was balanced by gender except house prefects, who were traditionally male with a female assistant. Their duties included Sports, Health, Worship, Entertainment and School Grounds. On occasions when the teacher on duty was late, morning assembly was usually led by the boys' school prefect, with the girls' prefect by his side. Very occasionally the female prefect might take the lead.

Strong and distinct gender roles and groupings were observed in relation to student duties. For instance, for the daily morning cleaning of plots, only girls carried brooms and swept their plots. The boys did not use brooms and those that did any work picked up papers. Other duties were actually allocated by gender, for example, the responsibility of time keeping was assigned to the School Bell Boy. Girls typically cleaned the offices.

The male students more strongly supported the gendered division of duties. In one incident when a teacher asked a male student to wash a plate for her, he expressed open shock saying '*Oh Madam! I can't do that. I can't wash plates. I am not a girl!*' He promptly gave it to the first girl that came his way and ordered her to wash the plate for the teacher. The boys regarded it as too girlish to bend and sweep with brooms, adding that the girls laughed at boys who sweep. The girls on the other hand thought that they could do the boys' jobs. They admitted, however, that they do laugh at boys who sweep.

Gendered Space

In the classroom, gendered seating patterns segregated the students. The boys tended to occupy the back seats which they explained as logical due to their greater average height. Both boys and girls spoke of being taunted and others assuming that they were in a 'love' relationship if they did not sit in single gender groups. In more positive terms, they referred to the discussion of common interests within their own gender group. Teachers allowed students to choose their seats, only rarely intervening as a discipline strategy, e.g. noisy or troublesome students would be moved to another seat next to a classmate of the opposite gender. In effect, this emphasized the normality of the gender segregation in the class and school. In one unusual instance in which a male teacher tried to introduce an activity in mixed pairs, there were loud shouts of protest from the class. This gender segregation typified break times, the playing field, school clubs and assembly. School lines always formed with girls at the front and boys behind.

Many classroom practices adopted by the teachers were gendered. These were taken for granted, normalized and required no specific intervention from the teacher. Boys in general took more of the classroom space and time. They were more often called on to answer or called to the chalkboard, they received more teacher attention and responded more to teachers' questions. Although some teachers acknowledged that girls had great potential, there were only a few instances when there was any effort to encourage girls to participate. In many cases, the girls were overlooked. They seemed to be too shy and lacking in self-confidence to volunteer answers to the teacher's questions or to go up to the blackboard, whereas the boys were not restrained from jumping in. For example, when a girl who was asked to read out a few sentences faltered over a pronunciation, a boy impatiently took over without any prompting whatsoever from the teacher and finished off the sentence! The girl was visibly annoyed but could not or did not protest audibly; there was no reaction whatsoever from the teacher to indicate that anybody had misbehaved and the boy was not rebuked at all. The lesson quietly went on. By contrast, in another class, only one girl, who also appeared to be the prettiest in the class, was called by name to respond to the teacher's questions. All other girls were referred to as 'You!' After being called

to answer four questions in a row, the named student rebelled against the undue and unfair attention and refused to answer any more questions.

Several observations of the class confirmed that the gendered space of the classroom appeared to escape the notice of the teacher, or at least did not lead to any intervention. This was more evident in classes which were noisy and less well controlled, and where there were more obviously negative examples of gendered behaviour.

Gender Violence

Observations in the focus class showed the boys to be more active and assertive, even to the point of being aggressive. During question and answer sessions, boys were the most vocal; they asked more questions than girls and actively discouraged girls by interrupting or shouting down those who attempted to assert themselves. In one particular lesson, the only girl who tried to actively participate was booed down by the boys. In explanation, one boy defended this behaviour with the words: *'Madam, she is too quarrelsome.'* Girls were also more likely not to complain when wronged.

Observations indicated that it took considerable emotional effort for a girl to carry out a very ordinary and sensible action that for a boy might have been a very simple event. Movement around the class even to switch the light on seemed to require considerable courage from the girls. In addition to the verbal abuse, boys would bully girls and persistently take their bags and books. The unrelenting gender violence perpetrated by the boys was made explicit by the female class prefect who had been described by the boys as ineffective. When allowed to speak, she admitted, that she *was* ineffective because, whenever she reported noisy boys to the form teacher, the boys would threaten and frighten her.

Despite the situation, teachers constantly described the relationships between boys and girls as 'cordial'. Both male and female teachers did not only fail to notice discriminatory acts and attitudes of boys against girls, they also committed such acts and exhibited such attitudes themselves. For example, similar behaviour from boys and girls was interpreted differently: boys were described as 'assertive' whereas assertive girls were seen as quarrelsome. A male teacher elaborated: *'They relate equally, but academically strong girls stand up to the boys. They do not allow the boys to control them.'* The oppressive classroom environment, characterised by the dominance of boys in class discussions, boys harassing girls' participation and their unruly behaviour, was especially threatening to the academically weak girl. As a female teacher said, *'Non-performing girls tend to keep quiet. They are usually subdued.'*

In interviews, teachers claimed to praise and punish equally, although the mode and intensity was sometimes different. The head added that the use of corporal punishment, usually administered by male teachers, was not a frequent practice in the school. Most of the caning that was administered did not exceed six lashes and thus was not recorded in the Discipline Book. From the students' perspective caning had a negative effect, as one boy elaborated: 'When teachers teach well and don't cane, you always feel like coming to school.' Others described the disturbing effect of caning on their studies. When a girl was caned in front of the whole school for fighting she said, '...after this, coming to school was difficult.' Another reported that when she was caned for non-payment of school fees, '...I felt like never coming to school again.' Yet another girl put it this way: 'When I am afraid I will be caned, I find it difficult to come to school'. For other female and male students, their most embarrassing days in school were when

they got caned for various offences. Girls in particular disliked corporal punishment, which they were subject to by the teachers and prefects.

In summary, this was a high performing school with low drop out. There were more boys on roll and they attended more consistently although they were more often late. There were some problems for the female Head with male teachers and incidents of poor teacher discipline. In a similar way the female prefects felt compromised by male resistance to their authority. Gender differentiation through duties, space and violence were often antagonistic and typified the school environment.

A3.2 Adako School

Adako is a **high performing peri-urban** school, established in 1978 in a growing township in Central Region with an estimated population of over 12,000 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002). A large sugar factory that provided commercial activity was now closed, leaving the town with very little significant commercial life. The majority of its residents were traders or involved in fishing. Those families involved in fishing migrated along the West African coastline often left children with grandparents. Average earnings were around 400,000 cedis (£40) per annum. As a result, even though school fees were relatively low, parents still had problems paying.

The PTA was fairly active as children were usually sent to get their parents to come to meetings. On a good day there might have been as many as 80 parents. Their contributions were an important source of income for the school and they were rehabilitating two toilets and providing some furniture. However, the Board of Governors was inactive. Support from the community was minimal and there was no support from the local chief.

The school had six classrooms, a staff room and a Head's office, all in one long building with verandahs on both sides. The partition between two classrooms was removed to provide a hall for school worship and for Scripture Union meetings. The school had no laboratory or library, although there were a few books in the headteacher's office. The buildings were falling into disrepair with cracks in the walls and ceilings and six old non-functioning toilets. There was a dire shortage of chairs. Apart from a few drawing instruments and pictures, there were no teaching aids. The school shared a playing field with a primary school just 200 metres away.

Teachers

The school had a total staff complement of 11, including the head teacher, with a high student-teacher ratio of 27.7:1. With only two (18%) female teachers, the school had less than the national average of 25% women teachers. Consistent with the national picture, the females were the longest serving, each with over 20 years' experience. The male Head had 20 years' experience, all of them in this school. All except one male, who had a diploma in Civil Engineering, were trained teachers. As Table A3.4 reveals, the female teachers fell into stereotypes in their teaching subjects, they taught Fante and Pre-Vocational skills, and one acted as the school counsellor.

Table A3.4: Adako School Teachers by Subject and Gender (2001)

Subject	Female	Male	Total
Fante	1	0	1
English	0	2	2
Mathematics	0	2	2
Science	0	1	1
Social Studies	0	1	1
Agriculture	0	4	4
Pre-Technical skills	0	1	1
Pre-Vocational skills	1	0	1
Religious and Moral Education	0	1	1
French	0	1	1

NB some teachers teach more than one subject

The most popular and active club, with a female patron, was a religious group: the Scripture Union. In contrast, the Science and Technology and Mathematics Clubs were dormant; both had male patrons.

Enrolment and Drop-out

Most students gained automatic entry to the school through the two feeder primary schools. A few others were required to take an entrance examination. 81% of the students lived within 35 minutes' walk of the school and most students (78.3 %) walked to school. Some 20% came by car and a small proportion (1.7%) came by canoe. The students' general appearance was poor, most had unclean and/or worn out uniforms. Few students possessed their own old texts, and pens were often shared or borrowed. Nevertheless, they all valued school for such reasons as securing future jobs, to open their minds, so as to be respected and to avoid working in fishing.

Table A3.5: Adako School Enrolment by Form and Gender (1999-2001)

Level	1999			2000			2001		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Form 1	46	51	97	48	44	92	59	57	117
Form 2	57	39	96	45	47	92	48	57	105
Form 3	41	43	84	44	37	83	41	40	83
Total	144 (52%)	133 (48%)	277	137 (51.7%)	128 (48.3%)	265	149 (48.9%)	154 (51.1%)	305

The school roll, shown in Table A3.5, had increased over the years to 305 in 2001. There were roughly the same numbers of boys and girls. In terms of attendance, the girls were more regular. The boys, on the other hand, came late during the fishing season and even then they often left during the first break. Others did not come at all. The head teacher confirmed the teachers' comment that: 'You are sure to find them at the beach...trying to earn some money'. They put this down to the absence of parents in the home.

Tracing the 1999 Form 1 cohort over the whole JSS period shows a total drop-out rate of 14.4%, which was lower than the national average. This was in fact made up of a lower than national average drop-out (10.9%) for girls and a higher than national average drop-out (21.6%) for boys. The table shows that the retention rate was variable. Over the period 1999-

2001, year on year drop-out for girls ranged between 0 (0%) and 13 (22.8%). For boys, the range was from an additional intake of 13 to seven drop-outs (14.9%).

According to the teachers, the indiscipline at home, with elderly grandparents looking after children due to the migratory parents, led boys to play truant and girls to drop-out often due to pregnancy. Some girls fell prey to older men or their own schoolmates, with incidents of repeated pregnancy, one girl getting pregnant several times.

Examination Performance

The school examination results in Table A3.6 indicated a much higher performance than the national average. It reveals that boys generally and persistently outperformed girls in the Basic School Certificate Examination (BECE). The girls predominated in the lower aggregate scores. These results show that in 1999 all students qualified to enter SSS, although this dropped to 89% in 2000 mainly due to poor performance by girls. This mirrored the national situation.

Table A3.6: Adako School BECE Performance by Gender (1999-2000)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES				Total	FAIL GRADES
			1-6	7-10	11-20	21-30		31+
1999	Total	94	0	5	61	28	94	0
	%		0	5.3	64.9	29.8	100	0
	Female	45	0	0	26	19	45	0
	%		0	0	57.8	42.2	100	0
	Male	49	0	5	35	9	49	0
	%		0	10.2	71.4	18.4	100	0
2000	Total	83	1	5	35	33	74	9
	%		1.2	6.0	42.2	39.8	89.2	10.8
	Female	46	0	1	15	22	38	8
	%		0	2.8	32.6	47.8	82.6	17.4
	Male	37	1	4	20	11	36	1
	%		2.7	10.8	54.1	29.7	97.3	2.7

These results indicated the higher probability that more boys enter SSS, although actual numbers were not available. Teachers confidently reported that most of the girls entered vocational schools or became apprentices in sewing or hairdressing and some boys became apprentices in carpentry, masonry, and draftsmanship.

Despite the results, some teachers, including the Mathematics teacher, felt that girls were better in all subjects. An exploration of the focus class school examination results lent support to the teachers' opinion, with girls performing better than boys in all subjects except in Mathematics. Females occupied the first three positions in each of the subjects and boys occupied the last three positions in English, Mathematics and Science. This was explained by reference to 'natural' gender attributes e.g. girls like reading but boys don't because they found it difficult to sit in one place for long. A survey of students showed girls preferred the more traditionally feminine subjects of English and French.

School Management

The teachers reported that the process of promotion was fair and open. Many had been promoted during their careers including four male teachers in 2001/2, and one male teacher was

on study leave pursuing a university degree course in Agriculture. There was no reported problem with teacher absenteeism and only one male teacher was persistently late. This was indicated by some male students who complained of that teacher coming late to school. In general, all students in the focus class, except one male, enjoyed being in this particular school because their teachers were good and they taught well. The head teacher reported that discipline procedures for the teachers included verbal cautions and counselling.

Although there was a prescribed uniform, high standards of repair and cleanliness were not enforced. Punctuality was more strictly observed, with three lashes administered to latecomers. The GES basic school rules were not printed or displayed but the head occasionally asked students to suggest their own additional rules. They would discuss these in groups and then compile the list which would be posted on the classroom walls. The following is a typical list:

- Don't make noise when you are in the classroom.
- Don't eat any food in the classroom.
- Come to school on time. No lateness.
- Come to school always. No absenteeism.
- All classroom cleaners/sweepers must come earlier to do their work.

Gender relations were not viewed as an explicit area of concern in the school despite the gendered allocation of duties and evidence that gender violence did exist. Both male and female teachers denied that there were sexist incidents in the school, in this way they sustained traditional gender norms and practices. When pressed further, they conceded that gender influenced interrelations. They acknowledged, for example, that their efforts to treat female students 'nicely' were underpinned by notions of them as the weaker sex. In reference to relations among teachers, a female teacher admitted: *'In school, we relate cordially, but the males still feel superior.'* In explanations of gender differences, cultural factors were commonly invoked such that in the school and classroom, gender relations in the prevailing culture were reproduced.

The influence of the community in sustaining the gender order was exemplified through the issue of student re-admission. Typical of her schoolmates, Naomi lived with her grandmother while both her parents had moved up the coast following the fishing. She had been her primary school girl's prefect and best female student. In the second term of JSS1 she became pregnant. All her teachers were disappointed. The father of her baby had been the boy's prefect in primary school and they came together into JSS1. Although Naomi was embarrassed, she was determined to go back to school. However, contrary to MoE policy, the head decided not to readmit her after her delivery. He was uncomfortable because the community had described his as a school for 'abaatan' (nursing mothers). So, the policy and equity were sacrificed for positive community relations. After further consideration and wider consultation, however, he decided to readmit her despite the name-calling. Ironically, it later transpired that due to relationships with other girl students, the parents of the boy who was the father of the child were asked to withdraw him from the school.

The prevailing school conditions have proved difficult for re-admitted school girl mothers who were usually placed in school one year behind. They often felt very shy and tended to isolate themselves with minimal participation in class, especially during Life Skills lessons when issues related to sex or the reproductive organs were discussed. They were subject to teasing from their classmates and their academic performance usually fell when they re-joined. This was despite

school efforts to facilitate school girl mothers by giving permission to breast feed during the day. Many girls who eventually dropped-out denied their pregnancy.

Gender Duties

School started at 7.30 am, giving students time to clean their classrooms and sweep their plots before assembly at 8.15 am, except Fridays when assembly began at 8.00 am. Even though these duties were for all students, girls were the most obviously serious about their work. In observations, it was abundantly clear that cleaning offices and buying of food for teachers were considered feminine jobs, whereas time keeping and ringing of the school bell was the sole preserve of male students. Interestingly, the students were remarkably rigid about the gendered division of labour. One boy said: *'If I see a girl washing her father's car, I would think that her father does not have any son.'* A girl said: *'I would not like it at all if a boy carries cassava on his head. That is a girl's job!'*

Officially, both girls' and boys' prefects were appointed as if of equal status. However, the girl prefects' authority and ability to instruct and control was not as far-reaching and effective as that of boys. There were occasions, however, when the girls took the lead; for example, in the absence of its teacher patron, a girl led a female dominated Scripture Union club meeting very impressively.

For the teachers too, there was a gender division of labour not only in terms of their subjects but also with regard to additional duties. The female teachers, although not officially assigned to do so, rose to meet and welcome visitors. They were also the ones who were quickest to offer seats to visitors. In contrast, duties that required physical exertion such as walking and working in the hot sun, sports, school grounds and sanitation, were typically left to male teachers.

Gendered Space

Typical of most Ghanaian classrooms, the girls tended to cluster together as did the boys. Boys tended to occupy the back seats. Interviews with teachers confirmed that students were allowed to sit where they desired. Even when the teacher occasionally reshuffled these positions, students reverted to their desired segregated places. In interviews, the boys claimed that the classroom arrangement was 'logical' for reasons of their height compared to girls. Both boys and girls mentioned that sitting in mixed groups resulted in teasing that they were sitting by their regular boy/girlfriends. This separation was also observed during break times, on the playing field and around the food hawkers. The girls sat with and/or ate with girls while boys grouped together.

With comments like *'Females are kinder, they are like mothers, males shout'*, all the focus class students, especially the girls, said that they preferred female teachers. In return, all teachers, especially the females, felt that the girls had great potential and only needed encouragement to match the boys in subjects like Agriculture; they were already ahead of boys in English and French. Observations of English and French lessons showed that girls responded more to teachers' questions and they also received more attention. In Mathematics too, where the girls were not as good as the boys, efforts were clearly made to encourage girls to participate. They were often called to the board and got more encouragement from the teacher when they fumbled. On one occasion, the teacher insisted that another girl not a boy, come to the chalkboard to 'rescue' a girl who was having difficulty working out a problem. Some boys however complained that some teachers could not tolerate their questions in class.

Gender Violence

The teachers constantly described the relationship between boys and girls as 'cordial'. Despite this, boys often bullied girls. In general the students suggested that their inter-relations had a more detrimental effect than the teachers were prepared to recognise. Bullying by senior boys and other students laughing at you when you answered questions in class were the main reasons given for disliking school.

In one incident of gender violence, a boy slashed a girl's arm and palm with a blade and tore the bodice of her school uniform because she took a few pieces of his popcorn without asking. The Disciplinary Committee decided to punish this case of excessive violence with further violence: the boy was to be severely caned. Nevertheless, the incidence of gender violence was minimised by the senior teachers. The head teacher liked to see it as: *'Boys tease girls but it is playful not hostile'*.

Although the teachers used corporal punishment as they deemed appropriate, according to them it was not a frequent practice. When it was used, it was administered with reduced intensity to girls. For very serious offences, boys could be 'laid', i.e. made to lie face down on a table or bench before being caned. Such caning was always by male teachers.

Both girls and boys cited caning and punishment as one of the most disliked aspects of school. One boy described the most embarrassing day in his life in school as the day he got chased and caned for non-payment of school fees. The girls also disliked the physical and emotional distress of 'bullying by senior boys' and 'being shouted at by teachers'.

In summary, this was a high achieving school with experienced, predominantly male teachers. The drop-out rate for the school as a whole and for the girls in particular was low. The boys, however, had a relatively high drop-out rate, poor punctuality and high absenteeism. These together with school girl pregnancies were related by the teachers to their home conditions and their migratory parents. Despite weak community support, there were conservative pressures against the re-admittance of schoolgirl mothers. Teacher discipline and professionalism were high, although like the other case study schools staff and student relations were highly gendered in terms of duties, space and disciplinary sanctions.

A3.3 Kokoase St Mary's RC School

The school selected as a **high performing rural** school is in Kokoase, a settlement located on a good un-tarred road linking it to the main trunk road about 35 kilometres from the district capital. It enjoyed electricity but lacked piped water, adequate commercial and domestic transportation, a health post, a library and telephone facilities. The population of 1,712 was made up of 918 females and 794 males (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002), who were engaged predominantly in migratory fishing and fishmongering. About 80.5% of the women were engaged in petty trading based on fishmongering while males were fishermen (51.4%), farmers (16.7%), carpenters (2.8%) and masons (2.8%). The local market was small and confined to the beach; it fluctuated with fish catches.

The level of education of most parents was very low; 52.8% of women and 34.7% of men have no education. Around 20% of both women and men had not completed primary education. The highest educational level of women was secondary education (16.7%), while that of men was university education (4.2%). The average earnings of parents were estimated to be 100,000 cedis per annum.

The school and its feeder primary school shared the same flat and sandy compound beside the main road. The two school buildings formed a T-shape with Form 1, the staff room, office and store in one block and Forms 2 and 3 in the other. The spacious classrooms had painted bare walls with some windows in need of repair. There were no teaching aids on display. There was no library, workshop or laboratory. Textbooks and other learning materials were inadequate in the school. At best the student – textbook ratio was 4:1 and in some subjects there were no books or resources. A box of Science equipment was kept in the head teacher’s office, which, together with the staffroom, was bat infested and unused. Apart from six almost broken double desks in Form 1, students had to bring their own school furniture. The variety of shapes and sizes gave a disordered, crowded appearance to the classroom.

There was ample playground space around the school but with few trees and flowers decorating the unfenced compound. It was frequented by sheep and goats from the community. The school lacked toilet facilities which meant that girls, especially during their menstruation, had to go home and thus miss some lessons. According to the head teacher, the SMC was defunct, the PTA made no contribution, assistance from the District Assembly was lacking and from the church it had also been negligible.

Teachers

The school had four teachers of whom only one was female, a reflection of the national proportions. Since its establishment in 1950, the head teacher had always been male. Two male teachers (50%) were untrained. The curriculum subjects taught by the teachers and the allocation of additional responsibilities also reflected traditional gender patterns. The student – teacher ratio was 26:1.

Table A3.7: Kokoase School Teachers by Subject, Responsibility and Gender (2001)

Gender	Subject(s) taught	Responsibility
Male	Social Studies, RME	Head Teacher
Female	English, Pre-Vocational Skills Agriculture	Assistant Head / Form3 Tutor GNAT Representative Environmental Sanitation, Staff Secretary
Male	Fante, Pre-Technical Skills Life Skills	School Chaplain, Staff Treasurer Form1 tutor
Male	Agriculture, Science Mathematics	Sports Secretary, Project Manager Form2 Tutor

Enrolment and Drop-out

The single form intake totalled between 100 and 120 students. The school drew the majority of its students (84.7%) from the primary feeder school on the same compound but, as a Catholic school, it also drew students (16.3%) from other nearby settlements. Nearly all students (98.6%) walked to school; for most, this took 15 minutes or less, for the rest it took between 35 and 55 minutes.

Table A3.8: Kokoase School Enrolment by Form and Gender (2000/1-2001/2)

Level	2000/2001			2001/2002		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Form 1	19	20	39	11	22	33
Form 2	22	20	42	14	18	32
Form 3	19	12	31	19	20	39
TOTAL	60 (53.5%)	52 (46.5%)	112	44 (42.3%)	60 (57.7%)	104

Table A3.8 show a slight decrease in enrolment in 2001/2002 and, in concert with the national picture, the boys outnumbered the girls. Against the national trend, the number and proportion of girls had decreased. Questionnaire data indicated that 40.5% of the boys and 44.3% of the girls were over-age (between the ages of 16 and 18). According to the head teacher, this was because of the migratory lifestyle of the community.

In terms of retention, between the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 academic years, eight girls, nearly one fifth, dropped out; this was a replica of the national proportion. In comparison, two (5%) boys dropped out which is far lower than the national average. In the focus class, two boys and five girls failed to progress to JSS2, which was still below the national average for boys but above that for girls. According to the teachers, high female drop-out was due to teenage pregnancy and parents withdrawing students to help in the fish industry in neighbouring countries.

Table A3.9: Kokoase School Attendance by Gender (2000-2002)

		Total school days	Average Girls	Average Boys
2000/2001	1st Term	69	61.3	63.9
	2nd Term	62	51.1	51.5
	3rd Term	76	60.4	58.6
2001/2002	1st Term	70	70.0	60.1

As indicated in the above Table A3.9, student attendance fluctuated during the year. Teachers said that the attendance of girls was higher than that of boys during the peak of the fishing season. Male student absenteeism was because some were in the habit of going to the beach rather than to school, with others leaving school at first break to join them.

Examination Performance

The examination results in Table A3.10 show that no student obtained between grades 1 and 9 during the three-year period. Three boys (two in 1999/2000 and one in 2000/2001) scored between aggregates 10 and 19 during the period. With the exception of boys in 2000, the majority over the three year period had not achieved aggregates that would have allowed them to continue into SSS. In 2001, this was the case for 65.6% of all candidates: 70% of the girls and 58.3% of the boys. These results were between 15 and 27 percentage points below the national averages. In a reflection of the national picture, in the last two years the boys performed better than the girls. This pattern was evident in the available school records and in Science the difference was statistically significant. Student subject preferences similarly echoed the traditional male preference for Mathematics and Pre-Technical Skills with a female preference for Pre-Vocational Skills, English and Fante.

Table A3.10: Kokoase School BECE Performance by Gender (1999-2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADES				FAIL GRADES
			1-9	10-19	20-29	Total	30+
1999	Total	40	0	0	17	17	23
	%		0	0	42.5	42.5	57.5
	Female	18	0	0	9	9	9
	%		0	0	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Male	22	0	0	8	8	14
	%		0	0	36.4	36.4	63.6
2000	Total	34	0	2	17	19	15
	%		0	5.9	50.0	55.9	44.1
	Female	12	0	0	3	3	9
	%		0	0	25.0	25.0	75.0
	Male	22	0	2	14	16	6
	%		0	9.1	63.6	72.7	27.3
2001	Total	32	0	1	10	11	21
	%		0	3.1	31.3	34.4	65.6
	Female	20	0	0	6	6	14
	%	0	0	30.0	30.0	70.0	
	Male	12	0	1	4	5	7
	%		0	8.3	33.3	41.7	58.3

Source: WAEC Broadsheets for Kokoase JSS

Table A3.11 shows that only seven out of the 106 students who completed JSS 3 within the three-year period continued their education to the SSS or technical institute. The head lamented that *‘The rate of progression to SSS is very small. On the average between two and five boys, compared to one or two girls, gain admission to the SSS annually.’*

The teachers explained the low retention into SSS as due to the lack of educational aspirations which they attributed to factors outside the school. One of the teachers suggested that: *‘Students’ learning is influenced by the belief that no matter how they learn, they might end up on the beach or smoking fish.’* It appeared that this notion had not encouraged most students to give of their best.

Table A3.11: Destination of Kokoase School Leavers by Gender (1999–2001)

	1999			2000			2001		
	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys
Senior Secondary/ Technical Institute	2	1	1	3	0	3	2	0	2
Vocational school	1	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0
Job training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
At home	37	19	18	30	10	20	29	19	10

School Management

The current head had only recently been appointed to the newly separated JSS. Previously the post had been held together with the primary headship. He lived 20 kilometres away and was a representative of the District Assembly which meant he was often either late or absent from school. Some male teachers had taken advantage of the situation and often either reported late or were absent. On several occasions, the female teacher was the only teacher available in school. Some of the male teachers were also unwilling to stay in school after the normal school hours to supervise activities like sports and projects. Despite the official allocation of additional responsibilities, the female teacher ended up performing nearly all these duties.

Despite complaints by male students and the female teacher very little had been done about the teacher absenteeism. The head teacher said that he had talked to the teachers involved but this had brought little change and the threat of disciplinary action had not realised. It seemed that teacher absenteeism encouraged male student absenteeism. The students claimed that it was much more worthwhile spending their time on the beach than coming to school since there would be no teaching. The boys claimed that they had not had lessons in some subjects for two months.

Gender relations did not appear to be an explicit area of concern in the school and there were no specific efforts to attend to gender related aspects of schooling. Nevertheless, both teachers and students admitted that sexist incidents did occur and that female students were the main targets. It was claimed that incidents of gender violence were dealt with effectively by the school administration. There had been one case in which the combined action of the school administration and School Management Committee had resulted in the termination of the appointment of a male teacher who had misused his authority. It appeared that he had coerced girls into accepting his amorous demands through the use of punishment. Similarly, both teachers and students maintained that students involved in sexist incidents were either talked to or punished depending on the seriousness of the offence. However, no examples were provided.

Gender Duties

Both male and female students were appointed as prefects but they were assigned different responsibilities. The duties of a female class captain, reminiscent of a housekeeper, were to see to it that the classroom was well kept. She had to draw a duty roster and supervise the daily sweeping of the classroom by the girls. In the same vein, one of the responsibilities of the female sports captain was the washing of sports vests. The boy prefects on their part were to supervise and control the class. Other student leadership positions included females as office girl or canteen supervisor and boys as school police. These duties were clearly gender differentiated along traditional divisions of labour.

School cleaning of the compound was organized by giving responsibility for plots to mixed groups of students. It was observed that girls mainly swept the plots and boys, rather than sweeping, picked up litter. Similarly sweeping of the classroom was an all female affair. Students of both sexes were very emphatic about maintaining the division of labour, with girls speaking of their embarrassment if the boy carried out a 'girl's' job. Boys described how they would tease the girl or boy, they said they would '*ask the boy to stop behaving like a girl*' or '*If it was a girl we would call her man macho*'.

Gendered Space

As with the other case study schools, the use of space in the daily school practices was evidently gendered, with school life permeated by single sex groups. Boys arrived at school in the

company of boys, girls in the company of girls. Then, at the morning assembly the three classes lined up, with the girls of each class at the front. In the classroom too, students sat in single sex groups, girls mainly at the front while boys occupied the back seats which they felt was their preserve. Interestingly, in the focus class with a roughly equal number of boys and girls, two girls, the highest performers, sat at the back. Girls went out together during breaks as did the boys, so they scarcely mixed at all.

The students indicated their preference for association with same sex students and minimal association with the opposite sex. It appeared from their responses that students avoided the stigma in school and in the community of being referred to as the girlfriend or boyfriend of a fellow student. Teachers reported that the need to avoid this inevitable 'sexualisation' of relations, with the consequence being rumours or name calling, prevented productive interaction between girls and boys such as sharing studying or providing other support. This discouraged mixing. The teachers claimed that this was detrimental to the girls especially, as they could not share ideas with the boys.

Despite the view that the performance of both girls and boys would improve if the two groups could share ideas, there were no evident efforts to organise class teaching in mixed groups. Classroom observations indicated that teachers tended to concentrate their attention on the boys much more than on the girls. In fact, most teachers were more supportive of the boys, gave them more attention and directed questions at them. In turn, boys answered most of the teachers' questions and made most contributions in class. According to one teacher, the girls became timid in class, which led to the situation where boys outperformed girls. Nevertheless, in interviews girls said that education was of value to everyone and the key to the future for both boys and girls. Boys on the other hand argued that schooling was of more value and importance to them, saying that they *'might not get good jobs to do without education but girls could marry people doing good jobs'*.

Gender Violence

Male and female students' relations were characterised by gender violence with both verbal and physical bullying directed at the girls by boys. Even the male prefect's responsibility for discipline often translated into bullying of girls. The girls' claim, supported by observations, indicated that most incidents started with boys either teasing or calling girls names. Retaliation from the girls was often followed by attempts by boys to beat the girls. The teachers, although confirming that boys did beat up girls, made light of this violence. As one teacher explained, it was: *'because girls insult boys. Generally, girls are rude. They are in the habit of giving cheeky answers and boys with little patience attempt beating up girls. The problem is that boys find it difficult to exchange words, they will rather use their hands.'* This gender violence was therefore explained as caused by girls who were quick with their mouths; boys found this difficult and reacted with physical violence.

There were instances when teachers seemed to deliberately frustrate girls. An example from a Mathematics lesson is illustrative. A prize was offered to the student who was able to solve a mathematical problem posed. The male prefect was given the first chance but failed. A girl then made an attempt and seemed to be on the correct lines but she was constantly harassed by the male teacher until she gave up. Her efforts made it simple for the male prefect to complete the solution without any accompanying harassment from the teacher and he was then awarded the prize. Such interactions suggest some explanation for the better performance of boys.

Further harassment of the girls by male teachers was observed to be much more sexually based and amounted to a form of sexual violence. For example, as a lesson was in progress, another

male teacher walked into the classroom and publicly addressed a girl as *'my wife. Wouldn't you talk to me today?'* The girl confirmed in an interview later that she was embarrassed and therefore did not talk for the rest of the lesson. In other incidences the male teacher-female student inter-relations were less overt but far more intimidating. For example, a male teacher sent out a female student from his class for misbehaviour on two separate occasions. Both were followed by the threat of exclusion for the rest of the term. Although the teacher provided some explanations for these sanctions, student interviews suggested that the motive for the punishment was the refusal of those girls to accept the teacher's love proposal.

Verbal abuse of students was another form of punishment that was prevalent in the school. Female students maintained that the verbal attacks were insulting and embarrassing for them. All students expressed their disgust for this form of punishment and described its negative influence on their interest in class. A male teacher was singled out as particularly fond of insulting the boys. Even though the school was not fully staffed, in interviews boys suggested that it would be better off without him, especially as he was frequently absent. They also noted this teacher's tendency to be harsher with the boys or those who asked questions or for further explanation. Students, especially boys, were in the habit of dodging the lessons of that teacher.

The use of corporal punishment was another important factor in student – teacher relations. Many of the students intimated that caning was an aspect of school life they particularly disliked. Girls complained that they were not caned in the proper way: some of the teachers whipped them on their backs. Boys suggested that *'some male teachers cane the girls much more than they cane the boys even though there are boys who are sometimes targets of these teachers for the same reasons. The teachers cane the girls for refusing their advances and they whip those boys who refuse to call girls for them.'* Despite this suggestion, female students were sometimes the targets of unfair 'retaliatory' punishment, the teachers suggested that sometimes girls were given lighter punishment since they were not as strong as the boys. Overall, it would seem that erratic teacher behaviour and inappropriate or undeserved student punishments was characteristic of teacher – student interactions.

In summary, this was a small rural school in which two of the four teachers were untrained. Although high performing for a rural school, the results were poor with usually less than half the students gaining low grades passes. There was a problem of fluctuating male student attendance and female drop-out. Students often left school for shorter and longer periods and even completely to engage in fishing-related work. Poor teacher punctuality and absenteeism remained unaddressed by the Head. Gender was not considered an issue despite antagonistic staff and student gender relations in all aspects of school life and a recent case of sexual harassment of girls against a male teacher.

A3.4 Aruba Yadimah School

Aruba Yadimah was a **poor performing urban** school in Aruba, a suburb about five kilometres from the centre of the regional administrative capital. It was one of the fastest growing suburbs with a population of 15,326, made up of 7922 females and 7404 males (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002). It enjoyed most urban amenities: electricity, potable water, hospitals etc. Aruba was a vibrant commercial centre, littered with kiosks and shops selling goods ranging from building materials to confectionery. It was often subject to traffic jams. A school survey revealed that mothers were predominantly traders and fathers were mainly artisans, carpenters, masons etc. In terms of education, although more mothers (39%) than fathers (16%) finished secondary

school, more mothers (19%) than fathers (3%) had never been to school. This population of low socio-economic status had an average annual income per household estimated at 1.8 million cedis (£180).

The community was ethnically mixed, predominantly Moslem and largely Fante speaking. The Islamic community had started the school in 1967 with local 'Imams' teaching Islamic religion. It was subsequently taken over by the government, which provided both secular and Islamic education. Arabic was offered as a non-examination subject. The school was a few meters away from the main mosque and near the main highway. It shared boundaries with the primary school and a number of houses, so there was little room for expansion. The unfenced compound became an extension of the community space, providing an arena for various activities (nailing and sawing from the carpenter's workshop, wailing in the event of death). It had six classrooms, a workshop and an office. The classrooms had low roofs, narrow windows and poor ventilation, the walls were bare but the dual desks were generally in good condition. The office had been screened into two: the head teacher used one compartment and the other was used as a staff common room. The school had only a urinal and no other toilet facilities. It had no library although there were a few assorted books and limited teaching and learning materials in the head teacher's office. The walls of the classrooms were bare – no posters, pictures or charts. The school faced serious textbook problems and in some cases only the teacher's copy was available.

The influence of the SMC was limited and the PTA was also not very functional with infrequent and irregular attendance. The PTA had managed intermittent cash support and communal labour. Few parents visited the school to inquire about the progress of their children. There were contradictory reports about relations with teachers. A male teacher provided his view: *'In the community parents appreciate the work of the men [more] than the female teachers because they think female teachers are lazy and come to school late because they spend much time caring for their own children. The female parents express this view most, they make comments like "we need male teachers to teach our children not women"'*.

Teachers

The school had a total of thirteen teachers including the head teacher, nine male teachers and four females. Although male dominated, this was a slightly higher proportion of women than nationally. All the female teachers were trained but four male (44.4%) teachers were not. The male head teacher had the longest service (25 years) but had only been in the school for three months. One male and one female had been in the school for four years, the longest serving in this school. Teacher retention was low, eight teachers had two years or less service and seven of these had only worked in the school. Three of the four women only had one year service and that was in the school. Many of the teachers worked in teaching while they waited for admission into higher education institutions. The student – teacher ratio was 17.6:1.

In contrast to the other schools, subject gender stereotypes were not evident in teaching subjects; so, for example, female teachers taught Agricultural Science and Mathematics and male teachers taught English and Vocational Skills. Additional responsibilities allocated to all teachers, however, tended to reflect the stereotypes, with female teachers assigned to Guidance and Counseling and Health, while male teachers were assigned to sports and clubs.

Table A3.12: Aruba Yadimah School Teachers by Rank, Service and Gender (2001)

Gender	Rank	No. of years in service	No of years in school
male	Senior Superintendent	25	3 months
male	Assistant Superintendent	8	4
male	Junior teacher	4	2
male	Junior teacher	3	3
male	Junior teacher	2	2
male	Junior teacher	2	1
male	Superintendent (non professional)	2	2
male	Student teacher (non professional)	2	2
male	Student teacher (non professional)	2	2
female	Assistant superintendent	7	4
female	Junior teacher	1	1
female	Junior teacher	1	1
female	Junior teacher	1	1

Enrolment and Drop-out

The double form intake of between 120-150 students came from the local community, with the majority progressing from the primary school on the same compound. Most students (81%) lived with their parents and walked to school (94%). Although most wore school uniform, with the females notably better dressed, most did not wear any footwear and some did not have school bags to keep their books and pens. It was not uncommon to see students using one exercise book for different subjects. The two classes in each year were organized on the basis of the primary school classes and were not based on achievement.

Table A3.13 below shows a slight decline in the school's enrolment over the last three years. In general, over this period, more boys enrolled in the school, reflecting the national picture. The intake has changed, however, over the years, with a predominance of boys in 1998 giving way to a slight majority of girls in 2000. The increase in girls' enrolments is a national phenomenon but the higher proportion on the roll is not reflected nationally.

Table A3.13: Aruba Yadimah School Enrolment by Form and Gender (1998-2000)

	1998			1999			2000		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Form 1	41	44	85	38	46	84	39	30	69
Form 2	31	50	81	37	44	81	41	38	79
Form 3	39	50	89	31	48	79	38	38	76
Total	111 (44%)	144 (56%)	255	106 (43%)	138 (57%)	244	118 (53%)	106 (47%)	224

A review of the 1998 Form 1 cohort reveals the pattern of retention in the school over the JSS cycle. It shows a lower than national average drop-out at 10.6% against the national picture; the drop-out of boys at 13.6% is higher than that of girls at 7.3%. In the focus class, two girls and a boy had dropped out. One of the girls who dropped out was known to be pregnant. Students

said drop-out was also due to poverty and low academic performance. Teachers also referred to poverty, truancy and pregnancy but also cited cases in which students transferred to more 'prestigious' (private) schools.

Irregular attendance was a problem in the school, with numbers dwindling through the day as students skipped classes and failed to return to school. The un-walled compound allowed students to move freely from the school to the near-by houses during break, pretending to buy food. Observations indicated that most of them ran home and did not return for classes. Reference to the focus class records in Table A3.14 shows that over the year the boys' average attendance was less than 70% compared to more than 80% for the girls, who consistently attended more regularly.

Table A3.14: Aruba Yadimah School Focus Class Attendance by Gender (2000/2001)

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Total Year
Total school days	69	62	76	207
Girls average	64.8	31.6	75.1	171.5 (82.9%)
Boys average	60.6	24.8	56.4	141.8 (68.5%)

Examination Performance

The BECE results in Table A3.15 show that, although the performance of the school has improved, it still remains more than 10 percentage points below the national average. In 1999 and 2000, no boy or girl got an aggregate of 10 or below and more than 50% of the students achieved the lowest category aggregates. In concert with the national picture, the boys outperformed the girls.

Table A3.15: Aruba Yadimah School BECE Performance by Gender (1999-2000)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADE				FAIL GRADE
			1-10	11-20	21-30	Total	31+
1999	Total	75	0	13	17	30	45
	%		0	17.3	22.7	40.0	60.0
	Female	30	0	4	6	10	20
	%		0	13.3	20.0	33.3	66.7
	Male	45	0	9	11	20	25
	%		0	20.0	24.4	44.4	55.6
2000	Total	72	0	7	29	36	36
	%		0	9.7	40.3	50.0	50.0
	Female	25	0	2	9	11	14
	%		0	8.0	36.0	44.0	56.0
	Male	47	0	5	20	25	22
	%		0	10.6	42.6	53.2	46.8

Source: Statistical Dept., Municipal Education Office, Capost

Teachers explained the relatively low performance of girls as a result of their significant domestic responsibilities, in excess of what was required of boys. The girls generally did more chores at home and were more likely to engage in selling before or after school. They were left with little time to study at home and had few credible role models in the community who could motivate them to aspire higher.

An exploration of the school test performances of the focus group by gender showed that at the end of primary, girls generally obtained higher marks than boys, and that more girls than boys were in the top ten students of the class. By the end of JSS 1, the best ten students in English Language remained dominated by girls, but there was equal representation in Mathematics and Fante, and boys had gained dominance in Science. A 't' test analysis of the focus class performance in English, Fante, Science and Mathematics showed no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. It would seem, therefore, that the gender differences in performance become more polarised in JSS. Interestingly, despite the better exam performance by girls in JSS1, with the exception of Science, the boys were considered generally better in all subjects. Although all subjects were compulsory, in stereotypical fashion, girls expressed a preference for English Language, Mathematics and Life/Vocational Skills and the boys for Science and Agriculture.

School Management

Four of the thirteen teachers were in promoted posts, with two teachers promoted in the last three years. Few in-service training programmes had been organized for the teachers over the last five years. Although the head teacher reported no problems with teacher absenteeism, observations indicated a lax school atmosphere with teachers attending irregularly, arriving late or refusing to teach. According to the male students, teacher lateness had a direct effect on their studies. They complained that, instead of attending class, some of the teachers feigned sickness or *'they would be doing nothing. Not even when we send a delegation to beg them to come to class do they agree; in cases when they agree to come the least thing we do results in the teacher packing his/her books away'*. A teacher attributed the situation in the school to the present and past administrations: *'It is a big problem. For instance, today only six out of 12 teachers came to school. Even teachers do whatever they like when they come to school. I think the main reason is that our new head teacher is too "soft"... The problem was still there when the old head teacher was here...but now it is more acute. We need a stronger headmaster'*. The general situation was evident and students also contributed by running home at the least opportunity, playing truant or attending school irregularly.

Teacher retention was reported as a major problem, with teachers leaving for higher education institutions at the start of each term. The data in Table A3.18 bears this out, with four years as the longest service within the school and nearly 40% of teachers being at the school for one year or less. From the teachers' perspective, the inadequate provision of textbooks was a major grievance. Without texts, they were required to write extensively on the chalkboard and it made giving students homework difficult. They blamed the textbook policy that allowed the supply of textbooks only on a five-year interval basis.

Officially, the school was governed by the national policy on sexual harassment against students by teachers and, additionally, it reserved the right to institute appropriate punishment on any student for sexual harassment. According to the teachers, the institutional procedures were for students to report serious sexist cases to the teachers, who would deal with them by listening to both parties and giving appropriate punishments. More serious cases would be taken to the head teacher, who should convene a staff meeting for discussion and action. Parents and the Guidance and Counseling coordinator may then be brought into the process. In some general cases of discipline, students disregarded the institutional procedures and complained directly to their parents, who in most cases came to the school to insult the teachers or warn/threaten the student(s) mentioned by their children. However, with respect to sexual harassment, interviews with teachers and students indicated that these policies had never been enacted. The general lax

atmosphere in the school militated against any systematic, consistent response to sexist behaviour. All the teachers reported that sexism was not a 'serious' problem in the school. Contradictorily, the female teachers complained that: *'Some of the male teachers also do things that we the unmarried ones do not like – touching or invading our privacy'*.

Gender Duties

Prefects in the school were selected on the basis of gender; in all duties boys held the substantive positions and girls were their assistants. Their responsibilities ranged from leading assembly (school prefects), supervising grounds work (compound overseers), organising sports (sports prefects) and maintaining order in class (class prefects). The post of 'office girl' was reserved for two girls, whose main duties were to tidy up and fetch water for the head teacher's office. Teacher explanations of this gender specification of girls referred to girls as generally more trustworthy and reliable than boys.

School duties, especially cleaning, were dominated by girls; these included tidying up the classrooms, scrubbing the urinal, fetching water for drinking, buying food for teachers and collecting teaching and learning materials. Boys sometimes fetched water but they did not take part in the actual scrubbing. They also carried rubbish to the dump. School observations showed that teachers and students alike seemed to take this division of labour as normal and as such it was sustained.

Gendered Space

Within the school the usual segregated and demarcated gender seating pattern was evident. Teachers explained that girls sat in front so that they could have a full view of the chalkboard and hear the teacher clearly, while the boys stayed at the back to control the class (e.g. shouting from the back), and to misbehave (e.g. taking snacks). During break, whether in class, the compound or going to the snack kiosks, this pattern prevailed. At this time, girls were often found chatting and boys playing football. As with the other case study schools, this was explained by the students in terms of common interests and the fear of being teased that they were lovers. Some of the girls interviewed lamented that: *'The boys were not ready to study with girls'*. At the same time, one girl said: *'None of the boys is my friend because I have been warned by my mother not to take boys as friends. I do not interact with the boys not even when I need assistance on something'*.

The teachers cited the gender segregated clustering of the students as presenting difficulties in the classroom even though they viewed this as 'natural'. They noted student reluctance to work in mixed groups which they related to their community socialization, in which parents ensure that the child 'keeps to its own' from a young age and is monitored more vigilantly when he/she enters the adolescence period.

Participation of students in the lessons observed was generally low. On the whole, boys were more active in contributing to the class activities and they attempted to answer most of the questions. Teachers generally seemed disposed towards distributing their questions fairly among the students. However, in most lessons it was only a few students who answered, for example, in one Science lessons it was observed that two boys answered most of the questions, in an English lesson a girl answered most of the questions. Classroom observations revealed that teachers generally did little to encourage the poorer performing students (mainly girls) to participate in the lessons. Other classroom practices tended to perpetuate the gendered divide, for example a lesson on 'Managing Menstruation' was given only to the girls while the boys were sent out of the class.

Gender Violence

During lessons, the boys tended to initiate distracting behaviour, shouting from the back or laughing at students who made mistakes in class. This seemed to adversely effect the girls' participation; most remained silent for fear of being ridiculed and waited for the male students to act first. Girls reported that boys threatened, bullied and physically molested them, and also sometimes young and weaker boys, with the least provocation. School observations showed that incidents of boys touching girls' buttocks or teasing them for having boyfriends, were ignored except by the victims who grumbled or insulted the boy to register their displeasure. In one instance, a boy stabbed a girl when they disagreed over an issue. Interviews with teachers and students confirmed incidents of fighting and bullying between boys and girls, with the boys being the aggressors. One female teacher added: *'There are...cases where some boys bully girls no matter the punishment given. Bullying may take the form of throwing stones at them or physically beating them up'*. The girls cited gender violence at the hand of the boys and their dominating tendencies as the major reason they disliked school. Pregnant schoolgirls failed to seek re-admission because of the disgrace and 'psychological trauma' that this would incur.

Teachers' frustration and anger with students who failed to provide the correct answers was noted. This sometimes resulted in verbal haranguing and abuse. For instance, in a French class the male teacher subjected a female student to a prolonged drill (2-3 minutes) on the pronunciation of some French words after she repeatedly failed. Interestingly, boys who also failed to respond correctly were spared the ordeal. This was not the case with corporal punishment. As elsewhere, both male and female teachers carried canes around the school and in class. Boys' behaviour frequently exposed them to discipline from teachers who felt that corporal punishment was the quickest means to restore order and authority. Teachers whipped students as they deemed appropriate and normally gave the same number of strokes to girls and boys for similar offences but with greater intensity to the boys.

To some extent, the additional school responsibilities of male teachers put them in positions in which punishment was more likely, e.g. inspection of students' plots and discipline of recalcitrant students and truants. Female teachers tended to resort more often to verbal abuse and insults. The boys cited flogging by teachers as one of their major dislikes in school. As one boy said, male teachers *'brandish canes which they use to whip us when we fail to answer questions correctly'*. Another added: *'Students are caned when they are late irrespective of the fact that they have too many things to do at home. For instance, I have to sell kenkey every morning before coming to school yet the teachers whip me when I come to school late'*. In contrast, the girls saw the male teachers as warm: *'We are well treated by the male teachers'*, although they noted that female teachers tended to advise rather than cane. Ironically, female teachers added that some boys *'make fun of the female teachers'* and the older ones resisted caning by them, claiming they were just like their older sisters at home. To overcome this, one female teacher said: *'I normally ask them to kneel down before I cane them'*.

In summary this school performed lower than the national average. Although drop out was low, attendance was poor with students skipping classes and moving freely from unfenced school grounds to their nearby homes in the crowded busy suburb. The lax atmosphere was evident in poor teacher discipline, including lateness, absenteeism and refusal to go to class. Many teachers had limited experience and teacher retention was low. There were however, teachers who escaped the subject stereotypes i.e. female Agriculture and Mathematics teachers as well as male English teachers. Similar to other case studies, despite the gendered practices that characterised the school, gender was not regarded as an issue.

A3.5 Bakpelle St Mary's RC School

Bakpelle St Mary was a **poor performing peri-urban** school in a settlement about ten minutes by car on a tarred road from the regional capital. It had electricity, pipe-borne water, telephone facilities and a good transportation system but health and library facilities were absent. The population of 2,995 comprised 1,572 females and 1,423 males (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002). The people were mostly farmers and traders. The chief crops of the people were maize and cassava. The women processed the maize into “fanti kenkey” which they sold, often with the assistance of school children. The educational background of most parents was low. As many as 91.4% of mothers and 67.1% of fathers had not been to school at all or had completed only primary school. The highest educational level of mothers was the training college (2.9%), and of the fathers the university (2.9%). A majority of students (54.3%) lived with both parents, about 30.0% with their mothers only, while 8.6% with their fathers only and the remainder (7.1%) lived with neither parent.

Established in 1987 under Roman Catholic management, the school shared the same compound with the primary school and the Church. The buildings were located on a cut-out ridge leaving the school without playgrounds and limited space for the students at break time. A road separated the school from sports grounds which were not used much. There was neither grass nor flowers on the steep school compound. The single school block included three classrooms and an office. There was no workshop, laboratory or library. The office was sub-divided into a storeroom, a staff room and assistant head-teacher's office. The limited library collection, teaching resources and Science equipment were kept in the storeroom although these were not observed in use. Basic textbooks were insufficient, with an average of four students per book. The previous head teacher doubled as the head of the primary school, where his office was located. The relatively new school buildings were in good order, well painted with doors, locks and windows all in place. The large classrooms were spacious but bare, with no teaching/learning materials displayed. The furniture provided by the students themselves had gradually been replaced by the school's own double desks. The school had a urinal and a toilet.

The school had a vibrant Parent Teacher Association (PTA), with meetings well attended by the parents, both men and women. This PTA had been of immense assistance to the school in terms of the provision of furniture and toilet facilities which have been constructed through their labour. The school had also recently enjoyed the support of USAID.

Teachers

The staff of seven teachers comprised four female and three male teachers. This was more than double the national proportion of female teachers but characteristic of urban schools. The new female head had taken over the administration of the school in September 2001. Five teachers were trained. Two female teachers had the longest overall service, with 24 and 25 years, while a male and a female had spent eight years each, the longest serving in this school. In line with national trends, the female teachers had stayed longer in teaching, with an average of 11 years service as compared with 7 years by male teachers. Four teachers had only spent one year in the school. The student – teacher ratio was 18.9:1.

Table A3.16: Bakpelle School Teachers by Responsibility, Service and Gender (2001)

Gender	Years in service	Years in school	Subject(s) taught	Responsibility
Female	24	8	None	Head Teacher
Female	1	1	Fante Social studies	Examinations
Female	4	1	Pre-Vocational skills Agriculture	Environmental Sanitation
Female	25	1	English Social Studies	
Male	12	3	English	Assistant Head Sports Secretary
Male	8	8	Pre-Technical skills, RME	Guidance and Counselling Club Patron
Male	1	1	Mathematics Science	Deputy Sports Secretary

Apart from the Head and Assistant Head, who taught none and one subject respectively, all the other teachers taught two subjects. In stereotypical form, the males taught Mathematics, Science and Pre-Technical skills, while the females taught languages and Pre-Vocational skills. The additional responsibilities were similarly stereotyped.

Enrolment and Drop-out

The intake of around 130 students progressed from the feeder primary without any selection. Most students (98.6%) came from Bakpelle and all walked to school in less than fifteen minutes. The students wore standard gender specified uniform of cream shirts and brown shorts for boys and brown pinafores for girls. Though generally neat and fresh, some wore patched up uniforms but all had appropriate footwear. During class, most students seemed to have pens and exercise books and school bags. A few students, mostly boys, did not possess the adequate number of exercise books and often used one exercise book for two subjects or loose torn out pages. The requirement for students to provide their own variable furniture became unnecessary as the PTA had recently provided new furniture.

Table A3.17 shows enrolments since 1999. The national increase in the number of girls is reflected in the school data. This has been accompanied in the school by a gradual decrease in male enrolments. As a result, the proportion of girls is higher than the national figures by 10 percentage points and the boys' proportion is lower by the same margin.

Table A3.17: Bakpelle School Enrolment by Form and Gender (1999-2001)

Level	1999			2000			2001		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Form 1	24	28	52	29	18	47	22	22	44
Form 2	18	24	42	20	26	46	29	22	51
Form 3	15	19	34	18	23	41	20	17	37
Total	57 (44.5%)	71 (55.5%)	128	67 (50%)	67 (50%)	134	71 (53.8%)	61 (46.2%)	132

The retention rates for the school derived from Table A3.17 are against the national trend of girls being the main drop-outs. A review of the retention of the 1999 Form 1 cohort shows that over the JSS cycle the total drop-out is 28.8%, which is far higher than nationally. With more than double the national proportions, 11 (39.3%) of the boys did not continue to Form 3. The comparable data for the girls shows higher retention with only four (16.7%) drop-outs, which is far lower than at national level. Further the teachers asserted that more female drop-outs rejoined school while boys did not. They also commented that the higher bridal price that a JSS completer could attract acted as an incentive for girls to stay on.

With respect to attendance, the teachers maintained that boys absented themselves from school more than girls. School observations and the attendance register entries compiled in Table A3.18 confirmed that boys were much more irregular than girls at school.

Table A3.18: Bakpelle School Focus Class Attendance by Gender (2000/2001)

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Total Year
Total school days	69	62	76	207
Girls average	66.8	60.9	69.6	197.3 (95.3%)
Boys average	60.2	58.6	67.7	186.5 (90.1%)

Poverty related issues were used to explain poor attendance. Due to lack of financial support, many students had to support themselves at school e.g. by selling porridge or other odd jobs. As a consequence, they occasionally absented themselves, which in some cases led to drop-out. The teachers added, however, that some boys truanted or dodged classes to enjoy entertainment like riding hired bicycles or watching afternoon movies.

Examination Performance

The performance data in Table A3.19 shows that, consistent with the national trends, boys outperformed the girls except in 2000. More boys are entered for the BECE each year and they gain better aggregates. Over the three years, a total of eight boys compared to one girl, scored between aggregates 10 – 19, the best performance category for the school. In 2001, the school performance overall was lower than the national average. The boys were only one percentage point below their average, compared to the girls who scored 13 percentage points below the average for female students. Only the Pre-Vocational skills (Catering option) provoked any comment on gender and subject preference. Both boys and teachers felt that Catering was a subject which suited girls and in which girls excelled. No male student declared a liking for this subject.

Table A3.19: Bakpelle School BECE Performance by Gender (1999-2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADE				FAIL GRADE
			0-9	10-19	20-29	Total	30+
1999	Total	34	0	3	13	16	18
	%		0	8.8	38.2	47.1	52.9
	Female	15	0	0	4	4	11
	%		0	0	26.7	26.7	73.3
	Male	19	0	3	9	12	7
	%		0	15.8	47.4	63.2	36.8

Table A3.19: Bakpelle School BECE Performance by Gender (1999-2001) (continued)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADE				FAIL GRADE
			0-9	10-19	20-29	Total	30+
2000	Total	30	0	2	12	14	16
	%		0	6.7	40.0	46.7	53.3
	Female	10	0	0	5	5	5
	%		0	0	50.0	50.0	55.0
	Male	20	0	2	7	9	11
	%		0	10.0	35.0	45.0	55.0
2001	Total	41	0	4	18	22	19
	%		0	9.8	43.9	53.7	46.3
	Female	18	0	1	7	8	10
	%		0	5.5	38.9	44.4	55.6
	Male	23	0	3	11	14	9
	%		0	13.0	47.8	60.9	39.1

Source: Statistical Dept. Municipal Education Office.

An exploration of the post-JSS destinations of the students is shown in Table A3.20. As expected from the BECE results, it indicates that more boys than girls continue in education. However despite more students attaining higher aggregates, there was a dramatic drop in the retention in education between 2000 and 2001, which was more extreme for the boys. Although in much smaller proportions, a similar drop-out was seen in those continuing in vocational school or job training. The data indicated that fewer girls tend to enter job training. Astonishingly, despite better examination performance over three quarters of the students were 'at home'.

Table A3.20: Destination of Bakpelle School Leavers by Gender (1999-2001)

	2000			2001		
	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys
Senior Secondary/Technical Institute	13	4	9	7	3	4
%	44.8	36.4	50.0	17.1	16.7	17.4
Vocational school	2	1	1	0	0	0
%	6.9	9.1	5.6	0	0	0
Job training	9	2	7	3	1	2
%	31.0	18.2	38.9	7.3	5.5	8.7
At home	5	4	1	31	14	17
%	17.2	36.4	5.5	75.6	77.8	73.9

Teachers ascribed the low number of students continuing their education to lack of parental support due to poverty and high school fees. Boys in interview expressed low aspirations and little hope of continuing schooling after JSS. This may have been a more realistic view than the higher aspirations of the girls, given their family background.

School Management

Four of the seven teachers, two male and two female, had been promoted and all seemed to be satisfied with the promotion system. The recent appointment of the new female head teacher

had been welcomed, especially by the male staff who felt that the previous incumbent had given preferential treatment to female teachers.

Nevertheless, gender relations did not appear to be an explicit area of concern in the school. Although a school policy to protect the child against sexual harassment and unwarranted corporal punishment was cited, interviews and school observations indicated it had never been applied in the school. The official picture was that there had been no incidents of sexual harassment. It seemed that labeling behaviour as sexist or as gender violence proved difficult. Some teachers recognised the shortcoming of this rule and had recommended alternatives, which included the creation of student disciplinary committees, inviting parents of involved students to the school, and suspension of students. None of these had been adopted.

Gender Duties

Both male and female prefects were appointed respectively as boys' and girls' prefects. Their duties were to assist the teacher on duty in ensuring orderliness in the school for the week. The power of the girls' prefects was somewhat constrained. They admitted that, due to previous experiences of retaliation, they often did not submit the names of the bigger boys for punishment. Other student responsibilities were more formally gendered with positions as School Police (assigned to a prefect who maintains discipline and order) and Bell Boy being male preserves. Girls were assigned the role of Office Girl, which included sweeping and housekeeping.

Maintenance of the school compound was organised by assigning students to plots which they were to keep clean and tidy. In practice, few boys swept their plots; rather, they concerned themselves with picking up litter and inspecting the plots, which they claimed was a duty for them and not for girls. The girls swept and cleaned the plots and the classrooms. There was not one occasion observed when boys engaged in these duties. The boys were insistent on this traditional gendered division of labour, whereas the girls argued that '*boys can perform the same tasks as girls*'. However, they continued to perform the duties and there was no apparent attempt to change the situation.

With respect to the staff, observations and interviews indicated that only the male teachers were active in non-teaching responsibilities. One of the female teachers conceded that: '*The extra responsibilities of female teachers exist only on paper. Male teachers actually carry out the responsibilities.*'

Gendered Space

School and classroom observations established that girls and boys tended to segregate into single gender groups at the least opportunity, both inside and outside the classroom. Gender segregation dominated the seating pattern in the classroom usually with the girls at the front, close to the teacher and the boys at the back. In the focus class, despite the larger number of girls, there was only one occasion when a girl was observed in the back row. It also characterised student interaction outside the classroom, when arriving to school, during breaks and when going to buy food.

Both teachers and students talked about poor girl-boy interrelationships and lack of cooperation. Some teachers made attempts to make mixed pairs during their lessons, for example using textbooks. However, the students reverted to their previous arrangements once left on their own. Students and teachers acknowledged the segregation of boys and girls and saw its negative

effects on performance, attendance and drop-out. Students agreed that they were influenced by those they worked with rather than those they did not mix with. The teachers felt that students would influence each other positively if they related much more closely. The boys' attendance and performance would improve if boys and girls could share ideas. According to one teacher, *'The boys feel shy to approach the girls for help. Men think that they need not go to females or women for help – that is the general feeling'*. The female teachers felt that this led to differential student – teacher relations: *'Boys feared and respected male teachers more than female teachers.'* The male teachers also noted that their female colleagues tended to make 'pets' of the girls.

Students and teachers of both sexes admitted that the focus class girls approached schooling with more seriousness than the boys. Somewhat atypically, these girls were much more active in class and performed better than the boys. The boys conceded that girls found school more satisfying and as a result were more regular and active in class. Teachers focused their attention on the girls to whom they directed most of their questions. The general feeling expressed by boys that teachers gave girls preferential treatment was admitted by all the teachers. The teachers explained that *'girls needed more attention and that boys would not take advice'*. Even though all teachers connected participation to achievement, observations indicated that they made no efforts to stop boys chattering at the back or to encourage their participation. There was no use made of any teaching/learning resources by the teachers.

Explanations of the greater motivation of girls were related by teachers to cultural practices, more specifically girls who complete the JSS and go into marriage attract a higher bride price. It was suggested that most girls want to stay in school for this reason.

Gender Violence

The separation of the gender groups was sustained by the students' poor interrelations and the gender violence perpetrated by the boys against the girls. The girls described the boys as intolerant and ready to beat up girls at the least provocation. As a result, girls were unwilling to share seating positions with the boys. Girls responding to gender violence from the boys were subject to further institutional violence through corporal punishment. Ironically, the school's rule that punished fighting by caning bolstered the boys' oppressive behaviour. Indeed, the male students expressed satisfaction that female students were punished for their reaction to their sexist provocation.

The boys' underlying assumption of their right to 'control' the girls led them to portray girls as provocative and quarrelsome: *'Some of the girls insulted boys who corrected them and therefore the boys did not want to associate with girls'*. They admitted that the girls' insults often led to their being beaten up by boys. The girls' picture of boys as bullies was backed up by female teachers, while male teachers were evasive but talked of punishment for offending students.

To an extent, the difficulties arose because the teachers viewed such tendencies exhibited in the school as normal occurrences: such behaviour was specific to children of that age group. Thus, even though teachers condemned the gender violence and punished offending students where necessary, they considered the attitudes as a normal way of life of boys and girls of that age. Consistently, both male teachers and students explained gender differences based on the portrayal of men as the stronger sex and of females as needing protection. As a result, they did nothing to disrupt the gender regime in the school and were therefore complicit in the reproduction of this behaviour within the institution.

Both male and female teachers had the delegated authority to administer corporal punishment, although the rampant use of the cane was not observed in the school. This was due largely to an

earlier incident in which a boy refused to be caned. The community intervened on the student's side and he was eventually transferred. Relations with the community have not entirely recovered, and this incident had made the teachers more careful with the use of the cane. All teachers and students agreed that corporal punishment continued to be applied sparingly in the school. The boys claimed favouritism for the girls in that even though the same number of strokes was given for similar offences, strokes given to girls appeared to be less intense. Teachers conceded that the punishment meted out to male students was slightly heavier than that received by female students. Even though none of the students interviewed mentioned corporal punishment as an issue they disliked in the school, it was connected to drop-out. Specifically, the higher drop-out rate of boys was viewed as another form of resistance, whether as a refusal to accept punishment or in response to poor academic performance. These male students rarely if ever came back to school.

Observations showed that male teachers were tasked to administer corporal punishment, especially when a large group of students were involved. As observed by the female teachers, since students generally feared the cane, they were afraid of male teachers and regarded female teachers who sparingly used the cane as 'weak' and 'too soft'. The male students especially showed much more respect for male teachers than they did for female teachers. Male teachers rationalised the boys' attitude explaining: '*Naturally men know that females are weak and, though boys, the male students might have this feeling about the female teachers*'. The male teachers had a matching view that '*female teachers were too soft*' and needed to be protected. Interestingly, despite their prominence in corporal punishment, all students said that they would rather approach male teachers with their problems.

In summary this school was characterised by low performance especially of the girls and high drop out rates particularly of the boys who also attended more irregularly. Teachers explained this as a result of poverty, absent students often engaged in petty trading to pay school fees and supplement family income. Unusually, the school had a high proportion of female teachers. More than half the teachers had only been in the school for a year. The school had recently become part of a USAID project and there was on-going building work and an active PTA. The allocation of duties, use of space and violence were all gendered but as with the other schools, none were not considered problematic.

A3.6 Beda-Beenya-Krom School

This was a **low performing rural** school that serves three villages linked together by an un-tarred road, approximately three kilometers off the main road. The villages had water but no electricity. The combined population of less than 3000 had a high average age as most of the youth had left to find jobs in urban areas. The predominant occupation (81% of mothers and 60% of fathers) was farming of subsistence and cash crops as well as livestock. Other parents were artisans or involved in trading. Many mothers (50%) and fathers (16%) had no formal education; although typical of the country as whole, more fathers had higher level educational experiences. With average annual income per household estimated at 1.2 million cedis (£120), students generally had low socio-economic backgrounds. Some of them sold groundnuts or toffees to their school mates to enable them to pay school fees.

Local community support for the school came mainly from the SMC which met regularly to discuss school matters and provides furniture. The PTA however was not very active. Although schooling was 'free', in addition to uniform and equipment for their children, parents were

expected to pay fees for 'sports, culture, utilities (water) and the school fund' amounting to 7000 cedis (less than £1).

The school, established in 1960, had a fairly large compound dotted with trees with an adjacent nursery school. The assembly grounds doubled as a volleyball pitch and there was also a football field on the other side of the school block. The school had four classrooms and an office in one building supported by pillars to form a veranda. The veranda was not fully cemented and in places it was merely bare earth. The buildings were only partly painted. The school had no library or staff room although one classroom was not being used. The head teacher's office was used as a store for all the school records such that the head teacher and the staff worked on the veranda. The school's toilet facility (pit latrine) and especially the urinal were in bad shape. In all the subjects there were insufficient textbooks. At best the students either sat in two's and three's to share or had to rely entirely on teacher notes from the chalkboard.

Teachers

All five teachers in the school were male and all were trained. The range of service was from 2-29 years and time in the school was from 1-15 years. The head teacher held the highest qualification and was the longest in the teaching service. The student – teacher ratio was 25.6:1.

Table A3.21: Beda-Beenya-Krom School Teachers by Service and Gender (2001)

Gender	No. of years in service	No. of years in school
Male	29	5
Male	16	15
Male	23	2
Male	2	2
Male	3	1

The only female teacher the school had ever had stayed for only one year and left because of the 'unfavourable' conditions in the village. In the absence of a female teacher, the female prefects were relied upon heavily (e.g. to search female students in the event of reported theft). Teachers covered the curriculum apart from the Catering option in Pre-Vocational skills. They shared the additional responsibilities; some were form teachers, others coordinated examinations, organised students for sports, served on the school management committees or acted as counselors.

Enrolment and Drop-out

Enrolment shown in Table A3.22 had declined to 128 in 2000. Similar to the national trends, the number and proportion of girls had increased. The relatively high proportion of females was the reverse of the national picture with its higher proportions of males.

Table A3.22: B-B-K School Enrolment by Form and Gender (1998-2000)

Year	1998			1999			2000		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Form 1	28	23	51	35	22	57	20	23	43
Form 2	31	37	68	27	20	47	28	20	48
Form 3	15	36	51	03	16	19	22	15	37
Total	74 (43%)	96 (57%)	170	65 (53%)	58 (47%)	123	70 (55%)	58 (45%)	128

All students came from the three villages; most (79%) lived with both parents and all walked to school. Although girls tended to be better dressed than boys, the students were poorly dressed: many wore old, faded school uniforms and some boys did not wear uniform at all. Few students wore shoes. School uniform was a 'sensitive' issue such that anyone wearing a new uniform was taunted. To girls, other students gossiped that '*her boyfriend bought it for her*', and boys were given a nick-name if they had a new uniform. On average, the girls looked older in appearance than the boys.

With respect to retention, the data in Table A3.22 shows a mixed picture. Of the Form 1 cohort in 1998, there was a 27.5% drop-out over the JSS cycle. This was much higher than national averages with male drop-out more than double the national proportions for boys. A review of the 1998 Form 2 cohort provided a much greater figure, with 72.1% of students dropping out between Forms 2 and 3. This was made up of 56.8% drop-out of boys and a massive 90.3% of girls. No explanation was provided for this. Apart from this particular case, year on year drop-out of girls ranged between 3.5% and 20% and for boys between 9.0% and 25.0%.

Across the three-year period, in concert with the national trend, more girls dropped out than boys. Interviews revealed that most girls dropped out due to pregnancy and they rarely returned. There had only been one case of successful re-admittance of a schoolgirl mother. In the female focus group, the girls discussed two pregnant drop-outs, saying that the mothers of those girls were either dead or they had traveled to Cote d'Ivoire. The same girls had been paying their own school fees and expenses since primary 6.

In terms of attendance, however, the teachers claimed that the girls were more regular and punctual. However, the attendance records of 2000/2001 for the focus class shown in Table A3.23 provide a different picture as throughout the year the boys' attendance was better than the girls. In this class, there were 48 students on the roll: 20 girls and 28 boys. Observations showed variable attendance from a high of 44 (16 girls, 28 boys) to a low of 31 (11 girls, 20 boys).

Table A3.23: B-B-K School Focus Class Attendance by Gender (2000/2001)

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Total Year
Total school days	71	65	76	212
Girls average	51.3	49.3	57.6	158.2 (74.6%)
Boys average	61.5	51.0	61.5	174 (82.1%)

The somewhat irregular attendance and retention were attributed by the teachers to the fear of being punished, inability to cope with schoolwork and most especially poverty. A teacher explained the boys' situation: 'Most of them have to cater for themselves. Their parents may not have neglected them but they are just too poor to be able to cater for most of their needs. The boys try to make up by either farming or engaging in weeding people's farms for a fee.'

Examination Performance

In Table A3.24, the school performances in BECE for 2001 shows a generally poor result.

Table A3.24: B-B-K School BECE Performance by Gender (2001)

Year	Gender	n	PASS GRADE				FAIL GRADE
			0-10	11-20	21-30	Total	31+
2001	Total	46	0	0	6	6	40
	%		0	0	13.0	13.0	87.0
	Female	28	0	0	3	3	25
	%		0	0	10.7	10.7	89.3
	Male	18	0	0	3	3	15
	%		0	0	16.7	16.7	83.3

Only 13% of students gained aggregates of 30 or less with proportionately fewer girls. This comparatively poor performance of girls reflected the national trend, although the school's results were far lower than the national average of over 60%.

Analysis of performance in subjects showed that the boys performed significantly better than the girls in Science and they outperformed them marginally in Mathematics whereas the girls did slightly better than boys in English.

On completion of JSS, most students moved away. The girls went to work as house- helps, petty traders etc in larger Ghanaian towns or Cote d'Ivoire. A few others learned a trade (dressmaking, hairdressing) and others stayed to farm. The boys moved to larger towns to learn a trade or engaged in menial jobs, some others stayed to farm. A very small number of boys and even fewer girls continued their education.

School Management

In this unusual all male teacher staff, only the head teacher had been promoted in the last three years. The last participation in in-service training had been 5 years or more previously. The head teacher oversaw the general administration of the school, he prepared and vetted lesson notes and registered students. Due to the absence of female staff the girls' prefects were called in to perform some special duties from time to time. The teachers were content with the school management, even though the Head was frequently absent from the school due to illness. Absenteeism was not a problem in the school although late-coming was, with only one teacher consistently arriving before assembly.

All the teachers reported that sexism was not a 'serious' problem in the school. Serious sexist cases were said to be minimal but whenever reported teachers reacted promptly with corporal punishment of the culprit. Formally, the school had put in place GES policy on sexual harassment. However, interviews with teachers and students as well as school observations indicated that no teacher or student had ever been suspended or had his/her appointment terminated as a result of harassing students sexually. More informal procedures for addressing students' complaints existed, e.g. approaching their teachers, guidance coordinator or even the head teacher. Although the teachers claimed to support this arrangement by acting promptly to solve problems, no examples were provided.

Gender Duties

A typical school day started at about 8.00 am for cleaning of the compound for assembly at 8.30 am. Lessons followed until 1.30 pm with a break at 10.00 am. Portions of the land had been divided into plots for all students to work on every morning to maintain a clean school

environment. Observations revealed that unlike the other case study schools, all students, including the boys, swept and weeded. However, the boys never fetched water. In a reflection of the gendered division of labour in farming, one of the boys explained: *'If a boy fetches water he would be laughed at. He would be teased for doing girls' work.'* Carrying a load (on the head) was perceived by boys as an activity for girls.

Teachers often assigned tasks to students on the basis of gender. In stereotypical form heavy physical tasks that demanded considerable exertion like felling of trees, digging the ground and moulding bricks were given to the boys. The girls were usually given other specific jobs like fetching water and sweeping. Some of these tasks were to raise funds for the school. Interviews with students about their duties revealed their discontent on this matter and their questioning of the purpose of school. One boy remarked: *'There is too much work. For instance, since last week we have been working on burning charcoal...if we came to school only to burn charcoal then what is the sense of coming?'*

The selection of prefects was also done on the basis of gender. Teachers initiated the process by naming candidates. Students then elected their class prefects, the School Prefect (boy) and his assistant and then the School Prefect (girl) and her assistant. The duties of the boys' prefect include conducting the morning assembly in which the girls' prefect had no active role. Within each class the prefect was responsible for distributing textbooks, maintaining order when the teacher was absent and ensuring that the classroom was swept before classes began. As with other case study schools, the girls' prefect had more problems than the boys' prefect in asserting authority, especially with boys, who reluctantly obeyed her orders.

Gendered Space

Within the classroom of dual desks, the gender segregated pattern was obvious. Similar to the other case studies, boys generally occupied the desks at the back. During lessons, students conversed with same-sex colleagues sharing their seat. On the occasion when this arrangement was disrupted e.g. in group work, a boy and a girl might have to share the same desk but they would not speak to each other. They each spoke to the nearest same-sex student in front or behind them. These interchanges were predominantly asking for pencils, pens and other study materials.

As in the other schools, the sustained formation of single-sex clusters in all classrooms had not been addressed in any systematic way. This segregation in the classroom was extremely durable despite the occasional efforts of some teachers to mix the groups. Although teachers acknowledged that students were always inclined towards forming single-sex clusters, they attributed it to adolescence. Interestingly, classroom observations revealed some cordial interactions among boys and girls, which were greatly reduced in the presence of teachers, who all regarded interactions between boys and girls as play rather than serious studies. Occasionally outside the classroom during break, some limited gender mixing was observed.

The girls explained that they associated with other girls so that *'we could discuss our personal problems or go to all places including the lavatory together.'* The students also avoided mixed groups to escape the possibility of others 'reading meanings' into their relationships. Indeed, in the larger community, parents often view with suspicion any close association involving adolescent boys and girls who were not siblings. As such, the school has been reproducing socialised patterns of sex segregation.

In their day-to-day interactions with the students, teachers were seen to be treating boys and girls differently. Classroom observations showed that teachers generally addressed questions to

the whole class but often grew impatient and called upon the more vocal and active students, who were mainly boys. Unfortunately, in some instances their efforts to encourage students often accentuated gender differences. For example, in one lesson a teacher remarked to a boy who was unable to draw: *'The girls are drawing why can't you draw?'* Observations confirmed by the teachers revealed that they tended to shower and 'exaggerate' praise or commendations on the girls.

Gender Violence

It was the boys and not the teachers whom girls said were the source of their 'worries' in the school. The girls made reference to the tendency for them to be laughed at in class. Boys, especially the older ones, were the first to laugh when a wrong answer was given or to catcall others at the least opportunity. One girl described the behaviour of boys in the following words:

'...(One is) ridiculed if one gives a wrong answer in class especially by the boys...they teased a girl who was allegedly caught having an affair with a boy (not a student)...they will tease if you wear a tattered school uniform, if your shoes are not up to standard...even if you wear new school uniform they still find a way of giving you names...'

The boys' behaviour tended to put considerable pressure on the girls, especially the more vulnerable (e.g. re-admitted) female students, and largely influenced their participation in class and attitude towards school. It was not surprising to find that in the focus class, students' participation was very low in every lesson, especially those classes that required the use of English. Only four students, three boys and a girl (the class prefect), were particularly active in most lessons.

The teachers were aware of bullying in which the boys threatened to beat up girls or intimidated them. Although they acknowledged this, it continued unabated according to the girls. This was despite the school rules and regulations in place that were intended to check forms of harassment of the child. Fighting in the school for whatever reason was usually punishable by caning and administered to all involved parties. Although there were a few incidences of fighting and petty squabbles involving only girls, interviews confirmed that fighting and bullying were mostly instigated by boys against girls. Further corporal punishment did not seem effective in deterring the boys from this physical intimidation of the girls. In attempts to minimise the effects of gender violence one of the teachers remarked:

'...But I do consider these 'normal' problems that are bound to occur when adolescents find themselves at the same place for a long period. These problems are not such that teaching would be curtailed or leading confusion in the school.'

Boys cited caning as the most undesirable experience in the school. Despite the official policy, which laid out clear procedures on corporal punishment, school observations revealed that it was common for teachers to carry or use the cane in the school. The teachers described a process of discipline in which they first listened to the students before administering punishment, taking more serious cases to the Head who consulted with his staff, provided counselling or called in parents. In practice, however, corporal punishment seemed to depend rather on the teachers' whim without thought for children's rights. Boys tended to easily become victims of caning on the grounds of their propensities to engage in teasing, bullying and intimidation.

In summary this small rural school took local students from low socio-economic backgrounds. The school buildings and facilities were in a poor state and school records were not kept well. It was a very low achieving school with irregular student attendance and high drop out especially of the boys. It had an all male teaching staff, which had problems with punctuality. It was typified by gender segregation and widespread gender violence although the teachers claimed there were no problems in terms of gender.

Appendix 4: **Minimum Standards for JSS in Botswana**

Adequate number of classrooms

Administration block with office space for the teachers, deputy-head, School head, secretary, staff-room and two storerooms for storage of books and food

Library

Special classrooms

Resource centre

Fully equipped Science rooms

A sport field for various activities

A tool shed for storage of agricultural and other tools

Teachers quarters with a minimum of two bedrooms

Adequate toilet facilities including provision for the disabled.

Sufficient land for agricultural purposes and future development

Electrification of school building including teachers quarters

Typewriter/computer

Reprographic equipment

Telephone

Library books

In addition the Ministry of Education resource allocation log has a list of the audiovisual equipment that forms the minimum that each school should have. The equipment is allocated according to needs of each subject. The resource allocation log for instance lists a total of 246 pieces of equipment that should be allocated to Science. The staff is appointed and paid by Unified Teaching Service. The schools are governed and maintained by a local Board of Governors. Communities provide accommodation for their children. Children who live outside a 5 kilometres radius of the school are eligible for boarding. There are a few boarding schools to cater for these children.

Appendix 5: **Botswana Pregnancy Policy Extract**

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- (1) If a pupil becomes pregnant the parent or guardian of such a pupil shall be required to withdraw her from the school at which she is enrolled; and her admission to a school, which shall be other than that from which she was withdrawn, shall be at least one calendar year after cessation of pregnancy and subject to the written approval of the Minister.
- (2) The parent or guardian of a pupil who is responsible for the pregnancy of another pupil shall be required to withdraw him from the school and his return shall be subject to a written approval from the Minister.

A pupil shall not be allowed to write an examination at school while she is pregnant.

A pupil who was withdrawn from a school on account of her pregnancy shall not be allowed to write an examination at a school until at least six months after such pregnancy has ceased.

A pupil who has been expelled from a school under regulation 34(2), at which he was enrolled shall not during the academic year during which he was expelled or withdrawn, be allowed to write an examination for which he had registered at such school unless the Minister authorises otherwise

(Education Regulations 1978: 58:68)

Appendix 6: Botswana JCE Performance Tables (1998-2000)

Table A6.1: Botswana National Subject Mean Scores by Gender (1998)

Subjects	Mean (Boys)	Std	n	Mean (Girls)	Std	n	T-test
Setswana	80.40	20.97	18374	87.37	18.99	16903	32.76
English	90.58	33.98	17029	96.40	31.47	18524	16.77
Mathematics	48.26	25.45	17022	47.74	22.77	18518	-2.03
Integrated Science	58.33	24.45	16263	53.69	21.03	17252	-18.66
Social Studies	75.55	25.86	17023	73.42	22.62	18517	-8.28
Agriculture	168.27	42.09	15996	168.36	39.12	16826	.20
Design and Technology	104.19	31.8	9393	92.00	28.59	1859	-15.35
Home Economics	78.36	28.6	949	96.54	24.7	7872	21.04

Table A6.2: Botswana National Subject Mean Scores by Gender (1999)

Subjects	Mean (Boys)	Std	n	Mean (Girls)	Std	n	T-test
Setswana	80.77	22.87	17071	88.84	20.81	18741	34.96
English	84.07	33.36	17231	91.11	31.42	18898	20.65
Mathematics	57.48	28.49	17217	56.98	25.66	18889	-1.75
Integrated Science	52.21	25.77	16736	49.11	22.76	17813	-11.87
Social Studies	72.66	25.95	17225	75.57	22.94	18880	-.35
Agriculture	172.37	43.93	16624	171.95	40.17	17660	-0.92
Design and Technology	98.64	32.58	13474	90.56	29.37	3743	-13.70
Home Economics	77.24	25.61	2376	89.25	23.01	13036	22.98

Table A6.3: Botswana National Subject Mean Scores by Gender (2000)

Subjects	Mean (Boys)	Std	n	Mean (Girls)	Std	n	T-test
Setswana	80.71	20.52	17319	87.99	18.79	19020	35.30
English	88.81	34.21	17486	97.07	32.62	19206	23.67
Mathematics	56.21	24.31	19189	55.92	26.13	17474	1.10
Integrated Science	56.61	23.85	17037	54.55	21.36	18186	-8.55
Social Studies	78.12	25.01	17464	77.65	22.17	19156	-1.91
Agriculture	166.12	39.24	16975	166.56	36.89	18042	1.08
Design and Technology	107.00	33.24	13837	96.29	30.89	3575	-17.42
Home Economics	85.57	26.38	2414	99.75	23.66	13628	26.57

Appendix 7: **Ghanaian National Promotion Policy on Promotion of Teachers**

The promotion policy of GES specified below does not explicitly refer to gender.

- Junior teachers qualify for promotion to the grade of Assistant Superintendent after five years of service. The teachers are expected to apply for work inspection and are promoted on the basis of satisfactory work.
- Assistant Superintendents are expected to serve for a period of four years to qualify for promotion to the grade of Superintendent. They also apply for work inspection and are promoted upon satisfactory work.
- Superintendents serve for a period of three years to qualify for promotion to the grade of Senior Superintendents. They also apply for work inspection and are promoted upon satisfactory work.
- Senior Superintendents qualify for promotion to Principal Superintendents after serving for a minimum period of three years. Their promotion is based on the passing of an interview organised by the GES.
- Principal Superintendents are promoted to the grade of Assistant Director after serving minimum of three years in the grade of Principal Superintendent. They attend and pass an interview organised by the GES to qualify for promotion. The Assistant Director grade is the highest a teacher in the junior secondary school who does not have a university degree can attain.
- Promotions from the grade of Junior Teacher to the grade of Senior Superintendent are handled by the District Education Office. Promotions to the grade of Principal Superintendent are handled by the Regional Education Office and those to the grade of Assistant Director are handled by the national headquarters of GES.

