

INDICATORS OF SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND ECONOMIC
PROGRESS OF WOMEN IN NIGERIA AND GHANA
FROM THE 1950s' TO THE 1980s'

By

STELLA FUEN AKEM

Bachelor of Arts

The University of Yaounde

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Thesis Approval

Margaret S. Callan

Thesis Adviser

Lodge J. Gaffney

Bernice Kopel

Norman N. Dusham

Dean of the Graduate College

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

The African continent stayed very traditional until the western countries started colonizing it. The traditions and customs of every African country that was colonized were affected by the ideas, customs, and habits of the country that colonized it. Up until Africa was colonized, and even some years later, each African country and each tribe in these countries had very strict and set rules by which its people were governed. These were rules that specified such things as how men were to behave, their position in the family, what they were to be involved in, the position of women in the family and society, their duties, and the rights of tribal rulers. Anybody who violated those rules was treated accordingly.

There was a lot of struggle between the colonizers and the colonized who did not want foreigners to tamper with their way of life. Eventually not being as powerful as their opponents, these African countries had to give up. As the ideas, habits, and customs of the colonizers started infiltrating the traditional rules of the African countries some changes began taking place.

These western practices and industrialization had to be assimilated by the Africans, and this meant adapting new conditions and circumstances. People, especially men started migrating to the cities to look for jobs that usually gave them more money than farming in the villages did. Migration meant they had to meet strangers from other towns and get accustomed to the idea of co-operation. "They help the migrant in this way to add to his stock of languages and get better used to the kind of cosmopolitan atmosphere which he has to adapt himself to in the world outside" (Little, 1966, p. 90). Most migrating men left their wives in the villages to take care of the family and some of the men's duties. In some cases community development projects taught those women how to take care of themselves and their children, especially as far as nutrition was concerned. Those women who went with their husbands joined groups that taught them modern hobbies and crafts, including the earning of pocket money for themselves. "Crochet-work in particular seems to be a profitable side-line" (Little, 1966, p. 92).

The introduction of Christianity meant that people who became Christians had to give up most of their traditional beliefs and customs. In this setting women and men had a place where they sat and talked together on equal terms, instead of the usual family situation where men were always regarded as superiors.

The opening of schools meant boys and girls had

equal opportunities of learning and eventually equal opportunities of earning a salary and being independent. It also meant they wore western clothes on week days, in addition to the traditional ones mostly on weekend. Educated men as well as women eventually had a say in who they wanted to marry as opposed to less educated ones who up until today not always had a say in who they married and certainly not comparable opportunities of leadership and social, economic, and political promotions as their counterparts.

As the need to earn money increased over the years, more and more women found it necessary to go to school, work or do some petty trading to support themselves and their families. Some who migrated to the cities with very little or no education earned money by prostitution.

From the colonization period until today, women in Nigeria and Ghana had a steady, and in some cases, slow progress in the social, economic, and cultural aspects of their lives. They were progressing up the social and economic ladder even though slowly up the cultural ladder where they still had to respect some traditional rules that placed men in higher positions. There was a need to show that the social, cultural, and economic lives of women in Nigeria (which got its independence from Britain in 1960), and Ghana (which got its independence from Britain in 1957) changed from the 1950s' through the 1980s'.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the social, cultural, and economic progress women in Nigeria, and Ghana made during colonization, and the progress they continued making long after independence. The objectives of the study were as follows

1. To analyze the social, cultural, and economic situation of women in the above mentioned countries during colonization, and shortly after independence (1950s').
2. Assess if there were any social, cultural, and economic changes in the women's lives from the 1960s' through the 1980s'.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated.

- H₁ : There is no significant increase in certain social, economic, and cultural aspect of women's lives in Nigeria from the 1950s' through the 1980s'.
- H₂ : There is no significant increase in certain social, economic, and cultural aspect of women's lives in Ghana from the 1950s' through the 1980s'.

Assumptions and Limitations

In doing a historical study of this nature, it is usually good to have an opportunity to witness some of the happenings first hand, but this was not possible.

1. The choice of a particular time period for the study instead of the entire historical span of the countries from discovery to present day was a limitation.
2. Data was not available on all indicators of social, economic, and cultural progress.

Assumptions made about the study include the following.

1. The literature on Ghana and Nigeria is reliable since the authors of the sources of reference have been to these countries.
2. Microforms used for collection of data, provided by the governments of these two countries were also assumed to be reliable.
3. There has been some progress in the social, economic, and cultural lives of women in these two West African countries.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are utilized in this study.

1. Tribe : A group comprising numerous families, clans, generations or adopted strangers that share similar customs and dialect.
2. Culture : A behavior typical of a group or tribe.
3. Constraint : "A limitation or restriction, repression of natural feelings and impulses". (The Random House Dictionary of the English Language. 2nd Edition, 1987.)

4. Illiterate : Someone with very little education or someone who cannot read or write.
5. Educated Person : One who has completed a course of study at a Secondary School (High School) or its equivalent.
6. Petty Trade : The buying and retailing of a few food and non food items (small trade).
7. Dowry : Money or gifts accepted by the bride's family from the groom so that the bride can traditionally become his wife.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter, the subtopics were divided under each country into three different segments : the 1950s' to mid 1960s', late 1960s to 1970s', and the 1980s. An attempt was made to show how women progressed economically, socially, and culturally in Nigeria and Ghana during these periods. It was not possible to give clear cut dates as to when some of these changes actually began taking place since change is a continuous process.

Nigeria

The 1950s' to the mid 1960s'

Social Progress: The 1950s in Nigeria was a period during which the British were still governing, and the 1960s was the post-independence period during which the Nigerians had just taken over from the British and were in control of their country. During this time span Nigerians, especially women underwent a lot of changes. Most of them were still dependent on their husbands for economic support even though some of them were engaged in some kind of trading, and so

not completely economically dependent.

Women were already migrating to the cities during this period for several reasons. Personal factors greatly determined which women migrated to the cities. Quarrels or accusations encouraged a woman to leave the village. In most cases villages where divorce was comparatively rare and the stigma attached to a divorced woman impeded her remarriage, she migrated to town to earn a living either by trading or prostitution (Lloyd, 1967). The most common trend was for the man to migrate to the city in search of money leaving his family behind. On rare occasions he took them along with him. Those who were not taken along stayed in the villages and often, "grew enough on their farms to maintain themselves and their children, and even send their husbands occasional food parcels" (Lloyd, 1967 p. 123).

Women who migrated to the city without husbands or money to begin trading most often became prostitutes. In most of these cases they did not enjoy promiscuity for its own sake but rather had no satisfactory alternative. "Such relationships are numerous in the larger industrialized towns where there are many adult males who are unmarried or living apart from their wives" (Little, 1966 p. 128).

During this period a lot of associations or unions were being formed to foster the interests of members. Unions associated with trade aimed at making sure that its members had enough of what they were trading in, and that they were

protected and given opportunities before they were offered to non-members. They were also taken care of in case of social emergencies that they could not handle. Some unions gave women the voice to push through and obtain some political positions, and gains, and even acquire some things that they could not have got if they approached men individually. "A growing number of women have become prominent in the political parties, occasionally as election candidates but most often as organizers of associations and inspirers of and spokesmen for the social attitudes of women" (Little, 1966 p. 118). Women also had their own sections in political parties, and the fact that they could get what they desired through associations meant their aspirations did not go unheard.

Some women by this time had started going to school, especially those whose parents were educated and could afford it or those whose parents had realized that education was the only way through which they could better themselves in the future. Not too many women at this time had a secondary school education, let alone a university degree. Education was some kind of a guarantee of economic independence from their husbands if they got married. Adult literacy classes for women were also conducted by associations so that its members could acquire a rudimentary knowledge of English and use it in registering their goods or communicating with foreigners (Little, 1966).

The advantages of educated young women included getting to know young men personally either in schools, recreational groups or mixed associations, that might ordinarily been very difficult to achieve. They met in weekly gatherings, excursions, and clubs which brought them closely together and enabled courtships to start in an easier atmosphere. Illiterate young women in the rural areas hardly had such chances to meet young men, let alone be courted by the men before marriage.

Unlike the educated girl dreaming for a monogamous husband, there are other women looking for a comfortable home and children, a husband who will treat them well and be considerate to their parents. The life he leads outside the home is a secondary matter (Little, 1966, p. 121).

The educated married women went to clubs with their husbands, or enjoyed other forms of western public entertainment. "Despite the major institutions - politics, business, religion, etc. being under male control, many women are sufficiently placed to influence matters affecting them as wives and mothers through associations or education" (Little, 1966, p. 138).

Cultural: Quite a number of factors helped in changing the Nigerian culture during this period to a significant extent. Christianity for example, was a major one. Before the arrival of Christianity some individuals, families and villages owned shrines in which they prayed and offered sacrifices to different gods. Women were not allowed to take part in these

sacrifices or even enter the shrines because men looked down on them and did not think the gods wanted women in the shrines. In very few cases women had their own shrines in which they prayed and also offered sacrifices to female goddesses. With the coming of christianity, women as well as men, who had become christians, had a common place of worship where no one was looked at as inferior to another. "Among the Ibibio women, for example, was the belief that being christian afforded them more opportunities for religious expression, for in the indigenous religion manipulation of the supernatural lies in the hands of men" (Little, 1966, p. 119). Women sometimes invited their husbands to church meetings to discuss the difficulties of modern marriage, a problem which to many of them seemed unsolvable (Little, 1966).

There were other forms of marriage apart from the traditional one which mostly involved the acceptance of gifts by the bride's family from the groom (dowry). Traditional rites were performed, the groom took the bride with him most often to the parents compound, where they lived for sometime or forever. The parents of the groom sometimes made the choice of bride for him but the girl never had the opportunity of courting the young man before marriage. That was the fate of illiterate women who stayed in the villages.

Educated women met young men, had a courtship and

chose the person with whom they wanted to spend the rest of their lives. They also had the privilege of having legal marriages which meant they could divorce if they became dissatisfied with the relationship. On the other hand, the illiterate women in the villages could hardly make such choices. A woman's status in part continued to be defined according to her social situation, for instance whether she was educated and got married to an educated man, belonged to an elite family, or was a chief's wife or relation (Little, 1966).

Illiterate women married to educated men often stood the chance of their husbands divorcing them and marrying educated girls or taking in a second wife who was educated. No matter whether a woman was educated or not, her suitor had to, in most cases, perform the necessary traditional marital obligations before he was traditionally accepted as her husband (Little, 1966).

Women living in the cities no matter their level of education, dressed the way they wanted (traditional or or western fashion) without fear of reprisals. Those in the villages who wore western clothes had to be careful about what they wore because they feared being chastised. There were still ceremonies in which women were not allowed to participate in and laws which prohibited them from doing certain things.

Economic: The traditional expectancy that women had to completely depend on their husbands had changed during this period to a significant extent. More and more women were realizing that they were not getting satisfaction by depending on their husbands financially. Those whose husbands gave them money started trading, others went to school, and some even became prostitutes all with the aim of eventually becoming financially independent (Little, 1966).

The traders in the cities sometimes joined associations that gave them some kind of financial security. "This is of paramount interest because for the majority of women selling is the only way of earning regular money" (Little, 1966 p. 123). In the case where a woman did not have enough money to start a large trade, these associations loaned her money usually at a lower interest rate than if she had to borrow privately. Some of these associations also regulated the trading practices of its members, which discouraged competition among those trading in a particular item.

Such is the sense of solidarity—the women gossip together, eat, drink and spend the entire day in each others company—that it is said to be unthinkable for a trader to disobey her "egbe" in this matter. The egbe also sees to it that no male trader deals in certain commodities customarily regarded as the business of women (Little, 1966, p. 126).

Even prostitutes had clubs that limited membership to carefully selected girls. They had common funds to help members in financial problems and even cover funeral

expenses if they died (Lloyd, 1967).

Educated women did not need to join associations for financial reasons because they earned reasonable sums of money and often got married to educated men earning good sums of money. They joined recreational clubs and some other associations where they saved small amount of money every month and then collected all of it at the end of the year. They also hired domestic servants to help them while they went to work.

The Late 1960s' to 1970s'

Social: The social situation of women got better than it was in the previous decades. The progress was not very fast, but it was steady. More was demanded of women socially than before, especially from the wives of successful men.

Today instead of remaining in the background or retiring to the women's quarters she is expected to play the hostess when his friends or business associates arrive. Failure to perform these new functions will put her at a disadvantage with more sophisticated women (Little, 1966, p. 158).

Many less socially prominent men were also embarrassed if their wives failed to entertain their guests in western style. Tribal chiefs or illiterate traders wealthy enough to support polygamous households included a literate woman as one of its members, to cook meals to the taste of their educated visitors and also write letters for them. There was more and more pressure on women to get some kind of a formal education (Little, 1966).

Some newspapers featured columns that dealt with women's social problems. Such columns dealt with answers to questions by women on things like etiquette, cosmetics, bridal apparel, fashion, and food preparation. All these showed that women were becoming more anxious about improving themselves socially. More elite wives were placed in a position which demanded more equal material relationships than their husbands were willing to offer. Some women (town dwellers, educated) enjoyed equalitarian relationships, while others did not.

A study of educated Yoruba in Ibadan suggests that more equalitarian marital relationships exist among children of educated parents. These have tended to intermarry among themselves, suggesting not only that their parents favored such alliances, but that the young people themselves recognized a similarity in interests. Such couples tend also to have smaller discrepancies in their respective levels of education and ages (Llyod, 1967, p. 181).

The approval of parents to their choice of mate became less and less important for women, especially the educated ones. Since more and more women kept migrating to the cities, their relatives could not always come in to resolve their marital or personal problems. They sought help from friends or the associations in which they were involved. Clubs and many other forms of entertainment were not just for the educated but for all who could afford to participate and abide by the rules. Women played a growing and significant part in politics, they organized votes for candidates they supported and ran as electoral candidates

themselves (Little, 1966).

Cultural: As christianity grew, more women turned away from the worshiping of dieties as that put them in an inferior position to men. Christianity placed them on a religious basis in the same position as men. For this reason and perhaps others, they converted in greater numbers with the passage of time than men.

Dressing traditionally in most rural areas was no longer regarded as the ultimate end unless during traditional ceremonies. Dressing western style was no longer the only way of town dwellers only, but also of an increasing number of village women.

Traditional laws on marriage became more relaxed as more women, even in the villages, had a say about whom they wanted to marry. More became aware of the fact that they were legally able to stop their husbands from marrying a second wife just by getting married in court. Even if they decided to get married in court or in church, they were still expected to perform the traditional marital rites. In cases where they got married without their parent's approval (which increased), the traditional rites were not performed because the parents failed to accept a dowry from the groom's family. Church weddings became very popular because they provided a chance for the families of the bride and especially the groom to show off their wealth and status. Divorce also became a common way for

some educated women and men to to escape their marital responsibilities and commitment. "Through frequent divorce, many women oscillate between prostitution and wifhood a number of times in their marriage career" (Cohen, 1969, p. 51).

Economic: Sending girls to school became the thing to do instead of a way of showing wealth or the way of only the educated parents. The number of women who had college degrees increased as well as the increase in number of key government positions, which meant bigger salaries (Sautoy, 1959).

In trade, women's associations got stronger. They organized rallies to vote candidates into the parliament whom they thought were ready to fight for their interests. "They are traders in their right and they compete freely with men in the economic as well as the political arenas" (Cohen, 1969, p. 53). By this period most women who started trade in the 1950s' and early 1960s' had accumulated enough money to be completely financially independent from their husbands. Some of them opened bank accounts in which they saved their money instead of saving all in the associations.

More women migrated to the cities either to join their husbands, as divorcees, widows or just to work in factories and earn money instead of laboring on the farms. Some of them in the villages also learned crafts like sewing, weaving and pottery that gave them an extra source of income. Fewer and fewer women depended only on the farms

to survive. More men became anxious to have their wives augment the household income (Llyod, 1967).

The 1980s'

Social: As seen from the last three decades, there was gradual but continuous social change made by women in Nigeria. The 1980's were no different. There was continued progress in all the social issues previously discussed. Marital stability was one of the major social issues in the 1980s' that experienced changes. A sharp rise in divorce rates and prostitution particularly in towns, the erosion of the old polygamous union which provided social stability and social security for members of the extended family were replaced by monogamy (Bell, 1986).

The increasing divorce rates brought about an increase in female headed households and single parents.

Women may form their own household or become the head of an existing household either in their own right or in the absence of the real head (husband, father, son, brother) at varying points in their lives and for many different reasons (Bell, 1986, p. 190).

Many women continued to attend school even though only a minority were highly educated as reflected in the small number in top ranking positions of the government or in other jobs. No matter the level of education, there were still constraints on them as childbearers and rearers, which often hindered them from progressing in a lot of other ways. Childbearing and raising was not the

only factor that slowed down women's social progress. Amongst many others was sexual inequality where they were discriminated against or not seen as a match for men in certain fields, even if they had the necessary qualifications.

Politically, there continued to be progress as more women engaged in voting, had their own political party wings, and ran as electoral candidates. The progress was still limited as men continued to occupy almost all the key political positions in the country.

Economic: As material goods got more expensive and the need to earn money to acquire them became a necessity, greater numbers of women found it necessary to work and support their families. More women strived to be financially independent from men.

But a large proportion of women with limited education had failed to gain access to secure waged jobs. ---Inequalities in opportunities to progress within the education system and to gain access to secure urban employment act particularly strongly against women (Bell, 1986, p.157).

Most of those who engaged in some kind of petty trading, especially in towns, found it very risky because they faced a highly competitive and unstable labor market.

Stable employment absorbed only a minority of them especially those with the necessary expertise. Large proportions of those who migrated to the urban areas did so because the agricultural produce was not giving them enough money to live on, their husbands had deserted them or died, and they needed to support their families.

Cultural: Much changed culturally compared to the situation the 1950s' and 1960s'. Christians and Muslims constituted a large proportion of the Nigerian population, and there were very few who still believed in the worship of dieties. Christianity represented some kind of freedom to the women because they were assured that God regarded them as equals to men. Consequently, the number of female christians continued to grow at a faster rate than the male. With the muslims, especially the Hausas of the north (Kano), women (married especially), were not seen in any way as equals of men. They were still regarded and treated as second class citizens. Despite all the cultural progress, made in other parts of Nigeria, the Hausa women still faced a lot of cultural and religious constraints. Illiterate ones and those with a limited education suffered this fate more than the well educated ones (Callaway, 1984).

Over 95 % of the married women in Kano city lived in seclusion because Islamic beliefs concerning the proper role and behavior of women emphasized that seclusion was the appropriate living condition for women. "Typically, those living in seclusion appeared to be withdrawn and obedient with their eyes downcast, their smiles rare and words few" (Callaway, 1984, p. 325).

They are taught from an early age that they are inferior to men and that in all matters they must defer to male authority. --- Thus although women are clearly subordinate, many are also patently assertive in regard to their rights and the protections assured them through custom and Islamic law (Callaway, 1984, p. 432).

Even the Nigerian government recognized this and in the 1979 constitution, gave predominantly muslim states the right to apply Islamic law to personal matters such as marriage, custody, divorce, property, and inheritance.

---the slowly rising level of education for girls means that more women will gain a broader understanding of their rights, even in Islam, and that some of them may begin to challenge their role and place in Hausa society (Callaway, 1984, p. 433).

Thus despite the gradual but continuous and significant changes that went on in women's cultural and social lives in Nigeria, very little of such changes went on in the lives of Hausa women in the northern part of the country.

In those parts of Nigeria where women went through "a lot" of changes, they were still subjected to certain traditional rites when necessary and even forbidden from taking part in some typically male traditional ceremonies or rituals. People were expected to marry the traditional way even though it was not imposed on them. Those who could afford it got married traditionally, legally, and wedded in church. A growing number of the educated ones did not even consider parent's consent to get married any longer.

Traditional dresses among women in the urban areas could mostly be seen on weekends or during celebrations. Definitely, the social, cultural and economic progress of women in Nigeria was not rapid but was a growing and continuous process.

Ghana

1950s' to the mid 1960s'

Ghana is one of those African countries that experienced the influence of the "white man" long before the 1950's. The geographical position of Ghana (along the West coast of Africa), was of an advantage to them because they experienced a lot of outside influence earlier than most inland countries. This speeded up the social, economic, and cultural changes of that country. Women as well as men were equally affected by these changes.

Social: Before and during this period, there was a lot of migrations to the cities where the migrants believed they were going to make a lot of money. Women migrated to the cities sometimes on their own and sometimes with their husbands for varying reasons. Some of them went either as widows divorcees, or as single women looking for a means of survival. Such women either became petty traders or prostitutes. The growing number of prostitutes was proof that the traditional role of women as housewives and childbearers was fast changing (Little, 1966).

Parents started sending more girls to school during this period even though the proportion of women going to school was still relatively small compared to men. Most parents had thought that a woman's place was at home and

formal education of any sort was for men. Women who went to school ended up being employed in traditional female jobs like teaching, nursing, and clerical. Even those who stayed in the villages in most cases had the opportunity to attend adult literacy classes and other community development training projects. Many village women at this period had the opportunity to learn reading and writing skills, that those before them had never had the opportunity to learn.

Prominent in a mass education campaign must be an attack on illiteracy, but mass education for community development is something more than this. It is an attack on ignorance, apathy and prejudice, on poverty, disease and isolation, on all the difficulties which hinder the progress of a community. It is education which is designed to teach not merely how to read, but how to live (Sautoy, 1958 p. 3).

The village women were very excited at the idea that they too were able to learn so many things. They said, "Teach us too; we wish to become educated; our brothers attend school, why should we not learn to read and write and do the wonderful things which they can do?" (Sautoy, 1958 p. 85). This was a big social step made by the Ghanaian government because only a few African countries had community development projects in villages at that time.

Women also played an important part in political campaigns especially during periods when their parties were directly involved in strikes, boycotts or disturbances against the colonial regimes (Little, 1965). They did not only vote but ran as election candidates depending on how

prominent they had become. The growing number of women in political activities showed that they were no longer willing to stand aside and let men decide everything for them.

Marriages remained fairly stable especially for women in rural areas who were still very much influenced by tradition. A reasonable proportion of those found in towns were not married, and even if they were, it was often monogamous. In the rural areas where polygamy was common, a man did not care whether his to-be wife was fertile or not because he had other women bear him children. In the city where monogamy was becoming more popular, men wanted to have girls prove their fertility before marriage by having a child. "If pregnancy occurs at an inconvenient moment for the lover, it may itself be sufficient cause for him to abandon the girl" (Southall, 1959, p. 47). Despite the dilemma most women in urban areas faced trying to prove their fertility, more of them got into monogamous marriages.

Divorce rates increased as some women who migrated with their husbands to towns broke away from them afterwards for various reasons. Sometimes it was because the women wanted to become financially independent by trading and husbands "disapprove of independent activity by women outside the home feeling that it will lead to liaisons with other men" (Southall, 1959, p. 51). The women also felt that they were not treated well by their husbands, or their husbands were cheating on them. The urban women often made

the choice of who they wanted to marry or remarry, and even paid back bridal wealth in case of divorce to insure their freedom.

Economic: Petty trading went on in Ghana long before the 1950s' carried out by women mostly in urban areas. This type of trading to them was a means of either helping their families survive in the cities which had a high cost of living or supporting themselves if they had no one upon whom to depend. In some cases they engaged in such trade just because they wanted to be economically independent.

In the rural areas a woman could support herself farming. In the towns, farming is not always possible for a woman who may be a "stranger" and therefore not entitled to local land, or if she is a member of a local lineage or married into one, the town may have been expanded until buildings have been erected on the fields formerly used for farming (Little, 1965, p. 123)

Most trading women belonged to unions that protected their interests. Such unions sometimes failed, but most were both successful and effective.

---The fish sellers union was quite successful in its efforts to insure supplies of the commodity in which its members trade. Some of the members of the union clubbed together in fours to raise money to buy fishing nets which were sold to fishermen on agreed terms. A fisherman who received the net sold his catch during the fishing season to the creditor group and the value of the fish was reckoned against the net (Little, 1965, p. 127).

Educated women who earned good sums of money failed to join such associations, since they supported themselves and their extended families if single, or helped support

their congenial families. More women went to school with the hope of becoming economically independent by working in offices instead of depending on trade. Those in the rural areas did not just stay completely dependent on their husbands. Most learned crafts that they made and sold to subsidize reliance on sales from their farming excesses.

Cultural: Besides social and economic changes, there were also cultural changes among women in Ghana during this period. The migration of many women to the towns meant that they could no longer be confined to traditional rules that were expected of them in the villages. The exposure and contact with other cultural ideas in the urban areas had an impact on the way they started reasoning. Polygamy which was accepted in the villages was not practiced by many in the towns. Most wanted monogamous marriages (Southall, 1959).

Prostitution which was frowned upon by many tribes became a growing tendency for some single women in urban areas, who found it the only means of supporting themselves. Women could get married legally or in church before their families had any sort of dowry from their husbands. Making the choice of who they wanted to marry, regardless of the person's tribal origin was a growing tendency especially among educated girls.

Night clubs and others forms of entertainment became popular in towns than other traditional forms of entertainment. Town women attended ballroom dances with their

partners dressed in fashionable western clothes.

Despite all these changes a large proportion of women still respected traditional laws such as staying away from traditional ceremonies exclusively for men, performing certain traditional rites, and most of all still regarding men as their superiors. Christianity and Islamism instead of deity worship became the more acceptable way to go, even in rural areas, especially among women denied access into most of the deity worship shrines (Little, 1966)

Late 1960s' to 1970s'

Social: The social changes affecting women during this period were not too different from those in the latter period. The progress was continuous but gradual. In marriage the divorce rate was increasing. Young educated women, now growing in numbers, expected to court their husbands and develop strong emotional ties with them before marriage (Llyod, 1967). Even some women in the rural areas too wanted to have a say in who they would marry. Parents, in many instances, were not able to make the choice of who was to marry their daughters. Legal marriages, too, were quite popular, and a woman could seek divorce readily if she had reason for it. Educated women sought egalitarian relationships with men even though only few actually enjoyed it. Traditional marital obligations were still carried out even though parents were less involved in their children's marital

affairs as they used to do.

Politically, women's groups became more influential. More women voted, ran as electoral candidates, organized riots and protests against members in key government positions that were not doing their jobs properly. "Yet their participation and ability to win elections or appointments to the highest offices has been tempered by the society's under-valuation of women and youth, as well as by factors such as class and education" (Ray, 1986 p. 91). This period was typified by political upheavals and the effects of women's protests were really felt by some ruling leaders.

Due to education and the quest for economic independence more women postponed marriage. They stayed longer in school, the numbers in higher institutes of learning grew, and the number of free single women in towns also increased. Dance clubs, and many other forms of entertainment hosted greater numbers of women than they had before. "As western education has caused the African to break with his traditional culture, the family has lost to a considerable extent its traditional function as an educational institution" (Brokensha, 1966 p. 262), and also the traditional family system.

Economic: Petty trading which the common Ghanaian women were known for in West Africa, continued to grow as more women migrated to the urban areas, and as women in the rural areas realized that farming alone was not giving them enough money

to support themselves and/or their families. Most female graduates picked up careers that had once been considered exclusively for men. The number of such women though minimal continued to grow. Most of those seeking economic independence wanted to possess good western clothes, comfortable luxury items, and even send some of their relatives to school (Llyod, 1967).

Cultural: The influence of Christianity and Islamism continued to be strongly felt as more pagans were converted, and even some fetish priests eventually became converted. Church weddings were popular, even though traditional marriage and birth rites or obligations were still respected by a majority of women. In some cases where the women stayed for too long in the cities they neglected the performance of certain village rites. City values influenced traditional ceremonies to a certain extent because of the constant contact between rural and urban people. Traditional music heard in the cities was greatly modified (Brokensha, 1966).

Polygamy was prevalent in rural areas but monogamy was still popular in the cities. A greater number of women made their choices of who they wanted to marry and sometimes did not even seek their parents consent. A divorced woman in the city did not worry much about her reputation, but in villages where divorce was still not common, "a divorced woman may not remarry, ---. If she becomes promiscuous, and such unions lead to the birth of children, the woman must

contend with strong ridicule at having borne a bastard" (Grindal, 1972, p. 53).

Western fashion was seen all over the country, especially in cities. Even in the rural areas, women wore western clothes as the influence of migrants made it unavoidable.

The 1980s'

Social: Education for women in Ghana was generally on the rise, and this trend carried into the 1980's. Greater numbers of women both in the urban and rural areas were going to school because most illiterate parents started realizing that education was the only thing that gave their daughters opportunities they needed. Several private high schools had been set up in different parts of the country by different religious denominations. Some were exclusively for girls. Many girls from these schools went on to more specialized institutions to train as nuns and take up new roles in churches. Female pastors were trained and ordained in some christian churches, even though women continued to stay at the background in the muslim religion. Many women gradually penetrated occupations that were traditionally regarded as being exclusively for men.

---Even though occupations in Ghana carry gender labels, the government has never discriminated against women in terms of salary. In line with past efforts, current governmental policy supports to raise the status of women by increasing the proportion of women in labor force and educational institutions (Pellow & Chazan, 1986 p. 127).

The importance of schooling was realised in most parts of the country. Northerners, however, who were becoming more progressive in their way of thinking than before, continued to diminish the importance of schooling for girls.

Politically, women continued to gain more and more power. The Akan, the country's largest ethnic group started granting its women a large measure of political power. Political leaders like Nkrumah realized how much power women had, and so made them his chief field organizers. He even repaid them by passing legislation to admit women into the Ghanaian parliament for the first time (Pellow & Chazan, 1986). Their political involvement did not end here. "In March 1982, the June Fourth Movement called on women to form a mass national democratic movement to fight the oppression which had reduced them to second-class citizen" (Ray, 1986 p. 96). Due to this movement women changed their ideas, stopped thinking of themselves as inferior to men, and increased their productivity to the country just as the men did. The movement recognized the fact that women had been discriminated against for too long and wanted to do something about it. The December 31st Women's Movement of the same year conducted political education among women and helped them form economic ventures which increased their financial self-sufficiency (Ray, 1986). Even though membership in the latter movement was not very large, its creation signified the need to deal with the problems of

women.

The number of female-headed households increased as the divorce rates grew. "Polygamous marriages are less frequent in urban areas, especially for persons exposed to western orientation, for women have unequivocally stated that a man should have only one wife" (Pellow & Chazan, 1986, p. 99). Monogamous marriages were more popular in the urban areas than before. With the control of kin group growing less, postponing marriage because of school or beginning an occupation, many urban girls assumed the typical urban role of girl friend (Pellow & Chazan, 1986, p. 99). More elites were moving towards the conjugal family type and towards civil marriage ordinances which unlike native law did not permit polygamy.

Polygamy, although less popular in urban areas, was still quite popular in some rural areas. The divorce rates in such areas rose too, but the women could easily remarry. Couples enjoyed little conjugal companionships, and spouses rarely sat down to talk. They ate separately and engaged in separate ceremonial and recreational activities. Marriage and marital roles were changing fast in the cities and some, but not all, rural areas.

Economic: Women continued to dominate the market place in Ghana in the 1980's. Their business sense kept the market place well supplied (Pellow & Chazan, 1986). Some women became so financially viable that they competed with men in

economic endeavors.

--- Throughout the country in city and rural areas alike, women hawk everything from snack foods to a complete meal such as rice and stew. The market place belongs pre-eminently to the women's world. Male traders are few and specialize in such products as charcoal, meat, and Islamic paraphernalia.---- Other types of exchange are similarly carried out as ethnic specialties (Pellow & Chazan, 1986 p. 152).

Few women traded in export crops mainly because a lot of it involved a great deal of man-power and heavy finances which they could not afford. Migration of women to the urban areas continued because they either found it more and more difficult to depend on their farms or they thought farming was too strenuous for the benefits they reaped from it.

Educated women picked up careers in what were considered as male jobs. The number of female medical doctors for example, and women in the military service increased. Continuous increase in the enrollment of women in schools showed that they wanted to educate themselves to the level of men so as to increase their economic power. A lot more women competed economically with men in different fields. Even women in the rural areas who were mainly involved in subsistence peasant farming were taking some of their products to sell in the cities. The trading influence spread quickly to them.

Cultural: As the urban milieu gained significance, traditional social roles and relationships were redefined.

Emphasis on urbanization undercut the status and esteem of

the rural sector. Monogamy became more popular in the urban areas than polygamy, even though in some villages the latter form of marriage was still popular.

There were still certain traditional rites and obligations women had to go through as they did in the 1950s but some of these rules were relaxed. Parents had realized that it was in the best interest of their daughters to choose and marry the man they wanted, even if it meant their marrying a man from another tribe. Increasing numbers of women got married without their parent's consent, and the dowry was no longer regarded with the same importance as was before, especially by educated parents.

Western fashion was seen both in the urban and rural areas. The continuous infiltration of city values into the rural areas made village women dress in western clothes just like urban women. Traditional dress was worn mainly on weekends or during ceremonies, and traditional music had generally been modernized.

Christianity and Islamism became very popular. A large proportion of the Ghanaian population were either christians or muslims and a very small proportion still offered sacrifices to other gods. Men in greater numbers taking their families to church on Sundays, and more women were assuming leadership roles in some churches.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to show that there has been a change in the social, cultural, and economic lives of women in Nigeria and Ghana from the 1950s' through the 1980s". These three variables were then analyzed to reveal developmental changes that took place within this time frame and how they affected the lives of women in the above mentioned countries.

The main objective of this study was to assess if there were any social, cultural, and economic changes in the lives of women in the above mentioned countries from the 1950's through the 1980's, so that developmental changes could be analyzed. The analyses was based on data and literature showing how women's social, cultural, and economic lives in Ghana and Nigeria changed over this period.

Research Design

A historical research design was used in this study. "Historical research is the application of scientific method to the description and analysis of past events" (Best & Kahn, 1989, p. 73). "It is not merely a list of

chronological events but a truthful intergrated account of the relationships between persons, events, times and places" (Best & Kahn, 1989, p. 57). A historical design was the best design that could be used to assess women's progress over the four decades treated.

Selection of the Years Studied

These four decades were chosen for investigation because more literature and data were found on women in the two countries during this period. The period also possessed evidence that showed there were social, economic, and cultural changes from one decade to another.

Instrumentation

TABLE I

SOURCES OF DATA THAT INDICATE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND
CULTURAL CHANGE OF WOMEN IN NIGERIA AND GHANA

NIGERIA

Category	Source
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NIGERIA. Federal Office of Statistics. Annual Abstract of Statistics. - <u>Compendium of Social Statistics</u> (United Nations Publications)
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NIGERIA. Federal Office of Statistics. Annual Abstract of Statistics. - <u>Compendium of Social Statistics</u> (United Nations Publications)

GHANA

Category	Sources
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GHANA. Central Bureau of Statistics. - <u>Compendium of Social Statistics</u> (United Nations Publications)
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GHANA. Central Bureau of Statistics. - <u>Compendium of Social Statistics</u> (United Nations Publications)

Development of a System to Assess Changes

The first objective of this study was to assess if there were any social, cultural, and economic changes in women's lives from the 1950's through the 1980's in Nigeria and Ghana. Education, politics, migration and some aspects of marriage were used as indicators of social change. An increase in the numbers of educated women, women in key political positions, number of women migrating to urban areas, and women's changing ideas on marriage indicated social progress. An increase in the numbers of women participating in the labor force and an increase in the numbers striving for better education to increase their earning power, were used to indicate economic progress. Changes in dressing, forms of worship, and some traditional rites and obligations were used as indicators of cultural change.

Analyses of Data

Data was converted into percentages, and a one percent increase or decrease determined whether the hypotheses formulated were rejected or retained. In cases where no data was available, facts from literature review sources were used to reject or retain the hypothesis.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the social, cultural, and economic progress women in Nigeria and Ghana made during colonization, and long after independence. This chapter presents an analyses of data that was found on the above variables and a discussion of the results.

Description of Population and Analyses of Data

In this study, the population consisted of women in Nigeria and Ghana. The social, economic, and cultural progress made by women in these two countries from the 1950s' to the 1980s' was investigated through the use of literature review and available data. The indicators of social and economic progress used in this chapter were those data was available on, and the indicators of cultural progress used in the chapter were also used in literature review.

Ghana

The social indicators of progress used in this chapter were

- Education (school enrollment) and
- Literacy rate.

Other social indicators used in the review of literature were

- Diversity in career fields,
- Migration to urban areas,
- Involvement in politics,
- Social clubs and engagement in other recreational activities.

The indicators of economic progress used in literature review were

- Number of women in economic associations, and
- Number financially independent from their husbands.

The indicator of economic progress used in this chapter was number of women in the labor force.

The indicators of cultural progress used in the literature review were the same indicators used in this chapter. They were

- Christianity and Islamism, as opposed to indigenous religions,
- Marriages contracted legally and in churches, as opposed to traditional or arranged marriages,
- Increase in number of courtships, and

- Changes in fashion, from traditional to western style.

The data on labor force, based on the estimated and projected population of Ghana (Table II), showed that the percentage of women in the labor force in Ghana dropped by 1 % over the period investigated, and was projected to remain same by the year 2000. Even though the data showed an increase in the number of women joining the labor force, this increase was not in sufficient numbers compared to the general population growth, to reflect a rise in the percentage.

Data obtained on enrollment of women in secondary schools and higher education showed that there was an increase by 3.1 % and 5.1 %, respectively, of women enrolled in these institutions in Ghana over the periods shown (Table III).

There was a 7.5 % increase in the number of female teachers at the first level (grades 1-7) and a fluctuation of the percentage at the second level (grades 8-12), (Table IV). There was an increase in the percentage of literate women in Ghana as shown in Table V. This table supports the fact that more women acquired some level of education during the period shown.

Literature review sources showed that culturally there was progress made by women in Ghana. From 1950 to the mid 1960's, it is said that many women migrated to towns which meant they could no longer be confined to traditional rules imposed on them in the villages. Polygamy which was accepted

TABLE II
LABOR FORCE, ESTIMATED AND PROJECTED POPULATION BY
SEX AND PERCENTAGE FOR GHANA

Number in thousands				
Year	Population	Labor Force		Percentage
	Total	Male	Female	Female
1950	5024	1296	964	42.7
1975	9873	2165	1545	41.6
2000	21164	4387	3138	41.7

Source : Compendium of Social Statistics. 1977

TABLE III

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT; SECONDARY AND SOME HIGHER INSTITUTIONS
BY YEAR, SEX, AND PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES IN GHANA

Year	Type of School	Number Enrolled			% of Female
		Total	Male	Female	
1965/66	Public Secondary Schools (Form V)	4966	3781	1185	10.9
1970/71	Public Secondary Schools (Form V)	7869	5914	1955	14
1966/67	Private Secondary Schools (Form V)	290	223	67	3.5
1970/71	Private Secondary Schools (Form V)	823	697	126	8.6
1965/66	University of Ghana	2001	1749	252	12.5
1969/70	University of Ghana	2501	2135	366	14.6
1967	University College of Cape Coast (Faculties)	1122	1006	116	10.3
1970	University College of Cape Coast (Faculties)	862	730	132	15.3

Source : Ghana Central Bureau of Statistics. Statistical Yearbook 1969-70. CIS National Statistical Compendia.

TABLE IV
TEACHERS BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF PUPILS, YEARS AND
PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES IN GHANA.

Year	Level	Total # of Teachers	% of Females
1960	First	21171	21.8
	Second	1895	18.3
1970	First	47957	26.5
	Second	5842	17.3
1973	First	50153	29.4
	Second	5440	18.0

Source : Compedium of Social Statistics. 1977

in the villages was not practiced by many in towns, and it was a growing tendency for town women, especially the educated ones, to make a choice of who they wanted to marry, sometimes regardless of the person's tribal origin. Christianity and Islamism instead of deity worship became the more acceptable way to go, especially since women were denied access into most deity worship shrines.

Mid 1960's to 1970's had more women getting married legally in churches, and contracting monogamous relationships. The influence of Christianity and Islamism continued to be strongly felt, as more pagans were converted. City values influenced traditional ceremonies to a certain extent because of the constant contact between rural and urban people. Some traditional rites were still respected by a majority of the women. Divorce became accepted in urban areas but still uncommon in the rural areas. Western fashion could be seen all over the country, especially in cities.

In the 1980's, most of the traditional rites and obligations women went through in the 1950's and 1960's had been relaxed. Monogamy had become even more popular. Most parents had realized it was in the best interest of their daughters to marry the man they wanted. Increasing numbers of women got married without their parents consent, and the dowry was no longer regarded with the same importance as it was before, especially by educated parents. The continuous infiltration of city values into the rural areas made

village women dress in western clothes just like urban women, and traditional dresses were worn mainly on weekends or during ceremonies. Christianity and Islamism became even more popular with a very small proportion still worshipping several gods.

Nigeria

The social indicators of progress used in this chapter were

- Education (school enrollment), and
- Literacy rate.

Other indicators of social progress used in the review of literature were

- Diversity in career field,
- Migration to urban areas,
- Involvement in politics,
- Social clubs and engagement in other recreational activities.

Indicators of economic progress used in the review of literature were

- Number of women in economic associations, and
- Number financially independent from their husbands.

The indicators used in this chapter were

- Number of women in labor force, and
- Number employed in the federal civil service.

The indicators of cultural progress used in the

- literature review were also used in this chapter. They were
- Christianity and Islamism, as opposed to indigenous religions,
 - Marriages contracted legally and in churches, as opposed to traditional or arranged marriages,
 - Increase in number of courtships, and
 - changes in fashion from traditional to western style.

Data on labor force as an indicator of economic progress in Nigeria, estimated and projected population by sex, and showed that the percentage of women in the labor force dropped over the years, by 4.2 % and will continue to drop in the future (Table VI).

Employment in the Federal Civil Service by sex, and the percentage of women (Table VII), showed an increase of 1.9 % women employed by the Federal Civil Service.

According to Table VIII, there was a 3.9 % decrease in the percentage of female students enrolled in primary schools over a period of two decades. There was, however, a 3.2 % increase in female students enrolled in secondary schools over the same period. Based only on numbers, there was a continuous increase in both primary and secondary school enrollment by female students.

Data on the numbers of women who have attended and received degrees in higher institutions showed an increase in numbers, even though the computed percentages stayed about the same. Again this difference in numbers and

percentages is due to the rapid increase in the general population over the same periods. There was a 26 % increase in the literacy rate of women in Nigeria over the period studied as shown in table Table IX.

This goes to confirm the literature review, which shows that more women went to school as years passed by.

Culturally, progress was made by women in Nigeria as has been stated in the literature review. Between 1950 and mid 1960, women were turning to Christianity because they were not allowed into the same shrines with men. Parents still had a say in who they wanted their daughters to marry but most women in the urban areas made a choice of the man they wanted to marry. Educated women often had a courtship with the young men they married. Legal and church weddings as well as divorce were on the rise. Urban women wore western clothes while those in the rural areas still wore the traditional clothes.

In mid 1960's to 1970's, more women turned from worshipping several gods to Christianity and Islamism. Dressing in western style was no longer only the way of town dwellers but also village women. Infiltration of city ideas into the villages affected the way things were done. Traditional laws on marriage and other things became relaxed. Church and legal marriages became more popular, as there was an increase in the number of women divorcing.

In the 1980's, much had changed culturally in Nigeria.

Christians and muslims constituted a large population and deity worshippers decreased. Women were seen more as equals to men at this period than before. A growing number of women did not even consider their parents consent before getting married. Church and court marriages became very common, and the number of women divorcing increased. Traditional laws that had a lot of restrictions on women were relaxed. Western fashion became very common.

Analysis of Hypotheses

The hypotheses for this study stated that there was no significant difference in the social, economic, and cultural aspects of women's lives in Nigeria and Ghana from the 1950's through the 1980's. Percentages of data on women in these countries were computed and a one percent increase or decrease was used to determine whether to reject or fail to reject the hypothesis. In cases where numerical data was not available, facts obtained from literature review of the study were used to decide whether to reject the hypothesis or not. Since the authors of the writings lived in these societies for sometime, their reports were assumed to be reliable enough to draw such conclusions.

Ghana

Economic: There was a slight decrease in the percentage of women joining the labor force in Ghana over the period reviewed. The projections don't show that there will be an increase in the percentage of women in Ghanaian labor force. There was an actual increase in the numbers of women joining the labor force, but this did not reflect in the percentages because of a rapid increase in the overall female population. Based on this data, the hypothesis was retained, since it showed no progress in the economic lives of the women over the period.

Social: There was an increase in the percentage of women enrolled in secondary schools, and higher institutions of learning in Ghana. There was also a continuous increase in the percentage of first level (grades 1-7) and higher institution female teachers. There was a big decline in the percentage of illiterate women. All these showed progress in the lives of women during the periods shown. Based on these findings, the hypothesis was rejected.

Cultural: From literature review, there was a continuous increase in all the indicators of cultural progress such as the abandonment of the worshipping of several gods to the worship of one God, and the growing tendency of legal and church marriages. Based on these reports the hypothesis was rejected.

Nigeria

Economic: Data showed that there was a slight but constant decrease in the percentage of women joining the labor force in Nigeria over the period studied, and the trend is projected to continue into the year 2000. The percentage of women that joined the federal civil service over the same period increased. Data on labor force showed an actual increase in the numbers of women joining the labor force, but not reflected in percentage increase because of the rapid increase in the female overall population. Even though there was increase in the percentage of women joining the federal civil service, there was overall decrease in the percentage joining the labor force. Data did not show that there was progress in the economic stance of Nigerian women during this period. Based on this, the hypothesis was retained.

Social: Data showed that over the years, there was a decrease in the percentage of female students enrolled in primary and secondary schools, and in higher institutions of learning. However, the overall literacy rate sharply increased among women from 1960 to 1985. Even though the percentage of female school enrollment decreased, data showed an increase in the general literacy rate of the women. Thus there was progress in the social lives of women in Nigeria during this period. The hypothesis was rejected.

Cultural: Literature review reported progress in forms of worship, premarital relationships such as courtship that led to legal and church marriages, and a general trend towards western fashion. Thus based on these reports the hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE V
YEAR, AGE, AND PERCENTAGE OF ILLITERATE POPULATION
IN GHANA

Year	Age	Total	Female
1960	6 years +	73.0	83.3
1970	6 years +	56.8	66.2

Source : Compendium of Social Statistics. 1977

TABLE VI
LABOR FORCE, ESTIMATED AND PROJECTED POPULATION BY
SEX, AND PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES IN NIGERIA

Number in Thousands				
Year	Population	Labor Force		Percentage
	Total	Male	Female	Female
1950	35690	9451	7304	43.5
1975	63049	14752	9914	40.2
2000	132467	27813	17965	39.3

Source : Compendium of Social Statistics. 1977

TABLE VII
EMPLOYMENT IN FEDERAL CIVIL SERVICE BY SEX
AND POPULATION OF FEMALE IN NIGERIA

Year	Number Employed			% of Female
	Total	Male	Female	
1979	197319	175204	22115	11.2
1984	302830	262315	39525	13.1

Source : Nigeria Federal Office of Statistics.
Annual Abstracts of Statistics.

TABLE VIII
 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT; PRIMARY, SECONDARY, AND SOME HIGHER
 INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING BY SEX, YEAR AND
 PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES IN NIGERIA

Year	Level	Number Enrolled			% of Females
		Total	Male	Female	
1966	Primary	3025981	1845367	1180614	39.0
1970	Primary	4815425	3515827	1299598	36.9
1966	Secondary	211305	145910	65395	30.9
1969	Secondary	137458	86262	51196	37.2
1972	Secondary	410803	275641	135162	33.7
1968/69	Diplomas and Degrees (In Nigerian Univ)	1621	1412	209	12.9
1972/73	Diplomas and Degrees (In Nigerian Univ)	23977	20889	3088	12.9

Source : Nigeria Federal Office of Statistics
 Annual Abstract of Statistics.

TABLE IX
RATE OF ADULT LITERACY BY YEAR AND SEX
IN NIGERIA

Year	Male Rate	Female Rate
1960	37 %	17 %
1985	64 %	43 %

Source : Women ---- A World Survey

TABLE X
SUMMARY TABLE OF DATA

GHANA	
Social, Cultural, and Economic Indicators	Change in Percentage
Labor Force	- 1 % in 50 years
School Enrollment	
Public Secondary	+ 3.1 % in 6 years
Private Secondary	+ 5.1 % "
University of Ghana	+ 2.1 % in 5 years
University College of Cape Coast (Faculties)	+ 5 % in 3 years
Teachers	
1st Level	+ 7.6 % in 13 years
2nd Level	0 % in 13 years
Literacy rate	+ 17.1 % in 10 years
NIGERIA	
Labor Force	- 4.2 % in 50 years
Employment in Federal Civil Service	+ 1.9 % in 5 years
School Enrollment	
Primary	- 3.9 % in 4 years
Secondary	+ 3.2 % in 6 years
Diplomas and Degrees in Nigerian Universities	0 % in 5 years
Literacy Rate	+ 26 % in 25 years

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was conducted to gain an insight into the social, economic, and cultural progress made by women in Nigeria and Ghana. The social indicators of progress used in the study were: education, politics, migration, and types of recreational activities. Economic indicators of progress were: numbers of women joining trading associations, numbers financially independent, and numbers in the labor force. Cultural indicators included Christianity and Islamism as opposed to indigenous religions, changes from traditional to western fashion, numbers getting married in courts and churches, and numbers having courtship before marriage.

The researcher found that changes in one variable affected and/or influenced changes in another variable, so they were some how dependent on each other. Two null hypotheses were formulated which stated that there was no significant difference in the social, economic, and cultural aspects of women's lives in Nigeria and Ghana from the 1950's through the 1980's.

Data was not available on all the indicators of

social, economic, and cultural progress. In variables where there was data, it was used to accept or reject the hypothesis formulated. Where there was no data, findings reported in the literature review were used to reject or retain the hypothesis formulated. Available data was converted into percentages, and a one percent increase or decrease over time determined whether the hypotheses were rejected or retained.

The results of the analyses showed that generally, there was some social, economic, and cultural progress in the lives of women in Nigeria and Ghana from the 1950s' to the 1980s'.

Conclusions

Though there was general progress in the lives of women in Nigeria and Ghana over the period studied, the data and literature review showed that progress was not made in all indicators outlined. Data on labor force in Ghana showed a drop over the years in the percentage of women joining the labor force, and the percentage was not projected to rise in future. Data also showed that there was an increase in the numbers of women joining the labor force. On the basis of this data, there was ground to retain the hypothesis against continuous economic progress by women in Ghana over the period studied.

A similar step by step analysis of the indicators determined a rejection or retention of the hypotheses in

each of the indicators studied. For Ghana, the hypothesis was rejected for social and cultural progress over the years. For Nigeria, after careful analysis of data and findings reported in the literature, the hypothesis was retained in favor of no economic progress, and rejected in favor of social, and cultural progress in the lives of women from the 1950s' through the 1980s'.

Thus from the study, it has been shown and can be concluded that women in Nigeria and Ghana made significant progress in the social, and cultural aspects of their lives from the 1950s' through the 1980s', but not in the economic aspects. As far as the social and cultural aspects of women's lives over the period studied in Nigeria and Ghana are concerned, it was good to be a woman in these countries during this period. Economically, it was not good to be a woman living in these countries during this period. Based on the trends and projections the cultural and social progress will be expected to continue right on into the twenty first century. How fast this continuous, will be determined by the overall stability in the economy and governments of these countries. Progress will also depend on the tribal cultures of the people in these countries because some cultures deter progress even when the government tries to enhance it.

Recommendations

The governments of Nigeria and Ghana have done a tremendous job in advancing the progress of women in their countries socially, and culturally from the 1950s' through the 1980s' as found in this study. However, there is still a lot that needs to be done especially economically. More women do not only need to enroll in schools, but they also need to attain higher levels of education and venture into fields that have been dominated by men such as engineering, medicine, and mechanized agriculture. Higher education will also guarantee financial independence for them and will help them take up key political positions in the countries, thereby giving them a say in the running of the affairs of these countries. In order to increase the percentage of women in the labor force, these governments may need to employ more women, or give out loans to them so that they can establish themselves financially through independent business transactions.

More political active groups should be organized by working women through which they can continue to fight for their rights, equality, and the protection of the rights already obtained.

Though women have progressed culturally, it is necessary that some important aspects of their cultures be preserved. Women in their traditional dresses can take pride in their culture. A complete loss of culture will mean

a loss in their identity. If not already available, I will recommend that the governments of these countries set up a ministry to deal with cultural affairs so as to help preserve some of the important cultural aspects of the people that identify them as a separate entity.

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VITA

Stella Fuen Akem

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis : INDICATORS OF SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL
PROGRESS OF WOMEN IN NIGERIA AND GHANA FROM THE
1950s' TO THE 1980s'

Major Field : Home Economics Education

Biographical :

Personal Data : Born on June 9, 1962 , in Kumba, South
West Province, Republic of Cameroon;the daughter
of Bobe Leonard Tubuo and Nawain Senocia Tubuo.
Married with two children.

Education : Graduated from the Queen of Rosary secondary
School, Okoyong in June 1979; Government High
School, Wum in June 1981; Received the Bachelor
of Arts degree in English from the University of
Yaounde, Cameroon, in June 1985; Completed
requirements for the Master of Science degree in
Home Economics Education and Community Services
at Oklahoma State University in July, 1989.