

**SUDANESE WOMEN AND EDUCATION:
THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION**

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Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy
in the School of Education,
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Indiana University

March 28, 1996

Accepted by the Graduate Faculty, Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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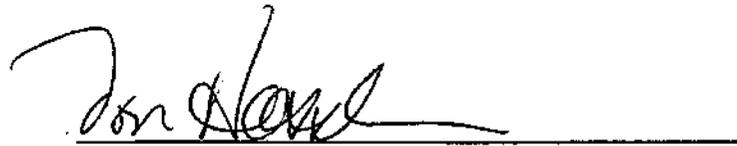
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March 28, 1996

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A host of people have helped in the research and the preparation of this dissertation. Recognizing the people and institutions that have assisted in the production of this dissertation is perhaps the most satisfying aspect of its completion. My debts are many. I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to many individuals, organizations and institutions who cooperated, supported, and aided me in this endeavor. Without their patience and support this study would have been impossible.

This research was made possible with generous financial assistance from the Rockefeller Foundation and Indiana University Graduate School. I would like to thank the grant's Coordinator, Janet Marcantonio and her staff, for their patience in processing of this grant and to the Rockefeller family for giving me this opportunity. The Upper Nile University, Khartoum, Sudan, hosted the research fieldwork, facilitated, and assisted with all equipment needed to finish the fieldwork. I am forever indebted to the former Governor of the Upper Nile Region, the late Paul Yuol Reeth who understood the importance of this research and for his support and facilitation of my local travel.

I am extremely grateful to Professor Frances Stage who supported and guided me through this study. Stage's deep insights into social issues in education have caused her to demand highly of all her students. She challenged me to meet her high level of intellectual expectations. Her serious and critical comments were a constant source of frustration. Nevertheless, her guidance in my intellectual development has benefitted this dissertation and the rest of my academic life. My research committee, Professor

Robert Arno, Professor Martha Kendall, and Professor Don Hossler helped me to grow and develop intellectual understanding in the field of education and social equity. They have helped me to see the social issues in a different way. They have challenged me and guided me in this research.

I also owe thanks to Professor Gilbert Weldy at the School of Education, Indiana University, Bloomington, who has been a pillar of strength. He has helped with editing and directed me to make myself clear in writing, since English is a foreign language to me, and to come to grips with the requirements of scholarly work. Without his help with ideas as well as with verb tenses and English expressions, I would still be writing this dissertation. His comments and suggestions have helped me to write simple sentences and get right to the point. I also thank Reva White of the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University for her editorial assistance.

I am extremely grateful to the staff of the African Studies Program, Indiana University, Professor Patrick O'Meara, Professor Brian Winchester, Sue Hanson, Becky Curtis, and Jean Cole for their support and assistance while working on this research. I am very grateful to The Department of African Studies Program and the Department of International Services for their moral and financial support. I consider this continuous support unusual and I am very grateful for making this financial assistance possible. I am also grateful to the staff of International Services, Dean Kenneth Rogers, Ruth Miller, Kitty Burkhart, and many others for their encouragement and support.

My special thanks to women, under whose auspices the research was done. These Sudanese women provided me with the opportunity to interview them. They have provided me with information and insights that benefitted my research immensely. Without their cooperation and patience this dissertation would not have been achieved. Thank you to all the respondents who spent hours upon hours sharing their experiences and wisdom for the future. I also thank the government of Sudan for allowing me the freedom of movement in and out of Khartoum during the emergency period.

Finally, I must express my gratitude to Mary King and Jan Ryser of the School of Education Research and Development Office, for their moral encouragement and for preparing my research materials for going into the field. I am also grateful to members of the Grace Presbyterian Church of Bloomington, for their help and assistance to my family.

I am extremely grateful to my family, husband Mai Duany, my children, Duany, Nyagon (Aggi), Kueth, Nok, and Bil who demonstrated patience and understood why mommy was so often preoccupied or absent. My sincere gratitude to my niece Jam Malou and my nephew Ruot Duany for the loving care given to my children while I worked on this thesis. To my husband, thank you for your love and support.

ABSTRACT

Julia Aker Duany

SUDANESE WOMEN AND EDUCATION: THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

This study drew upon the theories of inequality, cross cultural studies, policy analysis, and gender theories in order to explicate the experiences of Sudanese women in education. Examined were state policies, economic and socioculture attachments that perpetuate educational inequalities. Research questions included: 1. What factors affect or influence women's participation? 2. What is the interaction between social factors and state policies to influence women's participation? 3. Which factors can legitimately be labeled as problems? 4. What efforts are being made to increase women's participation in education? In what ways are these efforts successful? In what ways are they unsuccessful? 5. How can these problems be diminished or removed? And by whom?

In the past some leaders were committed to promoting equal opportunities between men and women, but political changes and ideological differences hindered their progress. In the 1970's the socialist government initiated changes that challenged traditional Islamic gender relations. The current Islamic fundamentalist government has embraced traditional gender roles between men and women. This close examination of factors that influence women's education found significant inter-

relationships between social/personal factors, family economic conditions, and institutional and political policies.

The research was conducted in the tradition of ethnography (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Geertz, 1975), using a natural setting as the data source. Data collection predominantly took the form of interviews in which I entered the environment, became a familiar sight, and then interacted naturally with subjects (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). Following each interview, I typed extensive field notes, with the analysis taking shape through checking and rechecking comments (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). The respondents were from three cities of Khartoum, Medani, Juba, and small rural towns of Southern Sudan; Nasir, Akobo, Leer, and Maridi. Five female students were from each of the institutions of higher education, University of Khartoum, Gezira University, and Juba University. Additionally, two female administrators, three faculty members, and ten women with little or no schooling were interviewed.

Interviews from the respondents were taped and transcribed. More data were collected from the government documents and reports, newspapers, and journal articles in both languages-Arabic and English. The Arabic documents were translated into English. This information was later used to compare notes with the data collected in the interviews and provided validity, reliability, and consistency in the analysis of the data.

Data collection occurred over 18 months, resulting in 20 micro audio tapes of interviews and 400 pages of detailed field notes. A comparative technique for data

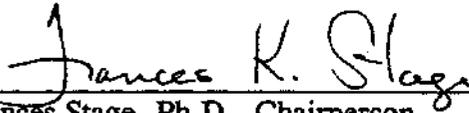
analysis was initiated at the beginning of the interviews. Events within a single interview were compared to each other and were then compared across interviews and within the field notes (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Through this procedure, dimensions and subdimensions became apparent (Strauss, 1987). In early interviews I developed two codes for faculty/staff members and students. As interviews continued, I was able to note a correlation between the students and faculty members' stands on gender issues and the type of language they used to express their feelings. This evolving dimension became a major theme. In this inductive, analytic manner, several hypotheses grounded in the data were developed from the natural context (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

The findings revealed that education allows individuals and societies to unlock their potential, to expand their horizons, and to adopt to a changing world. Educating females generates more substantial social and economic benefits. These include enhanced family health and welfare, reduced infant and maternal mortality, increase in female's earnings, especially economic productivity in the modern economy, and improved children's education, particularly girls' education. But women's access to and participation in education was affected by traditional beliefs, economic conditions, and school factors as well as state policies. The social beliefs were embedded in the structures and processes of the Sudanese educational system and operated systematically to cement gender segregation. In order to promote educational policies, to take them beyond mere political documents, the government must delve more deeply into the lives of women.

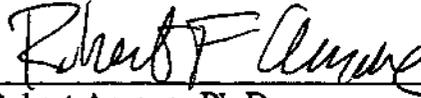
This research makes a contribution to the present body of literature in educational development, women's studies, cross-cultural studies, and policy analysis. The findings should be of value to the Sudanese Ministry of Education, International Development Agencies, educational planners of the SubSaharan Africa, the Middle East, and many other developing countries in their efforts to improve women's access to and participation in education.

To improve women's access to and participation in education, effective policy initiatives must take into account as many relevant factors as possible. They must stimulate more actions on women's education goals, at either the policy or institutional levels and should not be formulated so as to invite their own demise. A review of literature in this study suggests that theory is critical in policy research and that social research, rather than a decision-making tool, can serve an "educative" function aiding policymakers to understand the complexity of social problems. The emphasis therefore is on the individuals' ability to master strategies in a flexible manner extracting meaning from a complexity of interactions, for the sake of perpetually improving society. In sum, education, in general, is perceived widely as the route to improving an individual's opportunities for advancement. Women in this study indicated that education is becoming increasingly the means to a better life. The women believed that knowledge and skills are important, first, to improve food production, nutrition, hygiene, and health care, and second to acquire skills for earning the money necessary to improve the quality of life and to emerge from poverty.

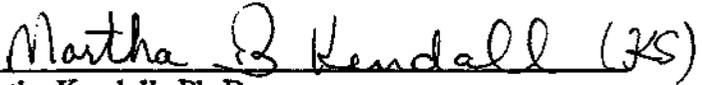
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Chapter 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Do not let them frequent the roofs; do not teach them the art of writing; teach them spinning and the surat el nur (The Light). Instruct women in moral and religious knowledge (Shaltut, 1975).

In Ancient Sudan before the coming of the Arabs, women enjoyed an equal status and had equal learning opportunities with men. Available data on the situation in traditional Sudan before Islam indicate that, although patriarchy existed in some African societies, women in Africa enjoyed a relatively high status before contact with the Near East and Europe. Much of the current imbalance between men and women seems to have developed with colonialism (Milimo, 1985). The adaptation of Islam as a religion and a way of life by the northern Sudanese, in the seventh century, led to political and social transformations in the African way of life. It lowered the status of women and, consequently, their participation in modern education (Simons, 1968). Currently in Sudan, the new wave of Islam is organized and has borrowed many of its ideas from an old form of "Sheikh Ahmad's Dream." One version on women's status is expressed by his writing in which women are considered becoming immoral according to Islamic tradition:

Women do not obey their husbands. They appear in front of men unveiled and they go outside their homes without the knowledge of their husbands (Ahmad, 1986: 128).

The position of the woman in the Sudanese society is linked directly to the family, which is the predominant institution. In its extended form, the family trains

and socializes the young children, provides welfare services, and affords a center for social life. Anderson's (1951) book on "Recent Development in Shari'a Law" stated that in Islamic communities the maxims relating to the training and instruction of the young in the art of reading and writing apply only to boys. The education of women did not fall under these rules except in one instance, where the Qura'nic women teachers of girls were to be strictly monitored in regard to the poetical pieces that they set before their female students. While it was deemed necessary to instruct women in moral and religious things, there was no desire to lead them through the portals of intellectual development. According to Anderson (1951) women's proper sphere centered around the spindle, and this requires no training in letters. This training became almost a household expression in the Islamic world. Of all the Qura'nic emphatic warnings most are uttered against teaching women to write. One scholar wrote:

. . . It is told of Luqman the sage that, when on one occasion he passed a woman's school, he asked, "For whom is this sword being polished? Implying, of course, that a woman would be her future husband's ruin. It is not surprising to find this view reflected in the instructions handed down by Ibn Bassam: He (the teacher) must not instruct any women in the art of writing, for thereby an increase of depravity would accrue to them. It is a current saying that "a woman who is taught to write is like a snake that is given poison to drink. . . . (Anderson, 1951).

Anderson also stated that:

. . . Islam does not consider a woman as a teacher "muallima" of God's message above men; only a man is considered by the Qura'n as the "muallima," God's messenger on earth. To carry out God's responsibilities, an Islamic man is asked in the holy book of Qura'n to equip himself with knowledge and wisdom to become spiritually prepared and to use wisely the things God has created. . . . (ibid.: 75).

The northern Sudanese people adopted Islam in the sixth century. They developed a prejudice against women's education, and women received little education at the Qura'nic schools. During the colonial rule, however, a climate was developed in favor of limited participation of women in modern economic and social life. Women's education received recognition. However, opportunities remained limited and only a very small percentage of women could avail themselves to the educational facilities and pursue an independent career. Social traditions continued to stand in the way of broadening the scope and sphere of educational and employment avenues for women.

Currently, education is funded largely by the Sudanese government, which is ostensibly committed to equal employment opportunity. Even so, women have problems participating in all levels of education. The expansion of educational opportunities for women has been a major objective of many Sudanese leaders during the past twenty years. Efforts have been made not only to increase the percentage of women who participate at all levels of schooling but also to enhance the type of learning experiences that are being provided. Article 53 in the constitution of Sudan states that:

Education is a right of every citizen and the state shall endeavor to spread and provide it free in all stages (Article 53: 10).

Although some attempts have been made to enhance women's education, women continue to be generally less represented than men, and the disparity increases at higher levels of schooling (Bowman and Anderson, 1980). Furthermore, UNESCO (1988-89 and 1990-1993) statistics indicate that vast differences continue to exist between the

literacy rates for males and females. The statistics show that "Fewer than two in 30 women have attended secondary school, and adult women have an average of less than one year of education" (UNESCO, 1993).

However, much research in developing countries focuses on gender roles. They also analyze female under-representation but do not give adequate solutions to what kind of education might be provided to female students (Samoff, 1993). This has resulted in a skewed understanding of the factors involved in providing an equitable education to both men and women in the developing countries. Factors such as socialization, distribution of knowledge, equal involvement in classroom activities, and equal expectations for learning can significantly affect students' performance and attitude development (Gintis and Bowles, 1976). Other studies have shown a lack of seriousness by the government in providing access to the increasing types of educational experience necessary to prepare the women better for important societal roles. Increasing awareness on the importance of education can enhance women's development and expand women's career options in today's changing technology and world economy (World Bank, 1993).

It is well documented in the social sciences that women can use education to alter their roles as mothers, workers, and citizens. Improvement in the quality of lives is a cherished aspiration both in Western and non-Western societies. However, in Sudan traditional beliefs and government policies undercut women's chances of attending any level of education, especially higher education. Boserup (1970) and Harrison (1984) also provide the same argument that in some societies (including the

majority of African countries), religious beliefs, cultural norms, family economic conditions and the division of labor within the home function to define female children's roles as future mothers. For example, in Sudanese society (the Islamic North) girls are taught that they are inferior to boys. Consequently, they pursue an education that makes them less qualified than their male counterparts for employment in the modern sector (Al-min, 1975). First, the majority of Sudanese believe that women do not need a university degree to be good wives or mothers. Second, women were not expected to hold a public office or work in public enterprise outside the privacy of their homes (Abu Nasr, 1982; Bowman and Anderson, 1980). Third, in the modern school system, female children experience less encouragement from their families and teachers to pursue their education. Also, the lack of incentives for female children undermines their ability and willingness to achieve in their schooling.

According to Naipaul (1981):

. . . In Islamic societies much of the everyday life takes place without taking into account women's needs. At the same time there appears to be a bordering of attitude in Islamic societies, where women are left with little voice within the family and no opportunity for any moves toward parity of legal rights in marriage or economic status. . . .
(Ibid.: 125)

These attitudes provide the basis for women to be under-represented in all levels of education compared to men. According to recent Sudanese government reports, 45 percent of female students advance only as far as the sixth grade. Compared with 25 percent of male students, fewer than 10 percent of young women reach secondary school, and approximately 2 percent of the women graduates of secondary school go on

to study at the university level. A significant percentage of the primary school dropouts are females. On the other hand, boys have better opportunities than girls to make it through the system in large numbers at all levels (UNESCO, 1989-90; Ministry of Education, 1988-1989).

University and other tertiary educational opportunities are recent phenomena in the Sudan, but women have limited access. Studies on women's education have emphasized the demand for equitable education and have drawn attention to increasing access for women (David, 1990). However, some evidence suggests that social factors operate differently for women than for men. Stromquist (1989), in her literature review on Women's Participation and Achievement in Third World Countries, described women's education as affected by the gender division of labor making them more needed at home for domestic work. This increase in young women's domestic responsibilities as they become older prevents them from attaining a higher level of education. Likewise, marriage and motherhood are strongly held as key values in the Sudanese society (Badri, 1986). Researchers such as Apple (1978), Freire (1987), Giroux (1981) and Anyon (1981) have also attempted to demonstrate how cultural factors influence the type of education that women receive. It is their belief that knowledge is culturally construed and valued as a social commodity.

Furthermore, Gintis and Bowles (1989) acknowledge that education becomes a means by which a society is stratified and produced into social hierarchies and political and economic divisions. This argument provided the basis for increases in the social change in the developing countries "educated women are beginning to resist this cycle

of social reproduction" (Barrett, 1984). This resistance can take many forms including disruptive behavior in the families, alienation, negation, and bargaining between the parents and their daughters over cultural norms and behaviors. This resistance can also negatively influence parents' attitudes toward women's education and can create opposition within the family. Women who want change begin to ignore their cultural norms and ultimately are subjected to social rejection (Bordieu and Passeson, 1977; Corwin, 1977).

During the time from 1956-1958 when Sudan achieved independence, the entire outlook toward women's education changed for the better. A new era was ushered in, improving the social, economic, and legal changes required for equalizing the status of women with men and assuring them equal participation in the national life of the country. The constitution of Sudan provided for equal rights and privileges for men and women and also some special provisions for their development and uplifting of their social, economic, and political status. Article 56 stated that:

The state shall ensure equality of opportunities for all Sudanese and prohibit discrimination in work opportunities or conditions or pay on the grounds of origin, sex, or geographical affiliations (Article 56: 11).

In the two five-year plans drawn for national development during the socialist government from 1971/1976 and 1977/1981, special provisions were made for the welfare and development of women. These provisions were aimed at programs such as health care and nutrition integrated with family welfare of women and children increasing women's participation in education, increasing women in the labor force and welfare service, improvement of living conditions, integration of women in national

politics, and an increase in political consciousness of their rights and capabilities as equal citizens (Ministry of Education, 1988).

Different governments, since independence, have enacted legislation differently. Attempts have also been made to introduce programs of development to enable women to play their role in national development in an effective manner. As a result of political changes, effective measures were not undertaken to speed up the process of educational development, and the social status of women has not improved.

Purpose of the Study

Research on women's participation in education in developing countries in general has shown that it is affected largely by an interaction between social structure, traditional beliefs, family economic conditions, and state policies (Barrett, 1984). The justification for this study lies in the fact that women's education potentially can play a significant role in economic productivity and can generate substantial social benefits for the country. The majority of research found that education is becoming the main channel through which women in the developing countries can acquire new rights and status in the public domain. Educated women have a better understanding of health practices, which is estimated to decrease the infant mortality rate by up to 10 percent under the age of five. Also, educated women have fewer children, and they are more likely to educate their children, particularly the female children (World Bank, 1993).

The neglect of women's education politically has been paralleled historically by a similar neglect in educational research and, while the resurgence of feminism in the early seventies in the West led to something of a boom in "women's research," little

empirical research has, so far, been carried out in the Sudan. Given this paucity of research it was necessary to approach the subject comprehensively, to look not only at broad rates of participation and the factors that influence women but also at the ways in which educational services are provided for women and the ways in which they are utilized. I explored how the system functions, to understand it from the inside.

The in-depth studies investigated social factors and state policies and the role they play in women's education, how educational services are delivered, and the ways in which they are utilized. The study identifies those who seek change and are in a position to enhance it. Examples are given from women who did not seek higher education as well as those who attended institutions of higher education. This study should benefit both women and men as it identifies the barriers that hinder access to education. The hope embodied in this study is that its' findings will not only contribute to educational theoretical work but also enable Sudan and other developing countries to understand the means to successful female education as a whole. The policymakers should find the results and conclusions useful as they engage in their respective tasks of shaping educational policies for more effective education for both men and women. If nothing else is accomplished by this dissertation than a fuller recognition of the importance of women's education and their role in national development, this author will feel rewarded.

Rationale of the Study

The primary factor in the genesis of this research is that studies of women's education exist primarily in developed countries and relatively little is known about

developing nations, especially some of the African nations such as Sudan. This study aims to fill the gap in empirical research on educational policy that affects the status of women, and is also intended as a contribution to the debate over the restructuring of gender and social equity and educational policies in the Sudan.

The second factor that influenced this study was the idea of "equal access" and the notion that women's education is strongly associated with national development, in the wealth and well-being of the nation as well as the society. Government policies based on the Islamic principle of segregation do not encourage women's access to education. Although the constitution of Sudan requires women to participate fully, it was of interest in this study to explore methods being used to increase women's participation. The status of women in a society is a significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society. The process of development in the Sudanese society is hindered when equal status is not granted to all. In rural Africa women make up half or more of all human resources. When they are bypassed by educational and technological advances and isolated from the mainstream of community action, development is inequitable.

Women's education has a relatively short history in Sudan, having been prompted primarily by the reforms of the 1970s. Equality was the central issue, and there was particular emphasis on social mobility. Some of the leaders have made efforts to change women's status with policy measures. They proceeded without a strong research base. It is evident that research, especially work done from women's point of view, is urgently needed. This study rests on an assumption that the

documentation and analysis of the educational policies and policy recommendations will yield valuable insight for evolution of an appropriate gender equity model. Factors promoting or hindering women's access to and participation in education were examined. Finally, recommendations are put forward for a gender-equity policy framework for policymakers.

Research Questions

Sudan won political independence in 1956. Yet, forty years have passed by and opportunities for women in education still lag behind those of men. Certainly, this study did not dismiss what the literature claims to be the factors that constrain women's access to education in developing countries. It was designed to illuminate the factors that affect or influence women's access to education in the Sudan, and particularly how social factors interact with state policies to influence the participation of women. It also identified those who seek change and those involved in the process of advancing it.

The research aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the state policies that affect women's access to education?
2. What are the social factors that affect or influence women's access?
3. How do social factors interact with state policies to influence women's participation?
4. Which factors can legitimately be labeled as problems?
5. What efforts are being made to increase women's participation in education? In what ways are these efforts successful? In what ways are they unsuccessful?
6. How can these problems be diminished or removed? And by whom?

The data were gathered and presented on what women have achieved and have not achieved in the Sudanese system of education. The study involves a comparative

analysis of data collecting from a synthesis of library sources; government documents; reports; and through interviews with women, academic staff, and policymakers in the Sudan. The data were organized around sets of closely related issues. The information was presented under two categories: (1) social factors including religious and cultural norms, parents' aspirations and support, student aspirations, and economic conditions of the household; (2) educational factors including government policy on access and equity, school factors and teacher's gender-role models and support. Factors promoting or hindering women's access to and participation in education were examined. Finally, recommendations were developed to insure a gender-equity policy framework in the Sudan.

Background/Personal Statement

Since the main instrument of a naturalistic study is the researcher, I have an obligation to describe my qualifications for carrying out the proposed study, including an adequate description of personal motivations, beliefs and relevant experiences.

My interest in women's issues in my country began when I became a young adult in the late 1960s. I was able to see difficulties women face in their lives because of their social status. I joined the Sudanese Women's Association and worked on educational and health projects. As a result of this, I designed a program that was to be relevant to women's needs. I strongly believe that women's issues need women leaders who can understand these issues. I also feel that there is a need for women to do more than just be housewives. Women need more education so that they can be a part of the modern trends of developing countries.

Also, being in the graduate school has caused me to search for a praxis. The more classes I take, the more I become alienated because most of what has been written about women in developing nations does carry some kind of cultural bias. One of the biggest frustrations is with the literature labeled "The Third World Women, Women-in-Development, or Empowering Women." It is often difficult for some gender scholars to avoid the tendency to treat women in developing countries as if they were a homogeneous group, to assume too readily that they share a common heritage and common experiences, and to pay little regard to the very considerable differences between their societies. These differences range from the obvious considerations of economic ways of life, political systems, and more distinctions of culture and social organizations in their geographical regions. My understanding of gender equality has to go beyond and before the whole "women studies" debate, and misrepresentation of women as a monolithic category. In Sudan, for example, it is not useful to see marriage as a romantic institution. It is more a social reproductive unit, a political institution to the Sudanese society. My purpose here, was to find a common ground where my beliefs will not influence the respondents' views, but to focus on women's experiences. I wanted to be able to understand and find factors that shape their social structure and the way they affect women's education in what might be called a "real situation." I was eager for hands-on, face-to-face research that would allow me to tell the women's stories and their experiences.

Organization of the Study

The research was organized into three sections. The first chapter provides the introduction to the study, pointing out in what ways women's education is worth researching in Sudan. Chapter two, is devoted to a brief history of educational development in Sudan. This chapter explores the policy changes, as well as progress made from independence through the socialist regime. This chapter also looks at the current reforms made by the Islamic regime.

Chapter three sets out a theoretical overview of theories of inequality in education that form the analysis of gender phenomena, and that may be used as a guide to make appropriate educational policy choices.

Chapters four and five contain analyzed data collected through interviews. Findings of the study are presented and interpreted within these two chapters. Chapter four provides a general discussion of factors that affect women's participation in all levels of education from the women's view. Throughout the chapter, consideration is given to the ways gender operates in the Sudanese society. It also explores social factors, such as the gender division of labor within the family. It explains how society and educational policies interact to affect women's access in education and women's survival within the educational system.

Chapter five focuses on factors as reported by women administrators. They share their experiences on what influenced them to get access to education. Those factors explored were: (1) the nature and consistency of government policies directed at encouraging women's enrollment, (2) the type of schooling made available to women,

(3) their quality and status within the educational system relative to the schools attended by males, and (4) the articulation between schools attended by women. This chapter analyzed and discussed the concept of equal access and the promotion of gender and social equity as key principles. The concept of social equity was also examined in relation to the role state policies play in the promotion of women's progress. The study also identifies the key players in the processes of women's advancement. Finally chapter six, a concluding chapter, summarizes the important economic, social, cultural, and school-related forces that perpetuate gender differences in education. Throughout the chapter the study identifies individuals and groups who seek change and those in the process of enhancing it. It also explores the methods appropriate in educational provision. The chapter concludes the study by identifying implications of findings for educational policy options in the Sudan and puts forward suggestions and recommendations to enhance change within the Sudanese educational system and future educational policy framework.

Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations that should be noted. The research was conducted during a State of Emergency, under conditions of escalating repression and implementation of various forms of state control. Activists in the women's movement were detained and harassed by police and security forces. The dress code was that all Sudanese women are required to wear long dresses (in the Muslim fashion), and group gatherings that were seen as a plot against the government were restricted. This hostile

environment affected the openness of respondents in sharing their political views, especially the southern Sudanese.

This research was also conducted during the civil war between the Arab/Islamic North and African/Christian South, at a time when women's organizations were primarily concerned with survival and the mobilization of their constitutions against the Islamic policies. Because of the difficulties created by the new system, the majority of women's groups have disbanded while others have changed direction and formed new organizations to fit the system.

The strength of women's organizations is not clear at this point, but it requires consolidation if it is to impact on state policies. For women to survive as a group, they should continue to have strong influence on state policy. They need to move beyond policy statements and translate these into practice for the welfare of the society.

Although challenges face Sudanese women, they must be active. And if they are to influence the state and its vision for a future society, they must be well organized as a body concerned with social issues. They should also understand that policies must involve goals, resource allocation, personnel, and concrete plans of actions. It requires means to measure and evaluate the impact of the policy. To achieve any of these requires involvement of women, especially educated women, to take the lead to bring about a genuine change.

Chapter 2

OVERVIEW OF MODERN EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE SUDAN

Preindependence 1902-1956

Sudan has a diverse society. Culturally its people have ties with tropical Africa in the South, Northern Africa, and the Middle East. Occupied for 56 years as a British colony and administered as part of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium because of its strategic nature, it is a cultural crossroad between the Arab North and the African nations south. It is an interesting country to study because of political changes and their impact on women's education. Soon after independence in 1956, the new government of Sudan took over the responsibility for education throughout the country. This is vested in a Sudanese Ministry of Education, with its main headquarters in Khartoum.

The rapid expansion of education in all of Africa since countries became independent has been a matter of primary political and economic concern. Given the present financial constraints and unacceptable levels of unemployment among school leaders, governments and international agencies are giving considerable attention to making education more relevant to national needs. There tends to be a general view that what the public thinks of the system is neither informed well nor important, especially when it comes to women's education. The relevance of education varies widely with family backgrounds and aspirations of students and their families. What

seems relevant to the policymakers may not be equally so to many who are using the system.

Sudan is a good place to ask about the long-term effects of educational expansion, because Sudan was an early leader among African nations in providing education. By the mid-1950s, a higher proportion of young people, (the majority of males) went beyond primary school in northern Sudan, more than anywhere else in tropical Africa. By the 1990s, a large number of the Sudanese under the age of 24, at least in the urban areas in the North, had been to school, usually beyond primary to middle school. Females also have made notable gains, though they are still behind males. By 1991, 40 percent of the relevant cohorts were enrolled in primary schools and 31 percent in secondary schools. Higher education experience was still very low (2 percent), but the proportion of females at this level has risen to 21 percent (World Bank, 1993).

Table 1. Percent of literacy by gender and age

Age	Female	Male	Female/Male Ratio (male=1.00)
10-14	44.9	64.9	0.69
15-24	27.5	55.2	0.50
25-34	9.8	41.8	0.23
35 and older	4.0	30.6	0.13

Source: Department of Statistics, Khartoum, Sudan, 1979.

The beginnings of the establishment of Western education started with two institutions. In 1902, Gordon Memorial College (named in memory of an English general who died while in service in Sudan) was established by the colonial government

to provide primary education in the North. Later it began secondary and vocational education. Kitchener School of Medicine was founded in 1924 to train small numbers of Gordon Memorial College graduates as general practitioners (postsecondary). Up to 1938, only 10 students were accepted, and they were all men. The graduates of the Kitchener School of Medicine proved to be on the same footing as their peers in Great Britain when examination scores were compared (Beshir, 1977). This period was dominated by Kitchener School of Medicine, which until 1956, was the only modern institution of higher learning in the country. The educational system reflected the humanistic side of the British higher education system (Mohammed and Habib Alia, 1985; Ministry of Education, 1984; Saad, 1972).

At independence in 1956, Gordon Memorial College as the primary education institution and Kitchener School of Medicine as the higher institution combined and became the University of Khartoum. Political pressures by the Sudanese people persuaded the government to establish more educational institutions. The design of the academic structure was changed and admission requirements were liberalized. Courses were combined, evaluation procedures introduced, and a wide range of courses were offered. Higher education began to provide training. Short-term courses for further degrees were included (Ministry of Education, 1985).

The first government of Sudan, after independence in 1956, faced overwhelming problems due to the shortage of a labor force and the lack of well-trained Sudanese to replace the colonial personnel. Beshir (1977) reported that at independence the overall literacy rate was very low, 15 percent, and for women 2

percent. The country had relied on external forces, especially the senior administrative posts were held by the British and the Egyptians. The first educational reform by the government of Sudan took place in 1957. Both the North and the South were unified under the control of the Ministry of Education. In subsequent years, in response to the economic development and the increasing demand for various specialists, the government set up a large number of public institutions. The Sudanese graduates were able to replace nonSudanese in the administrative positions. Bringing more Sudanese into the system was looked upon as the starting point for independence (Saad, 1972).

By the early 1960s the Sudanese government had progressed remarkably in expanding the educational system, especially at the primary level. Together there were more than three hundred elementary schools, and one-third of the students were females. There were two universities, five colleges, and two research institutions with the enrollment of 1,633 students. Currently, in Sudan there are a number of institutions of higher education that provide females education. These include the Higher Nursing College established in 1956, and Ahfad University for Women established in 1966, and Omdurman Islamic University in Omdurman with two separate campuses, one for women and one for men. These separate institutions have contributed to the increase of women's enrollment in Sudanese higher education (Mohammed and Habib Alia, 1985; Ministry of Education, 1984). The Khartoum Branch of Cairo University, founded in 1955, was a joint effort of private and government sectors for human resource development, and currently has an enrollment of more than 15,000 students. It established the tradition of coeducation where men

and women studied side by side. The Institute of Technological College, and eleven other small institutions of higher education, specialize in various professional and technical fields (Bikas, El Sammani, and Yacoub, 1975).

Table 2 shows the early total enrollment from 1960 through 1968 of male and female students in all institutions of higher education, 87 female students out of a total enrollment of 1,633 students. At Khartoum University there were 22 female students out of 722; at Cairo University Khartoum, 27 female students out of 241, while no female students enrolled in the Islamic Institute.

Table 2. Enrollment in institutions of higher education 1960 - 1968 by gender

Institution	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Univ. of Khartoum	700	45.3	22	25.3	722	44.2
Cairo Univ./Khartoum	241	15.6	27	31.0	268	16.4
Higher Institutes	305	19.7	38	43.7	343	21.0
Islamic Institute	300	19.4	-	-	300	18.4
Total	1,546	100.0	87	100.0	1,633	100.0

Source: Secretariat General, National Council for Higher Education, 1985.

The first woman to attend a university was admitted to the University of Khartoum in 1945, and four more were admitted in 1948-1950 (Mohammed and Habib Alia, 1985; Saad, 1972). There were fewer than ten female students at Khartoum University in 1956. Because of the low enrollment of women, two groups advocated for an increase in enrollment of women in education. First, was the "Graduate Movement," founded by Sudanese graduates, (both men and women in the mid-1940s),

followed by the Women's Movement in the early 1950s. Both championed the right of women to equal educational opportunities with men. Second, the shortage of labor force after independence became a public issue that was addressed by the Sudanese government in the late 1950s and early 1960s to develop human resources.

Universities and colleges began admitting women in order to increase the labor force. In the mid-1960s, University of Khartoum officially opened its doors to women, which contributed to increase the number of women in the labor force (Ministry of Education, 1984; El Sammani and Yacoub, 1975; Saad, 1972). The number of women participating continued to increase in the 1970s and 1980s, in both education and the labor force (Ministry of Education, Sudan, 1988; Yacuob 1975). Currently, in Sudan females constitute 15 percent of the labor force.

Despite all developmental measures, constitutional and legal guarantees to improve the social and economic life of women, their educational advancement, and improvement in their participation rate in the national life of the country, still they lag far behind men in almost all the sectors including education (Ministry of Education, 1984). There are several reasons for the low participation by females in education in the Sudan. Many of the studies on women's enrollment in primary and secondary schools, as well as universities and colleges, suggest that family and school-related factors are dependent and operate in symbiotic relationships to influence women's participation (Stromquist, 1989). Traditionally, the main career of a woman is to be a homemaker (World Bank, 1980; UNESCO, 1980). Thus, a woman's participation in the labor force is usually assumed to be temporary. This argument is supported by

Robertson (1989) whose study of women's enrollment in the developing countries found that marriage and childbearing are considered sufficient reasons for women to forego further education. Stromquist's (1989) literature review on women's participation in education in SubSaharan Africa found that the families gave priority to boys over girls.

. . . A family can invest in boys' education more readily than girls' education, with the belief that the men must get jobs, but the women may not have to work outside the home. Even if women intend to work, most jobs open to women do not require a college education. Also, a woman will get married, have children, and will not go for further studies. . . .

Although cultural trends in recent years are changing, traditional thinking regarding women's education in the Sudan remains the same. A study by the World Bank (1993) found that increasing numbers of women in higher education are the sole wage earners supporting their families, being economically independent, and are improving their standard of living. The Sudan Census (1982) showed that 10 percent of the labor force was women. These women are working to support themselves and their families. Ram (1982) also stated that a number of women do not choose to abandon their educational careers upon marriage and the arrival of children. Women have been struggling and are undergoing a tremendous change due to the recent economic crisis. What has been foremost in women's minds has been the ability to feed, the ability to save the children, and the ability to have a wholesome community. This has been very strong, because Sudanese women have been carrying a heavy load of motherhood and making a livelihood for their families. The two major roles have given them a status in the society.

Independence 1956-1969

The colonial educational systems in Sudan, both public and private, were inherited by the Sudan government at independence from 1956 to 1959, and were originally designed more to provide civil servants to serve the colonial administration than to educate the Sudanese. Although the population is predominantly rural, schools tended to cluster in the urban areas. This concentration is found at all levels of education. The system suffered from shortages of teachers and facilities, but education in the South was even more inadequate.

Before and during the colonial rule, the country was divided into ethnic and geographical districts to facilitate the rule by the British and Egyptian authorities. The South was treated separately as a different entity from the North, culturally, politically, and economically. The British colonialists favored the North, especially the cotton growing regions, which were selectively developed, while the South was left with out any development. Educational development was a part of the colonial government's responsibility in the northern region, where modern schools were established, while in the South, education was left to Christian missionaries who established Bible Schools. As early as the mid-1950s these educational institutions were run by missionaries, with very poor levels of instruction. The purpose of education in the South was the evangelization of the Christian faith to the African people. The students were taught to read the Bible in their own languages. The church was the only institution that provided education for the southern Sudanese (Beshir, 1969; Keyon, 1991).

The move toward independence brought about a civil conflict between the Arabs of the North, who controlled the government, and the Africans of the South. The

southern Sudanese felt that they had been denied full civil rights and equality within the country. They have been fighting to obtain this equality and a degree of autonomy. Some inhabitants of the South would prefer to secede completely from northern Sudan and establish their own state. Because the colonial government lacked interest in the South, it imposed upon the missionaries a policy of provincial education, supervised by the missionaries in return for government subsidies. Civil war broke out in the mid-1950s, and continued throughout the 1960s. The Sudan government expelled all the missionaries in February 1964, accusing them of collaborating with southern rebels against the northern government. This act diminished educational opportunities for the southern Sudanese (Sudan Now, 1989).

Since the colonial rule, the demand for education has exceeded Sudan's educational resources. At independence in 1956, education accounted for only 15.5 percent of the Sudanese budget (£Sd 45 million) (Beshir, 1977), which supported 1,778 primary schools, 108 intermediate schools, and 49 government secondary schools. Higher education was limited to the University of Khartoum, with less than 1,000 students sent abroad on government scholarships or by their wealthy parents. The literacy rate in 1956 was less than 5 percent, with effort made by Socialist governments in the 1970s, progress was made. Currently the literacy rate has risen to about 27 percent.

The government system of education was supplemented by nongovernment schools managed by the various communities that catered to the children of Egyptians and other nationalities. These schools were aided by substantial government grants to provide a valuable supplement to the government system. During the first six years of

independence, primary education school enrollment rose from 819,586 to 2.5 million. Secondary school numbers rose from 33,216 to 400,589. Although there are 67 girls for every 100 boys at the primary level, at the secondary level this percentage drops to 28 girls for every 100 students, and young women comprise only 13.7 percent of the students in higher education (Ministry of Education, 1989).

The educational philosophy and curriculum followed the British tradition. Although in the North all students learned the Arabic language at the primary level, both Arabic and English were learned in the intermediate and secondary levels. The language of instruction at the higher level remained English. This increase in the enrollment at all levels demanded more trained Sudanese teachers, which Sudan lacked, so they became dependent upon foreign teachers.

FIGURE I.



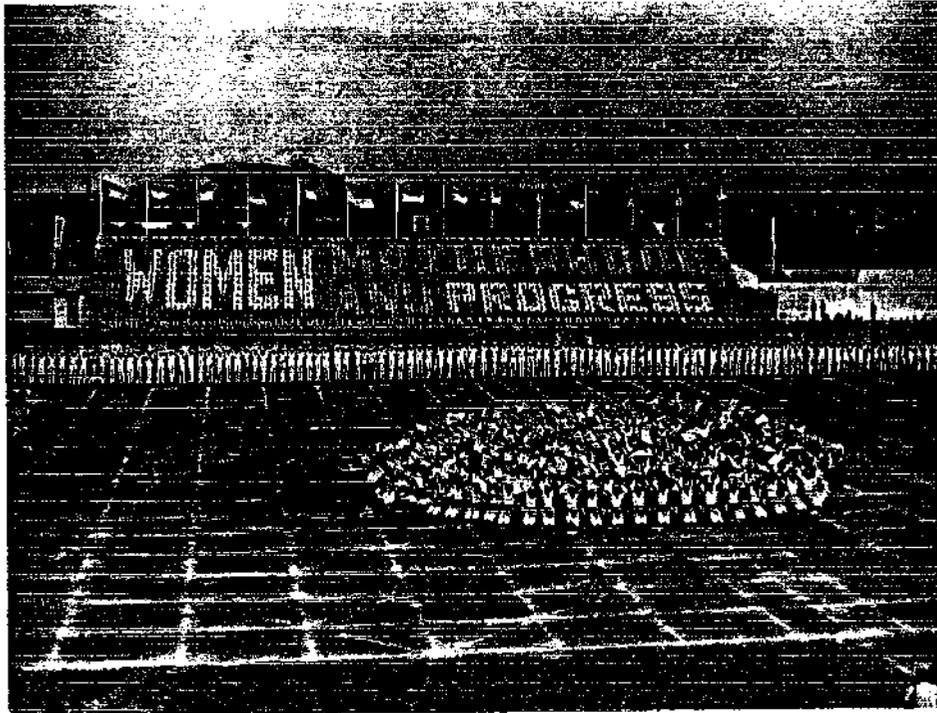
Development of education means peace and stability of the country (Numerri, 1973).

FIGURE II.



School children participate in the celebration of the May Revolution, 1973.

FIGURE III.



May Revolution supported women's progress.

FIGURE IV.



Education is an investment and an advancement of the individual and the society (UNESCO, 1988).

Socialist Rule 1969-1979: A Period of Progress and Change

In 1969 when the socialists took power, they considered the educational system inadequate for the needs of social and economic development. The government proposed extensive reorganization, which would eventually make elementary education compulsory for six years. It also paid more attention to technical and vocational education at the intermediate level. The previous system of primary and intermediate schools had been a prelude to secondary training, and secondary schools prepared students for higher education with no proper basic knowledge for jobs (Ministry of Education, 1989).

By the late 1970s, the Sudanese educational system had been largely reorganized. The basic system of education consisted of a six-year curriculum at the primary level and a three-year curriculum at the junior high level. After taking the junior national examination, qualified students could go to one of three kinds of senior secondary schools: (1) a three-year academic secondary school, which prepared students for higher education; (2) a four-year commercial secondary and agricultural technical school, or (3) a four-year teacher training secondary school, which was designed to prepare primary school teachers. Postsecondary schools included universities and small colleges (Ministry of Education, 1988).

The establishment of a regional administration in 1972-1980 contributed to the expansion of the educational system in the South. By 1980 the number of primary schools increased to 5,400. Less than 14 percent were located in southern Sudan, which has 35 percent of the country's population. The enrollment in the primary schools was more than 260,000 students and a proportion of the secondary school

population consisted of 1,334, which accounted for 6.5 percent of all secondary schools that were in the South until 1982. The break out of the civil war in early 1983 destroyed many educational institutions for the second time. These educational institutions were taken over for military quarters and do not serve educational purposes any longer (Sudan Now 1990).

The emphasis on technical education proposed by the socialist government and encouraged by various international organizations accounted for one-fifth of the upper senior secondary schools in the Sudan. In 1976-1979 eight times as many students that were enrolled in the academic stream enrolled in the technical schools, creating a profound imbalance in the marketplace. These technical schools lacked qualified professional teachers. Lack of equipment, irrelevant curricula, and low teacher morale, resulted in the graduation of inadequately trained students. Because of low morale, students' performance may have suffered. Many of them tended to see this kind of schooling as a second choice at best, not a surprising view given the system's past emphasis on academic training and the low status of manual labor, at least among much of the Arab population in the North. These institutions were for training skilled workers in agriculture, but few of the schools were directed to that end. Most of them turned out workers who could be more useful in urban centers (Hassan, 1995).

The hope for universal and compulsory education was not realized until the late 1970s, it was meant to provide a more equitable distribution of facilities as well as teachers in rural areas and the southern region. During the late 1970s, the socialist government established more schools at all levels and with them, more teacher training schools, although these were never sufficient to provide adequate staff. But the process

was inherently slow and was made slower by limited funds and by the inadequate compensation for staff. Teachers who could find a market for their skills elsewhere, including places outside Sudan, did not remain teachers within the Sudanese system. The majority migrated to oil producing countries to find jobs (Ministry of Education, 1990).

The proliferation of upper-level technical education has not dealt with what most experts saw as Sudan's basic educational problem, providing a primary education to as many Sudanese children as possible. Even more important was the development of a primary school curriculum that was geared to Sudanese experiences and took into account that most of those who completed six years of schooling did not go further. The realistic assumption was that Sudan's resources were limited and that expenditures on the postprimary level left most Sudanese children with an inadequate education. In the early 1990s this situation had not significantly changed. It was even made worse by the Islamic government's new educational reforms. The table below shows the increase in enrollments from 1956 to 1983.

Table 3. Enrollments in school by level, gender and year 1956 to 1983

Year F/M	Elementary Female/Male	F/M	Intermediate Female/Male (In 1,000)	F/M	Secondary Female/Male
1956	33.0/146.0	0.19	7.0/ 39.0	0.18	4.0/22.00.18
1967	156.2/315.0	0.49	22.0/ 67.4	0.33	5.4/23.70.23
1977	491.7/815.3	0.60	74.2/144.4	0.47	22.2/47.30.47
1982/83	64.4/935.8	0.69	137.4/193.3	0.17	60.5/99.20.61
%	30.8/ 14.8	2.1	85.6/033.9	2.5	168.9/109.71.5
Change: 1977-1982-83					

Source: Department of Statistics, Ministry of Education 1984

Growth of Higher Education

In the mid-1970s there were four universities, eleven colleges, and twenty-three institutes in Sudan. The universities were located at urban centers, and the majority of the institutions of higher learning were in the North. Colleges were specialized degree-granting institutions. Institutes granting diplomas and certificates for periods of specialized study shorter than those commonly demanded at universities have provided Sudan with a substantial number of well-educated people in certain fields. However, Sudan was left short of technical personnel and specialists in sciences relevant to the country's largely rural character (Saad, 1972).

By 1980 two universities had opened, one in Juba in the Equatoria Region, the other in the Central Region, and in 1981 there was talk of opening a university in Darfur in the Western Region, which was nearly as deprived of educational facilities as the South. By 1990 some institutes had been upgraded to colleges, and many had become part of an autonomous body called the Institute of Technical Colleges known as Khartoum Polytechnic. Some of its affiliates were outside the capital area, for example, the College of Mechanical Engineering at Atbarah, northwest of Khartoum, and Gazira College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Abu Naamah in the Central Region.

Another important theme expressed by the Socialist government was that "education for the masses, was for work in a revolutionary and progressive society." With the establishment of new institutions in the mid-1970s, enrollment increased rapidly. In the period from 1974 to 1984, enrollment doubled every four years and

reached a peak of 35,053 in 1984 before falling slightly by 5 percent in 1985/86 due to the fall of the socialist government and the outbreak of the civil war.

During this period, women's education made a step forward, as a result of the government's encouragement. The significant event of the period was the emphasis laid on women's education in the Report of Ministry of Education (1971) that stated that "education should not be the privilege of one sex only, but equally the right of both sexes and that women's education would be expanded further for the advancement of the country." Table 2 shows the expansion in higher education enrollment. The enrollment at the University of Khartoum in 1974/75 was 715 females out of a total 6,942 or 10.3 percent. At the Omdurman Islamic University in 1974/75, there were 147 females out of a total enrollment of 754, or 19.5 percent. At Juba University the number was 83 out of 621 in 1982/83 or 13.4 percent. At Gezira University it was 202 out of 899 or 22.5 percent in the same year. Juba University opened its doors in 1977 and the Gezira University opened its in 1978. At Cairo University, Khartoum Branch, the number of the women in 1974/75 was 2,513 out of 12,671 or 19.8 percent. This changed to 8,026 out of a total enrollment of 20,385 in 1982/83 or 39.45 percent.

Table 4. Enrollment in institutions of higher education by gender

Institution Female/%	1974/75 Female	Total	1982/83 Female/%	Female	Total
Univ. of Khartoum 26.6	715	6,942	10.3	2,145	8,059
Omdurman Islamic University 29.4	147	754	19.5	542	1,845
Juba University 13.4	-	-	-	83	621
Gezria University 22.5	-	-	-	202	899
University of Cairo (Khart. Branch) 39.4	2,513	12,671	19.8	8,026	20,385
Institute of Tech College 13.1	178	1,466	12.1	196	1,500
Other Inst./Specialized Colleges 34.9	112	208	43.8	783	1,744
Total 34.2	3,665	22,041	16.6	11,977	35,053

Source: Department of Statistics, National Council of Higher Education, 1985.

At this period, the goals of the education system were in line with the revolutionary government's general program of economic development and industrialization of the country. Hence, the main objective of education in schools and universities of Sudan during this period was to train citizens for active participation in shaping the life of the new socialist state: "women must be regarded equal to men, and they must therefore shed the remaining shackles that impede their free movement so that they may play a constructive and profoundly important part in shaping the life of the country" (Ministry of Education, 1977/1985). Now, the recent changes in the 1990s, in the government policies, are forcing women to conform to codes that restrict

their behavior. This has shown some effect on women's enrollment in the colleges, with a drop of 5 percent in 1990-1991 (Sudan Now, 1990).

The University of Khartoum is the oldest, post secondary education institution established in 1956. In 1990 it enrolled about 12,000 students in degree programs ranging from four to six years in length. Larger but less prestigious was the Khartoum Branch of the University of Cairo with 13,000 students. The size of the latter and perhaps its lack of prestige reflected the fact that many, if not most of its students, worked to support themselves and attended classes in the afternoon and at night, although some day classes were introduced in the early 1980s. At the Khartoum University, Cairo Branch, only tuition is free, whereas all costs at the fully residential University of Khartoum are paid for by the government. At the Institute of Higher Technical Studies, which had 4,000 students in 1990, tuition is free, but a monthly grant for the students does not fully cover other expenses. The smallest of the universities in the capital area is the specialized Islamic University of Omdurman, which existed chiefly to train male Muslim religious judges and scholars (Ministry of Education, 1991).

The University of Juba in the South, established in 1977, graduated its first class in 1981. It was intended to provide education for civil servants in southern Sudan, although it was open to students from the whole country. In its first years, it enrolled a substantial number of civil servants from the South for further training, clearly needed in an area where many in the civil service had little educational opportunity in their youth. After the outbreak of hostilities in the South in 1983, because of instability, the university was moved to Khartoum, a move that severely

curtailed its instructional programs. Gazira College of Agriculture and Natural Resources was also intended to serve the country as a whole, but its focus was consistent with its location in the most significant agricultural area in Sudan.

Of particular interest were the dynamic growth and expansion of Omdurman Ahlia (public) University. It was established by academics, professionals, and business people in 1982 upon one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the city of Omdurman. It was intended to meet the ever-growing demand for higher education and training. The university was to be nongovernmental, job oriented, and self-supporting. Support came mainly from private donations, foreign foundations, and government, which approved the allotment of thirty acres of prime land on the western outskirts of Omduraman for the campus. Its curriculum, taught in English and oriented to job training was pertinent to the needs of Sudan, and had attracted more than 1,800 students by 1990. Its emphasis on training in administration, environmental studies, physics, mathematics, and library science had proven popular (Ministry of Education, 1990).

Women's Education

History in many developing countries (including Sudan) shows that in the long term, education policies do have very far-reaching consequences. Not only do they make a difference, but this difference lasts a long time. There is a great deal of evidence showing that (1) countries that expanded their education systems, subsequently experienced rapid economic growth; and (2) countries that had exceptional economic growth already had exceptionally well-educated populations (UNESCO, 1989). In a changing world in which knowledge and ideas are capital,

adaptability is essential and the response to time and environment is a challenge to developing nations. As education became a resource that is more vital to a nation, the nation's progress became more dependent on its provision of education to all citizens (World Bank, 1993).

Education has been graded as the most significant instrument for changing women's position in the society (Duany, 1994a; UNESCO, 1989;). It not only develops the personality and rationality of individuals, but qualifies them to fulfill certain economic, political, and cultural functions and thereby improves their socioeconomic status. The constitution of UNESCO directs its effects to achieve "the concept of equality of educational opportunity without regard to sex, race, or any distinction, economic or social." One of the expectations from educational development in contemporary societies is the reduction in the inequality among individuals, and that is why education was included as the basic right of every human being in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNESCO, 1989).

From the 1940s to the 1950s, girls' education was reported to be confined to the urban population who were foreigners (Bedri, 1985). Traditionally, women's education was of the most rudimentary kind, frequently provided by a khalwa, or religious school, in which Quranic studies were taught to prepare women morally. Such basic schools did not prepare women for the secular mainstream learning, from which they were virtually excluded. Largely through the pioneering work of a Sudanese businessman Shaykh Babikr Bedri who supported women's education, five elementary schools for girls were established in the North in the 1950's. He and other Sudanese businessmen provided funding for women's education.

Expansion was slow, however, given the bias for boys and the conservatism of the Sudanese society, with education remaining restricted to the elementary level until 1950. In early 1950 the first intermediate school for girls, the Omdurman Girls' Intermediate School, opened. By 1955, ten intermediate schools for girls were in existence. In 1956, the first secondary school for girls opened with an enrollment of 265 students; it was operated by the government.

Girls' education began to expand. By 1960, 245 elementary schools had been established, but only 25 junior secondary and two senior secondary schools were established. There were no vocational schools for girls, only a Nurses' Training College with a low enrollment of eleven students. Nursing was not regarded by many Sudanese families as a respectable vocation for women. During the 1960s and 1970s, women's education made considerable gains under the education reforms that provided 1,086 primary schools, 268 intermediate schools, and two vocational schools for girls. By 1970, girls' education claimed approximately one-third of the total school resources available. By the early 1990s the numbers had remained approximately the same, especially in the rural areas and in the south.

This slow development of girls' education was the result of the country's traditions. Parents tended to look upon girls' education with suspicion, if not fear, that it would corrupt the morals of their daughters. Moreover, preference was given to sons, who, by education, could advance in society to the pride and profit of their family. The traditional norms and values for girls were enhanced, not at school, but at home, in the preparation for marriage and the dowry that accompanied the ceremony. Girls' labor is a valuable asset to the family until marriage, either in homemaking or in

the fields. Finally, the lack of schools in the rural areas discouraged even those who desired elementary education for girls (UNESCO, 1989).

This rather dismal situation should not obscure the successful effort of schools such as the Afhad University College for Women in Omdurman, founded by Bibikr Bedri started as an elementary school for girls in the 1930s. By 1990 it had evolved as the premier women's university college in Sudan with an enrollment of 1,800 students. It had a mixture of academic and practical programs, such as those that educated the women to teach in the rural areas (Bedri, 1989; Ministry of Education, 1990).

Women's Education and Policy Change

Female enrollment in education approximately doubled between 1970 and 1978, from less than 10 percent to 20 percent. The corresponding percent of females in primary education has increased from 20 to 40 percent. Secondary education has increased from twenty to thirty 5 percent. Higher education has increased from less than 10 percent to 15 percent (Ministry of Education, 1990). The advancements made in education since independence have made primary and secondary schooling readily accessible to women at the local level. At the same time it has not made access available at the higher levels. After the opening of new national universities, Sudan changed the policy that allowed women to study abroad during the socialist government in 1970s and early 1980s. The current Islamic government introduced rigid laws preventing women from seeking their university education abroad (Hassan, 1995).

Sudan's new policies have an adverse effect on the postgraduate education of women. Currently there is less than 1 percent postgraduate education. A number of reasons account for the increased interest women have in graduate schools. The mass

media, wider travel abroad, and intermingling with foreigners all influenced the Sudanese, both the Arab-Muslim North and African South in their attitudes toward women's education. The place and role of women in Sudanese society vary widely from region to region. The benefits of education are being noticed for welfare of the family. Not only does the society see men providing for their families, they are also beginning to see that educated women are fulfilling the same role.

However, the major public attitudes toward women's education remain rooted in the Islamic religion in the North and interpreted by various religious leaders and governments. The conservative Moslem society restricts women's freedom of movement, so their contact with men is constrained. This is particularly true in northern Sudan, with its leading religious role as a major holy place of Mohammed El Mahdi and his followers.

Al-Hariri (1987) states that "it is true that Islam laid down a few rules on dress and speech of women." She also pointed out that "Islam has no specific statement about gender differences in the field of education and labor. But it does insist on keeping women in a position that ensures their stable family life." She reported that the first international conference for Islamic education held in Mecca in 1977 "insisted that women's education should be separated from men's. . . ."

Primary and secondary schools in North Sudan are more often segregated into boys' and girls' schools. However, in the South, coeducation was not encouraged by the missionaries but at the independence it was allowed, even though there were situations in which sitting arrangements in the classroom separated males from females. One major constraint is that an increasing number of schools and colleges impose the

principle of gender segregation in their admission policy. The Islamic University in Omdurman has neither female students nor lecturers (Ministry of Education, 1993).

When women are enrolled in the same university as men, like the University of Khartoum, educational facilities, staff, lecturers, and students are segregated along gender lines. However, the lack of female professors demands that male professors instruct in female schools. In the universities, special preference is given to women students in residential facilities and supervised dormitories. In the North, female university students are obliged by the state law to dress in a prescribed manner (less colorful) thus removing any sign of class distinction in the educational environment.

Coeducation was introduced at the university of Khartoum in the 1940s when one female (a non-Sudanese) enrolled in the College of Arts. For a long time many Sudanese families were not comfortable with sending their daughters to coeducational institutions. However, with the establishment of the all-women's college, Khartoum Nursing College and Ahfad University of Women College, families are becoming more comfortable with sending their daughters to school. The number of female students in the higher level grew from 30 students in the 1960s to more than 4,000 students in the 1980s. As stated earlier, at present, females enrollment has increased in the higher level but still lags behind men's enrollment.

Education has been an important factor of development since Sudan's independence, which has helped in raising the status of women and their role in society. Similarly, the literacy rate for women has increased from 5 percent to 12 percent and from 17 percent to 45 percent for men in 1960 to 1982 (Ministry of Education, 1985).

Islamic Regime and Educational Reform 1990-1994

The Islamic regime announced sweeping reforms in Sudanese education in September 1990. In consultation with leaders of the National Islamic Front, the ruling party, Islamic teachers and administrators, who are the strongest supporters of this regime, proclaimed a new philosophy of education. The government allocated £Sd 400 million for the academic year of 1990-1991 to carry out these reforms, and promised to double the sum if the current education system could be changed to meet the needs of Sudan (Ministry of Education, 1990).

The new education philosophy is based on the recognition of human nature, religious values, and physical nature. The reform could be accomplished only by a Muslim curriculum, which in all schools, colleges, and universities would consist of two parts: an obligatory and an optional course-of-study. The required course to be studied by every student was to be based on revealed knowledge concerning all disciplines. All the essential elements of the required course drawn from the Qur'an (Lewis, 1966) and the recognized books of the hadith (modern). The optional course-of-study permitted the student to select certain specializations, such as history, according to individual aptitudes and inclinations. Whether the government could carry out such sweeping reforms throughout the country in the face of opposition, especially in the South, from within the Sudanese educational establishment and the dearth of resources for implementing such an ambitious project remained to be seen. Another major admission requirement for all young adults was membership in the Popular Defense Forces, a paramilitary body allied to the National Islamic Front, the ruling party. By early 1991, the government decreed that all university students attend

military training. Language policy became effective, Arabic replaced English as the language of instruction in the universities. At the University of Khartoum, seventy faculty members who opposed this reform were dismissed. Not only that, lack of teaching materials especially in natural sciences was a frustration for both lecturers and students. The South who opposed all these policies lost a considerable number of enrolled students. There were more than 300 students enrolled at University of Khartoum in 1982. Today there are only fifteen southern Sudanese students enrolled in the University of Khartoum due to this policy change.

Summary

The political changes and their effect on women's education set the stage for my study. The Islamic government is basically aiming to meet short-term, politically significant goals as opposed to long-term plans to correct the various shortcomings of the educational system. In Sudan, Islam and politics and religion and education are highly intertwined. A close look at the female experience in the educational system provides some insight into what has actually taken place.

In summary, attaching greater importance to meeting the immediate political and ideological requirements has been the pattern of Sudanese governments, rather than the training of a skilled labor force. Because of various legal, economic, social, and professional limitations imposed on women in the Sudan currently, little actual change has occurred in the level of women's educational enrollment and attainment since the take over by the Islamic Salvation Front in 1986. The available data point to the reality that Sudanese women have proven to remain active in advocating change of policies that discriminate against women in the educational system. It is hoped that one day the

ability of education to raise the standard of living, opposed to its use as a mere political tool, will regain its rightful place and begin acting as an instrument at the service of the people of Sudan.

Chapter 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND CONTEXT

Educational Theories and Concepts of Inequality

Among sociologists, there is disagreement on the reasons for inequality within educational systems. Wexler (1979) argues that the reason for inequality in education is that women are deprived of access and the society reinforces cultural norms and stereotypes within educational systems. This idea is supported by Marxist theorists who believe that "education is an essential part of the process of producing inequalities." Others claim that education "plays a large part in remedying social inequality." Both theories, however, have a common criticism that simply looks at the results of education as an input/output model. Recent Marxist reviews of education have concentrated more closely on the contradictions implicit in the experience of schooling: the process by which inequality is created and renewed and the cultural resistance of students to dominant ideology (Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Willis, 1977; Apple, 1982; and Thomas, 1990).

Theories of gender and education have also mirrored the factors (stated earlier in chapter one) that affect women's education: that "inequality is caused by the differential socialization of girls and boys (in a sense, that girls are culturally deprived), and these practices affect women's education" (Mahony, 1980). Spender (1982) and Mahony (1980) stated that schools both reflect and produce patriarchal relations and that the state has the power to affect school and family practices. Yet these traditional norms and practices are not questioned by the Islamic state because

Islam as an ideology does not separate the state from religion, therefore, the state has authority over the family to re-enforce the laws. Spender's and Mahony's arguments reflect the situation in the Sudan; for example, the proportion of women who passed the national examination and enter higher education was very small in the 1978-1979 academic year. Statistics for 1986-1988 showed a drop in enrollment in Sudanese universities and colleges. Only 13 percent of students were females and 62 percent were males. This drop was due to changes in government policies toward admissions in certain schools, such as the college of agriculture and the school of law. The Islamic government has implemented Islamic Laws (Shari'a); Sudan became an Islamic state, and Islam as a culture does not allow gender integration.

Islam, as an ideology, is significant in the processes of ordering social relations in Muslim societies, particularly in ascribing to women their status and role. Historically, women in Muslim societies, like women in Western societies, have been excluded from the production of the forms of thought, images and symbols through which a great deal of their experience and social relations are expressed and ordered (Ahmad, 1984; UNESCO, 1989). The apologists for Islam recognize that "to a limited extent, the low status of Middle Eastern women is attributable to the abuses of Islamic law on the part of males" (Saleh, 1986; Levy, 1965; Andersen, 1951).

From 1972-1983, during the Socialist period, the Sudanese government attempted to encourage women to take their place in the labor force. A provision was made in the educational legislation in 1972 regarding Sudanese women; from then on there would be equal education for all. Other aspects of the lives of Sudanese women do not appear to have been much affected by the political changes. However, it is too

early to expect noticeable changes in the roles played by women (Ministry of Education, 1988; Youssef, 1985; Mohammed and Habib Alia, 1985).

The Concept of Equal Access

The extent of inequality that exists between men and women in Sudan is an overwhelming problem that has contributed to an unequal participation in education and the workforce. The development of education among women is the main instrument through which the country narrows the inequality and accelerates the process of social, economic, and political change in the status of women.

There are two schools-of-thought about the role of women in society. The majority of traditional schools-of-thought strongly feel that the place of women is at home. The second school-of-thought, more radical, feels that women should be allowed to shoulder the same responsibility as men in the society. This extends beyond home; consequently, all openings available to men should be available to women as well. The synthesis of the two views lies in extending the scope and openings for women in the field of education, because if a woman has to stay at home and play the role of a housewife, she can discharge this responsibility in a better way, if she is educated. At the same time, education and training would enable a woman to enter into an economic life, she can choose an independent career, or if it becomes necessary, augment the family income. Educational development and an acquisition of vital skills are therefore, necessary for a woman if she is to be efficient, even in her traditional role as a wife and mother (Sanderson, 1984).

The current overall aim of education in Sudan is stated in the general Educational Act of 1976:

General education in Sudan aims at giving a balanced and integrated education for mental, physical, spiritual, and moral development. That is to be achieved through the development of basic attitudes, promotion of a spirit of initiative, leadership, responsibility, scientific outlook, devotion to work, and productiveness to achieve socioeconomic development aiming at the creation of a healthy socialist community, promotion of national unity, and veneration for the country's heritages and values, Arab and African heritages. All this in conformity with the Sudan constitution and the charter of National Work and the State general policy. (Constitution of Sudan, 1973)

There is wide support among educated groups in Sudan for the notion of equal education opportunities. However, when it comes to areas of specific application, there is considerable disagreement. Sudan represents a setting where government policies have required mass attendance in primary and secondary schools, while controlling access to universities through a policy of national examinations, admissions, and Islamic segregation of the sexes. Sudan also has been a very interesting example because, historically, it has had more than 35 percent of self-employed women. This is more than any other northern African country of Islamic background (Ram, 1982).

Before and during early independence, the state allowed access to universities to male secondary graduates only, and allowed limited access for women graduates until recently (Saad, 1972). The period of 1972-1982 started with the creation of more opportunities for women in higher education. This policy ended with the integration of women into the professional fields and into the workforce. By the end of this period, the new Sudanese government, led by the Islamic National Front Party, changed its policies and began restricting the availability of educational opportunities for women.

Traditional Islamic conceptions of education are embedded in the very essence of being Muslim. This observation is related to the Islamic view of man's attitude

toward knowledge in the Muslim society. This attitude is primarily defined in the "Quran" (the Holy Book) where the word "allama" (to teach, to instruct) is mostly used with reference to God when he chose to instruct man about what he ought to know (Ali, 1989; Andersen, 1951).

The restricting of educational opportunity on the basis of gender has characterized many of the world's nations and has remained the norm in Sudan. Different governments have implicitly assumed that demand automatically leads to supply and have adopted a wide range of policies (admission requirements, location and number of colleges, and administrative requirements) not all of which are designed to meet the demands of the entire population. For example, all institutions of higher education are located in urban centers. However, only 18 percent of the Sudanese population lives in these areas, while 82 percent of the population lives in rural areas (World Bank, 1989).

The literature of the 1970s and 1980s expressed the idea of "equality." This idea means that all people should have an equal opportunity to develop and use their special abilities. In education, this idea was extended to give access to both sexes, solely on the basis of individuals' abilities and was extended to both urban and rural populations (UNESCO, 1988; World Bank, 1989). As Sivard (1985) stated:

Access in regard to educational opportunity is understood in a way that refers to both the opportunity to participate in education and availability of facilities in which a poor country is not able to provide equally, for example, in the facilities available in rural and urban areas. The second, is the extent to which individuals and groups enroll in and attend higher educational activities. The third level of educational inequality is in the treatment in academic performance. We know that not all students or groups of students are treated equally by teachers and administrators. Streaming, curriculum tracks, attention giving, and stereotyping are factors that lead to variations in academic performance.

The development of the idea of equal educational opportunity was made official (education for all) in 1956 by the Sudanese Government after assuming power from the colonial government. Equal educational access was defined as equal attendance regardless of the individual's background (Ministry of Education, 1984). Several interpretations of the idea of equality in educational opportunity are being advocated by various groups in Sudan. These alternative interpretations such as coeducation and open admissions to all, to students in fields of interests, are more than a mere academic interest. They lead to the advocacy of different educational policies and different standards for judging the current extent of educational equality in different groups.

In the Sudan, the answer to the problem of unequal educational opportunities consisted of providing a free education to all Sudanese citizens. The support of equality in educational opportunities is still being applied by many governments, but there are many differences in applying the laws that govern the educational system. First, it does not address the availability of resources in the Sudan. Second, it assumes that the existence of a free education will eliminate the problem of the lack of economic resources, an inequality of opportunities among the urban and rural families. In other words, it assumes that the children of rural poor families will be able to have equal opportunities in all levels of education. This assumption does not address the problem of a female child. Many rural families do not allow a female child to attend school beyond the primary school level. Because her labor is necessary to the family, and also because she is expected to marry early, her education might be seen as a waste of family resources. In the Sudanese society the husband is the ultimate beneficiary of a woman's education. In that case, boys have better chances of using the family resources because his family views it as a future investment (UNESCO, 1988; World Bank, 1983). Article 20 in the Constitution of Sudan states that:

Education is an investment and an advancement of the individual and the society. The State shall plan, supervise, and direct education to serve the nation's objectives.

Significance of Women's Education

A basic assumption of this study is that the central obligation of any educational system should be to develop fully the potential of every individual. The basis of this research is the need to enhance different forms of parity within education in Sudan. In particular: (1) parity in access to a given level of education among individuals from different family backgrounds, regions, schools, religious backgrounds, and gender; (2) parity in intellectual variations in terms of different fields of study like the sciences and social sciences; (3) parity outcomes in terms of cognitive achievements of certain levels of education; (4) parity of payoff in status and income based on gender differences.

There are a number of reasons why women's education is important. A better education for both men and women, when all other things are equal, can contribute to growth in actual earnings, in nonmonetary returns, and in equitable distribution of income of all people (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall 1985). Moreover, educating women generates more substantial social benefits. More years of schooling tend to improve women's knowledge and use of better health practices. It is estimated that each additional year of schooling decreases the mortality rate of children under the age of five up to 10 percent. Educated mothers have healthier and fewer children, and can send their children, females in particular, to school (World Bank, 1993).

Education is not an end in itself, but a means to a larger end, and the individual has the right and responsibility to determine the purpose to which she gives to life (UNESCO, 1983). Inequalities in women's education have been given little attention in Sudan. Wolpe (1977) claims that education trains middle-class students (male and female) to take over positions of high status and responsibility in society, such as civil servants, doctors, teachers, and managers. Currently, in Sudan very few females are attending school or a college or university, because the new law does not permit participation in public life. The new government has embarked upon the policy of dismissing women from public employment. The justification is based on the grounds

that Islamic doctrine requires women to be confined to the home, but there is also the need for civil service in the interests of fiscal economy (Kelley, 1983; Ram, 1982; Saad, 1972).

Since very few women attend school and few go on to higher levels in the Sudan educational system, this study was intended to examine the process and the crucial role played by the Sudanese system of education in the creation and reproduction of gender differences. To be able to understand the process, we have to look at the experiences of women themselves and what meaning they give to their education. Understanding women's experiences may enable policymakers to equalize opportunities. In other words, the system of education in Sudan would best serve women after a thorough analysis of the operations has been made. Only after educators, policymakers, and planners search for honest answers to obstacles that hinder women's education and will the system of education serve women.

Literature Review

In extensive literature reviews, Stromquist (1989), Hill and King (1991), and Acker (1994) identified factors that affect or influence women's access and participation in all levels of education in developing countries:

Institutional barriers excluding females from any level of education:

- (1) sex and age quotas in admission practices;
- (2) regulations requiring full-time course loads or completion of studies within a particular time period;
- (3) inflexibility of times and locations of the institutions (women with families need greater flexibility);
- (4) faculty and staffs discouragement of female students continuing their studies; and
- (5) discrimination, stereotyping, and gender expectations about women's lifestyles.

Situational barriers:

- (1) negative attitudes of some family members toward a college education for women;
- (2) lack of available educational opportunities; and
- (3) the strain of being simultaneously a woman, a homemaker, and possibly a parent.

Dispositional barriers:

- (1) women's views of appropriate sex roles and their ambivalence about education, intellectual activity and careers;
- (2) personality characteristics less compatible with independent action and competition; and
- (3) the tendency of both men and women to undervalue the work of women.

In spite of these factors that the research denoted as barriers for women, the institutional barriers and some of the situational barriers to women's education can be amenable to government influence.

In the Sudan, women's dropout rates in schools and colleges are attributable in part to their greater tendency to marry during their undergraduate years (UNESCO, 1986). Women are substantially more likely to get married during college than men. Marriage has the opposite effect on the retention rates of men and women. Marriage sometimes negatively affects women's chances of finishing college and has a positive effect on men's chances. Women tend to drop out of school or college for personal, nonscholastic reasons, while men tend to drop out mainly for scholastic reasons (UNESCO, 1988; Assie-Lummumba, 1987; Biraimah, 1982; Beckett and O'Connell, 1976; Ahmad, 1974). Family economic background ranks high in importance for men who drop out (because some men have to care for their families), and family decisions rank first for women (Thomas, 1988).

The literature attempts to highlight the factors that affect contemporary female participation in education in developing countries. Education in the Sudan, as in many other developing countries, is becoming a means of social awareness, social mobility, and economic well-being for women and men (World Bank, 1989). The exclusion of women represents a serious violation of justice and human rights. Access to education, however, has improved significantly in the last two decades in other parts of the world, but Sudan, by comparison, still has a smaller proportion (13 percent) of women attending a college or university. The research has identified several areas of importance. For the students, parental support and high educational aspirations for

their children supply the motivation for college attendance and achievement. Academic quality of secondary schools will help determine whether one will pass the national examination. Educational resources and school environments may affect educational achievement. Women are less likely than men to take certain subjects such as English or history (UNESCO, 1988).

Women tend to have somewhat lower educational aspirations, especially beyond high school, and these aspirations decline during college attendance, while male students' aspirations rise (Youssef, 1976/77). Robertson's (1985) study on women's enrollment in Africa, found that women enroll almost as frequently as men in both primary and secondary levels. Women are more likely to drop out of college than men, especially after marriage (Sivard, 1985). Except for those who attend all-women's colleges, women experience the same college environment as men. Women take different subjects, more often specializing in the humanities and arts and less often taking math and sciences (Tembo, 1984, Blackstone and Weinrich-Haste, 1980). Women are under-represented as educational administrators at all levels of education. The absence of women as college and university faculty members, especially at the higher ranks is documented by most research (Weis, 1980). The literature indicates that there are powerful constraints affecting women's participation in higher education in Sudan. Although progress is being made, the status of women as students and employees is still not equal to that of men in the developing countries (Stromquist, 1989; Ran, 1985).

Women's Enrollment

The primary and secondary enrollment rate is directly associated with students' family income and residency. More students from the urban areas enrolled than from rural areas. The average family income of enrollees in the urban areas in primary and secondary school levels is approximately 50 percent greater than the family income of

enroUees in rural areas (UNESCO, 1990). At the primary level, only 10 percent of the rural population is enrolled (Robertson, 1985; Mohammed and Alia, 1985).

At the secondary level, the proportion of girls' enrollment to the corresponding population of the age group 14-17 was only 12 percent in the late 1970s, in comparison to 32 percent in the case of boys. The proportion of girls enrolled at this level now has dropped from 6 percent to 3 percent.

Among those who pass the national examination in the Sudan and are qualified to enroll, what proportion enrolls at tertiary levels? El Sammani and Yacoub (1975) in their study on Higher Education and Employment found that the proportion of total enroUees who are women increased from 5 percent to 10 percent in the late 1970s. College enrollment rates were low among women in the 1950s and early 1960s, but steadily moved upwards during those years (10 percent vs. 19 percent). Much of the increase in women's enrollment has been in older age groups, as a higher proportion of females decided to continue their education after marriage. Even in the over-25 age category the number of women enrolled has not equaled that of men (Bedri and Burchmal, 1985). Discrete policies and institutional traditions regarding time in school and curricula also may influence girls' participation, both in terms of their absolute learning gains and their performance relative to boys (Hayde, 1989).

Other studies found that college entry is affected by the socioeconomic context of students parents' educational background and the intervening influence of manifest ability as indicated by grade point averages (GPA) of the national examination, and upon college aspirations. Given equal ability and aspiration, rates of college entry are approximately equal among those from differing socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds, but differing socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds are associated with differing distributions of ability and college plan entries. Studies from the World Bank (1986) found that rural boys get better grades than urban girls in university entrance national examinations. One of the reasons is that women have a lot of domestic duties,

and therefore, less time to study (Mohammed and Habib Alia, 1985; Ministry of Education, 1984; Hevi-Yiboe and Bruchinal 1985).

Educational Aspirations

A report from the Ministry of Education in Sudan (1980) reported that 34 percent of high school female students graduated, and 15 percent planned to attend a university or college. Attendance percentages were low in the early 1960s but rose in 1975 to 18 percent (Ministry of Education, 1985). More female high school seniors planned to attend college than males, but men were found to have more access to pursue their plans while women were found they had limited access to pursue their plans. Enrollment rates in 1979-1983 indicate that 45 percent of male students attended an institution of higher education while only 13 percent of the women had enrolled (Ministry of Education, 1984; UNESCO, 1991).

Primary factors associated with college plans are: (1) community (students in urban areas are more likely to plan to go to college), or (2) an older sibling or close relative living in the same house (extended family) has attended college (Ahmad, 1985).

The reason that most female high-school graduates 18-21 years old drop out of school is that their families do not have enough resources to pay for school fees, so they keep the girls at home and pay for the boys to continue their education (World Bank, 1986). Ramirez and Weis (1979), in their study on political incorporation of women in Africa, and Robertson's (1985) study on women and change in East Africa found that financial well-being of the family greatly affects female participation. Nyinyangi's (1980) study of female participation in Kenya also supported this explanation.

Cultural and religious values also affect female participation. In most African countries, the education of girls is often seen as worthy of consideration only up to marriageable levels. Kirui (1982) and Hyde (1989), in their studies comparing boy's

and girl's secondary school enrollment in SubSahara Africa, found that the girls often repeated the upper grade levels so that they could find husbands.

Another cultural practice, common in Africa, is related to bride wealth, where the groom pays for the bride. Robertson (1985) in her study of gender participation, using the UNESCO data for 44 African nations, found that in the countries where the bride wealth concept is prevalent, when a girl reached puberty she was not allowed to continue her education because she was of marriageable age. Also, bride wealth among poor families encourages the father of the bride to marry off his daughter at an early age to a wealthy man. Bride wealth is not only for gaining wealth, but it is also for distribution of wealth within the society (Kelly and Slaughter, 1991). Robertson also revealed strong association between urban populations and enrollment rates. Women who live in urban areas are more likely to enroll both in primary and secondary levels than those who live in rural areas. She said that the number of girls at primary and secondary levels is high and declines at tertiary levels. Other studies also suggest that only wealthy and academically talented girls seem to escape the practice of parental discrimination in favor of sons. (Shah, 1986; Hearies, 1974; Saad 1972 and Frisher, 1968).

Bedri and Burchinal (1985) made a times-series comparison from 1956 to 1983/85 in school enrollment in the Sudan. In this study they found large increases in school enrollments for men and women, with large percentage gains for women relative to men in the lower levels of education. The female/male ratios in school enrollment varied among the administrative regions of the Sudan, being positively and strongly correlated with per capita income and the percentage of population living in urban areas of the regions. Also, another study by Mohammed and Alia (1985) on the enrollment of women in higher education in Sudan found that there has been a large increase in female enrollments in most institutions of higher education, that the proportions of

females relative to males also have increased substantially, but that enrollments of women still lag behind those of men, especially in scientific and technical fields.

School Environments

School-related factors affecting students' participation, particularly the decision to drop out, include the content of educational programs and teaching practices.

Yeoman (1985), in a study on college dropouts in developing countries, found that the main reason given by the young people was a lack of interest. Women reported that they spend excessive time sitting in the classroom with no interesting work to do. The same study found that people believed educating females had less value than educating males. In this study female students indicated that the teachers asked them fewer questions, gave them fewer positions of responsibility, made less eye contact, and let them get away with lower standards of work than males (Yeoman, 1985).

The pattern of intellectual and educational development for an undergraduate woman varies somewhat if she attends a women's college rather than a coeducational college. At a women's college, she is more likely to attain positions of leadership, complete the degree, aspire to higher degrees, and enter a graduate or professional school (Hyde, 1989; Kaneko, 1987; Arriogada and Horn, 1986; Heyneman, 1974; and Henires, 1974).

Research on the effects of school environments on educational achievement has been affected by the provision of equivalent resources. The peer group is a major component of the school environment. Segregation between schools or within a school, intended or unintended, may have deleterious effects on the less able group of students (possibly including the practice of segregating female students for home economics, and male students for physical education). However, many of the factors that affect educational resources and school environments can be influenced by policy decisions at the government level (Stromquist, 1989; UNESCO, 1988; and Ministry of Education; 1988).

Educational Achievement and Gender-Role Modeling

Research in general has consistently shown that women get higher grades than men in both primary and secondary school, but begin to show lower grades at the higher level of education. Between 1976 and 1980, there was a substantial improvement of grades among college students in Sudan. There were many reasons for this improvement. According to the Ministry of Education Report (1985), the political stability of the country during the socialist government (1969-1985) contributed to better economic conditions that led to the improvement of school systems and teachers' training.

Achievement is especially important for analyzing the educational status of women. The variance in achievement is greater among women than men, and a larger proportion of women do not achieve for a variety of reasons. Women are much more involved in helping their mothers with the housework while their brothers are free to use their time to study (Abu Nasr, 1982). Unfortunately, some of the factors related to low achievement (characteristics of the student's community and family) are not amenable to governmental intervention.

Johnson (1973), for example, illustrates the significance of same-gender teachers as achievement models, although others such as Biraimah (1980) dispute this argument. Kalia (1980) carried out a survey of school textbooks in India. He found that women were represented as passive, subservient and "feminine," while men were depicted as active and superior decision makers and achievers. Through the school's "hidden curriculum," contained in textbooks, teacher's attitudes, the authority structure, and the lack of female role models, women learn, that high academic achievement is not part of their role. Finn, Reis, and Dulberg (1980) examined the relationship between the school factors and women's performance in schools. They conclude that the schools produce sex differences in achievement through patterns of sex-role stereotyping and role modeling.

Other research concerning the effect of gender-segregated schooling upon women's achievement has shown that women achieve highly in single-sex-schools. The impact of sex-segregated schooling upon women's achievement is an important issue for developing countries where such schooling is common. It may take many forms, ranging from separate school systems to separation within schools for specific subjects or majors. Dale (1969), in England, carried out an extensive study of mixed and single-sex schools. He found that mixed schools are more successful. Other researchers such as Shaw (1966), contend that women perform better in a single-sex school because the need to maintain sexual boundaries and identities is reduced.

Subject Matter

A survey of entering college students by the Ministry of Education in Sudan in 1980 shows that women are increasingly motivated to pursue careers in professional fields that are dominated by men; however, certain government policies on admissions to some schools such as law and religion discriminate against women. For example, in Sudan the College of Marine Biology at Port Sudan, which is one of the outstanding colleges in the country does not admit women (Ministry of Education, 1989). A report by UNESCO in 1988 stated that in Sudan majors are patterned by gender: more than 70 percent of the degrees in home economics, library science, education, and health professions such as nursing (at the undergraduate level) are awarded to females, and more than 80 percent of the degrees in medicine, agriculture, architecture, business, engineering, law, and physical sciences are awarded to men.

A number of studies have reported that cultural norms concerning gender are directly or indirectly the major cause of group differences in discipline specialization. For example, in Sudan women were not allowed to apply to schools of engineering and agriculture until 1970. Also, some studies found that long-term financial returns from investment in education varies as a function of subject matter as well as by gender. The fields into which women often go tend to be fields with low average salaries and

little prestige. Besides the differences in salaries at the same jobs with the same education, no study has been done on salary implications of the occupational fields entered by women in Sudan (Hum, 1985; Ministry of Education, 1985; Burn, 1971; Guthrie et al., 1971).

In summary, this literature review on women's participation in education in Sudan has shown inequalities of access to education. Many studies tend to concentrate on factors that affect female participation at the lower level of education, but no study has focused on the higher level of education. Also, measures of inequalities in education are not being taken into account in national educational development planning in the Sudan. Even so, women's enrollment is increasing although at a very slow rate. The slow increase of women's participation suggests more critical studies are needed to allow women to speak for themselves, and to tell what might be the factors that influence their participation. This study also determines to identify those seeking change and who are in a position to advance it. Equal education for both men and women in Sudan is an important educational policy issue, but it has been neglected severely by the Sudanese government. The literature pointed out that for African society, and particularly the Islamic (as in the Sudan), women's social status is a major reason for many kinds of inequality in education and in the society. Men participate in higher levels of education and women do not, and the society sees this as a normal social pattern of behavior. Inequalities exist, because families and the government do not question a lack of participation or low educational performance and attainments by women.

Chapter 4

WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN SUDAN FROM THE STUDENT'S VIEW: FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN'S EDUCATION

I just want to be able to read and write, because women raise children, so they are the ones who prepare for the future. (Asha, 1993)

This quotation introduces the subject of this study because it illustrates quite clearly how women's education falls behind men's education. There is instrumental value in education for women. Once a woman is educated, she can become a vehicle to pass on any benefits of education to her family. She can directly influence her children's education and indirectly improve household activities and household income (The World Bank, 1993). Many policymakers and researchers on the subject look at women's education in the instrumental way, but most women themselves see education in the self-development context that leads to social and economic independence. In this study the women see themselves in their own right, with their own potential and their own needs for self-development.

This chapter focuses on women's education in Sudan from the women's view. Women in Sudanese educational institutions, especially higher education, are an outstanding group. They have a strong sense of superiority; they are full of confidence and are persistent in the pursuit of a better education to achieve their independence. The women in this study, diverse as their backgrounds and experiences of some aspects of the Sudanese educational system may be, share a disturbing similarity of experience so far as gender discrimination is concerned. Therefore, this chapter examines women's perception of education and the focus here is on the factors that affect women's education and the underlying causes of the status of women's education in Sudan. Their experience will illustrate obstacles faced by women in education. Tracing these barriers will explain the problems that have led to a lack of women's access to and participation in education. The findings are presented under three

categories: institutional barriers, situational barriers, and dispositional barriers (Stromquest, 1989; King and Hill, 1993).

Education, a Basic Right

There was little chance, therefore, for quite a number of children ever to see the inside of what is called 'the little red school house' or the 'little brown school house. (Coombs, 1968)

Investing in education and training is now recognized as one of the key conditions for developing countries and the cohesion of contemporary societies. In order to meet the challenge of education for all, implementation of comprehensive, consistent, and effective educational policies are needed. Also needed is a firmer commitment by the government and society to develop new educational approaches to broaden access to and participation in all levels of education for all children.

In the past, and especially in Africa, there was a close link between traditional learning and the fundamental needs of each community. The elders, the wise men, and women of the village, were able to pass on know-how and a set of values needed to perpetuate their way of life. Emphasis was placed on collective rather than individual abilities. With the introduction of Western education, a new economic way of life, and high population growth rates, a general economic decline jeopardized the future of families and children in developing countries. The decline in the system of mutual aid within families, particularly in the urban areas, has made children, especially females more vulnerable than ever. The lack of stimulation and backing deprives the present generations of support from the family such as that received by children in the old traditional society. For this reason, education assumes greater importance, since it is a matter, at least in part, of replacing the functions previously performed by the family (Bowman and Anderson, 1980).

In this study, education was considered the most important factor in changing women's status in the modern economy. The majority of women indicated that cultural norms and religious beliefs were factors that affected their participation in

education. A change in parents' attitudes, more support from both teachers and parents, and a change in government policies that discriminate against women were frequently mentioned as factors that influence women's access and participation. Women interviewed for this study interpreted education as providing an opportunity for them to develop their own personalities and be able to decide their own futures. Education to them meant being independent economically, and having confidence and self-respect as a human being.

The rural students interviewed in this study were proud of themselves because they had worked very hard to pass the national examination enabling them to attend one of the three top universities in the country. These students admitted that they had to work twice as hard to reach the standard required and had confidence that they will finish their education so that they can have a career. The urban students admitted that rural students were academically better because they worked harder and took their schoolwork more seriously. The women indicated that their success in education was a change of roles for rural women. One woman said: "I have a friend who came from the rural area. All she does is study every day, and she does very well on her examinations." The urban women think that they are superior in their social and economic status. The majority of respondents were from well-to-do families. Their parents are government officials or business people.

These women also commented on the government policies, access and equality of women's education. The majority of women cared about government policies. They demonstrated great interest in the type of governments that might rule the country and what policies toward women's progress would be enacted. This desire to develop greater self-respect and self-esteem pervades the spirit of the women of Sudan today.

Women in the Sudanese universities have the courage to break various traditional norms. They are bold enough to resist their fate by overcoming various difficulties with amazing willpower, in spite of the double load of domestic and

schoolwork. While it is difficult for anyone to achieve these goals, it is even harder for women, since discrimination against women exists. The Sudanese society does not grant equality for women. The majority of women commented that in order to achieve perfect harmony between genders, women intellectuals must break away from traditional thinking and withstand pressures from all directions. They must handle appropriately various prejudices that require not only the firm determination to achieve, but also the willingness to work very hard and not give way to inequality and injustice.

As one woman stated:

I want to be a role model for young women. It is time for the government to provide adequate education for women because it will be for the common good of the society.

Women in Sudan, as do other women in the world, suggest that they have no alternative perspective in terms of education. Some of the respondents in this study cited life situations such as unwed motherhood, which made education difficult, especially at the higher levels.

Institutional Barriers: The State and the School

Sudan is the largest country in Africa with a population of 27 million people. More than 80 percent is rural. The underdevelopment of the economy has restricted the scope and speed of development of education, especially higher education. Sudan has suffered serious economic problems for forty years of its independence. Even so, enrollment grew, and the number of students doubled in all levels of education. The distance from home to school, the urban/rural dichotomy, and the core/periphery imbalance affect women and girls more than it affects men and boys. For example, in rural Sudan, the opportunity to go to school is a family matter. In the school system, the likelihood of enrollment, regular attendance, and retention are school administration matters. In the school environment, the availability of role models would be rare for a Sudanese girl living in the village, looking after siblings and working in the field. In short, culture is a collective code for defining the realities and interpreting women's

and men's activities. The Sudanese educational system shares the view that boys and girls cannot be educated equally and this remains a living example of gender inequality. One of the girls school administrators commented on the poor planning and educational facilities:

There are very few schools in the country, and the majority are for boys. Females have few schools. Also, women have few voices in management and this is throughout Sudan; the whole range of gender issues does not even get onto the agenda.

Most rural schools reflect in their enrollment figures the difference between boys' and girls' opportunities. The village school at Nasir in South Sudan is typical of many rural schools in Sudan. The boys stand a better chance of staying on to complete the primary level, but the girls drop out as they approach their fifth year of schooling.

Table 5. Enrollment per class at Nasir Primary School

Classes	PI	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
Girls	25	21	15	11	07	05
Boys	55	48	35	34	28	30

Another factor affecting girls' opportunities in education is geographical. With more than 579 ethnic groups and more than 150 vernacular languages, Sudan is a mosaic of different cultures and customs (Sanderson and Sanderson, 1981). The diversity is reflected in the traditional attitudes toward the role, status, and the education of women and girls. To complicate things further, the original pattern has been overlaid by the Islam penetration in the North, and the South's penetration by the Christian missionaries. Until 1944, education in the South was provided totally by the Christian missions. The South is underdeveloped educationally even today. Until 1956, Sudan was in effect, a British colony. Its borders were artificially drawn by the British to include Africans in the South and West, Arabs in the North and in the East. The result is a nation of diverse ethnic groups with no common culture, language or religious faith. Education in rural Sudan was described by women in this study as difficult because of a lack of facilities and great distances from schools.

In addition to indigenous cultural differences, there is the colonial legacy that has divided Sudan into the Arab North and the African South. The relative neglect of the colonial system has led to political differences. The civil war has become another barrier to the expansion of educational systems. Apart from the regional diversity there is also a huge disparity between urban and rural areas that affect women especially. In towns, 75 percent of the men read. In villages 98 percent of the women are illiterate. The overall literate rate is 43 percent for men and 95 percent for women (Barr, 1993).

One of the reasons for large scale internal migration from villages to towns and the rural exodus generally is the lack of educational and economic opportunities in rural areas (Ministry of Education Plan, 1990). Distance to school is a great problem despite the role of the extended family in providing accommodations in town for large numbers of country cousins. More secondary boarding facilities are needed, but they would make secondary education more expensive for both the state and families. Women marry at an early age. The family size that, although large in all parts of Sudan, is bigger in rural areas and judging by the responses of the women in the interviews, is likely to remain so. All these aspects of rural life tend to militate against increased participation in education by women and girls.

The Ministry of Education and the Commission on Higher Education set basic policies, goals and major structural elements for the national educational system in Sudan. These centralized policies shaped the state-supported public system that accounted for an increase in the enrollment rates in the 1970s.

Many reforms and restructuring of the Sudanese educational system, created many problems. Even when the tuition is free, the expense involved in sending a son or daughter to a school may still be considerable for a rural family that still must pay for transportation and spending money. The educational costs (the high cost of higher education) add to the financial burden for the students' families with limited earnings.

Also, the implementation of segregation policies (separate institutions) has added to the already existing problems. Education is seen as the best resource a nation can provide to its citizens. Most research has argued that education for all can be justified not only from a social but also from an economic point of view:

Estimates of the social returns from investing in education indicate that the strongest case for public support of education is at the primary level in low-income countries. This meets the goal of promoting equity as well as that of raising productivity. (World Bank, 1994)

Educational planning is, however, always a balancing act between ideas of social equality and immediate labor market requirements. For the country to achieve economic independence, a cadre of qualified workers including women has to be trained. The Addis Ababa meeting of head-of-states in 1989, in fact, resolved to establish more relevant education. This policy was adopted in Sudan to include women in training for all fields. One of the faculty members stated:

I am a government official, and it is part of staff training to attend some of the conferences within our fields. This year many women did not attend any conferences because they are not allowed to travel without the company of a male relative or husband. The "Shari'a" Islamic law does not allow a woman to travel alone, unveiled, visiting places of entertainment and maintaining social contact in public.

Within the schools and the educational system, there are factors that may operate to the disadvantage of women. There is evidence of residual gender bias in the school curriculum with the traditional options being offered. This is a problem of structure as well as content (Brock and Cammish, 1991). The curriculum was another factor, indicated by women, which was influenced by male images (including textbooks and instructional materials), especially at the primary and secondary levels. Female images were always represented negatively, whereas male images were desirable characters portraying positive attitudes toward education. In 1989 the Islamic government called for separate schooling for males and females. In general, male and female students are taught by a separate staff of their own gender, with separate school buildings and separate administrations. Although the curriculum was considered the

same, there were some gender-based differences in the field of study such as home science and nursing for females and physical education for males.

Education has been free in the Sudan. Students did not pay their tuition and living expenses; even meals and other living expenses were paid by the national government. Therefore, the government subsidized educational expenses for all students. Both rich and poor get free education. In 1991 the new reforms required students to pay for their meals and living expenses. Ninety percent of the students got no help from their families at all. Alma, whose daughter attends one of the colleges commented:

Educational cost are becoming higher than the family income. The problem is with the economy. Governments should be aware of the general conditions of ordinary people.

Women who are entering secondary schools and institutions of higher learning indicated a number of cases of differentiated curriculum offerings, tailored to specific future gender-roles. Most women are streamed into classes such as home economics, health science, social biology, education, and fine arts.

Class size in the primary and secondary levels was frequently mentioned in the interviews. Having more than 80 students in a class was quite common. From what recent research has shown about classroom interaction and gender, one can hypothesize that the larger the class, the less attention women might receive. The data from the national examinations indicate that fewer women than men win places in secondary education or in a university.

In southern Sudan, Christianity has lower expectations for women. The teaching of the churches, as it was introduced by the missionaries who were the teachers in the South, was based on the Bible. What was taught in the mission schools was home economics in preparation for girls to be housewives. Martha, who is a third year student at Juba University, explained the differences in the treatment of females and males in the church schools in the South in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Discrimination is always covert in the society. Males have authority and power, and women have to take directions, so it can be very covert. I think women have to know a lot and do well in whatever they want to do. They must get good skills or be the best at a profession of their interest.

Sudanese parents would not hesitate to send a daughter to school if the teacher was a male. In Sudan, it is usually considered not safe to send an unmarried female teacher to work far away from her home. In the 1970s, during the socialist rule, female teachers from the North were sent to teach in the rural areas. The state was supportive and concerned with mobilizing and promoting female human resources. To change the traditional status of women and girls and to alter the status quo in women's and girls' education, committed leadership was necessary among the local politicians under the socialist party.

Situational Barriers: Division of Social Roles

In Sudanese society men and women have clearly different social roles. Men do most clearing in the fields, do business or have jobs outside the home, while women do the household chores and look after the children. Consistent with the collectivist and authoritarian characteristics of the Islamic culture, women are more tied to their social role and have less authority. This means that education is not so important for women. For many young women at the secondary level, this is just a period in which to wait for their ultimate goal, to get married. Some young women are kept at home until they reach the age of sixteen to be married off.

In the rural areas, agricultural production depends upon weather conditions; the family income is relatively low, which severely affects the education of rural children. The report from the Ministry of Education (1988) indicated that among 10,000 rural women less than 2.0 percent have a secondary education. Economically, young women contribute greatly to domestic labor. Many get married at the age of puberty, which results in a large number of school dropouts. In most areas in Sudan the percentage of

female students who drop out has reached as high as 50 percent at the primary and secondary levels. One of the faculty said:

There are no well-planned programs that prepare women to participate in the modern economy, especially education in the rural areas.

Another cause of gender inequalities in Sudanese institutions of learning has been the families' economic condition. The parents are reluctant to send their daughters to school, especially, when the family income is low. This was indicated by a majority of the women in this study as the most influential factor. The families are faced with the problems of supporting their daughters' schooling with limited resources. Women play a central role in subsistence agricultural and pastoral life. They are the prime source of labor. Their role in feeding, or helping to feed the family, has implications for their daughters who have to work with their mothers and also have to learn the agricultural and pastoral skills they need later in life.

School enrollment and attendance is obviously affected. Young women may also be involved in their mothers' petty trading activities, resulting in low class attendance. The future gender roles of a female as defined by a typical Islamic society would be that she becomes a mother, housewife, and homemaker. These roles, at best, would require only a minimal level of education. On the other hand, the expected gender role for a boy includes being a bread winner for the family. There is a rather utilitarian view of women within the traditional economy, that women are useful for housework and fanning and will ultimately bring in a bride-price. Sixty-seven percent (20) of the women indicated that the decision to attend a school is influenced by the family interests. The woman then, unlike the man who is often allowed to concentrate on his schoolwork, may be expected to divide her time between domestic duties and school.

The data suggests that both boys and girls are equally involved in the agricultural and pastoral ways of life in the rural areas. Significantly, in urban areas among well-to-do families sometimes girls have more opportunities of schooling but

their domestic duties do not change. Thirteen out of twenty new female students at Juba University in 1993 came from high status families, where fathers, usually professionals, often provided help for their daughters' education. "Salima" is a first year student at Khartoum University. Her father is a medical doctor. She referred constantly to both her father and mother during the interviews and the conflict over women's education.

I know what my parents wanted; mother wanted me to marry, while my father wanted me to attend a university. Mother apparently, told me 'it is a waste of women's time to spend all these years studying and later you are not allowed to work in the public.' I do not talk to my mother about the university; it is always a mistake, because she gets angry when I say things that have nothing to do with domestic work. If I'd followed my mother's path, I'd probably have gotten married. But my father was always saying you have to go to a university. So I did what he wanted me to do. I have gotten this far, so I have to do my best.

Education is important in a modern economy (Summers, 1994; UNESCO, 1983). It entails the acquisition of knowledge and skills that would provide one with access to future employment. Men would, therefore, be expected to acquire as much education and training as possible so they can attain a higher status as heads of their families, and as successful heads of their households. Females are expected to depend upon their husbands for their livelihood, while boys, after entering adulthood, are expected to provide for their wives and children from the fruits of their school training. Society's gender role expectations could, therefore, be said to have created the gender imbalance in education that has been sustained to the present day. Although all of the women interviewed indicated that girls help at home more than boys, the descriptions were even stronger in the rural areas where girls are still playing a more traditional role. Girls are very involved in fetching water, caring for the siblings, preparing of food, and cleaning house. Asha is a senior at Gezira University; she described the influence that her mother had on her education. She said:

During my primary and secondary school years, my father helped me understand things that were beyond my understanding. He has been someone that I have looked forward to talking with and have talked with about the future plans of our family. He understands me and what I

want. He told me if I want a job and a decent one, I must have a good education.

Absenteeism from school has been found to result from an economic factor. Children help on their parents' land or earn money by selling farm items (Bowman and Anderson, 1978). Distance to school, illness and pastoral traditions also contribute to absences. For rural families the indirect costs of losing a child's work earnings in addition to the direct costs of schooling can be a major factor in school attendance. In implementing educational policies, the state is constrained by the economic status of its ordinary citizens (Duany, 1994b).

Dispositional Barriers: Sociocultural and Religious Factors

Sociocultural traditions such as early marriage, dowry systems, and seclusion can all be factors in the high dropout rate as girls reach puberty in their 6th year of schooling. In Sudanese society, Islam as a religion plays a major role in shaping parents' attitudes toward education. As in many other existing world religions, Islam is patriarchal and defines women as being either inferior or subordinate to men (Saad, 1972; Abu Nasr, 1982). Their traditions require women to conform to codes that restrict their behavior. These codes were initiated through cultural norms since the adoption of Islam in the Sudan in the 16th century. Despite official state policy, it is the sociocultural attitudes and traditions that determine the status of women and girls and preserve the status quo for women's education. On several occasions, during the interviews, women commented on norms and customs as not changing. Thalma left school at age of 16 to marry, she commented that:

It is considered to be the duty of women to bear children, look after them, provide needs of the family, and to respect and obey the wishes of her father or husband and in old age, even her son. The Sudanese are not ready for change to improve women's social status.

For these women discrepancies exist between visions and actuality. Being educated means status although many expressed a desire for social change or economic prosperity, they have fewer chances than their brothers. One of the respondents tried

to convince her mother to change her attitudes toward certain programs. Nafisa, wanted her daughter to get a nursing degree:

I told my mother that with home science women can only become teachers or nurses. And being a nurse you just take instructions from the doctor, so why not become a doctor. Now women are looking for better fields so that they can get decent jobs.

Islamic culture plays an important role in the family. In many Islamic societies, women are put under legal as well as social restrictions. Women are generally considered to be either absolutely pure and good or evil, and to be guarded against. Various restrictions and taboos are placed upon women in order to keep them from undermining certain social orders. Tales and stories that stereotype women are of the most extreme forms and are used for socialization. Women are forbidden to participate in social, political, and economic activities outside the home. If they do appear in public, they are expected to hide themselves behind a veil. Only a few women are given the choice to participate in education and in the political arena. Most do not have a choice; their roles are clearly demarcated as wives and mothers. These conditions stifle the personal growth of women (Goodwin, 1994).

The community provides the environment in which socialization occurs. The gender role placed upon women is defined by the needs of the society. Female values are passed on by the culture, religions, and myths; "an entire ideological apparatus, from culture, education, customs, language, and dress through all spheres of society in which she is a part, had been accepted as vital to the situation of women" (Al-Hariri, 1987; Anderson, 1951).

In Sudan, as in other Islamic countries and some other African cultures, young women have a very short period of childhood. Their bride-price, as Robertson said, "bought their labor, their sexuality, and their child bearing capacity" (Robertson, 1985). As soon as she is able, a young girl begins to look after the younger children while her mother goes out to work. Soon she begins fetching water and fuel and prepares food. By puberty she is married and starts her own family. She learns very

quickly that her needs are of a secondary importance in relationship to the male relatives or to her husband. She adjusts to the complementary roles of men and women in which her rights are embedded. The Sudanese society sees marriage not as a romantic institution, but more as a social reproductive unit, a political institution.

Martha commented also on how important her labor is to help her mother, she said:

I've learned a lot from my mother. She has taught me to work hard and how it can pay at a later age. In Africa there are certain things that only women can do. You just have to learn how to do them.

From one generation to another, parents mold their sons and daughters to personalize such masculine-feminine patterns. Men and women grow up with the gender mystiques motivating all their behavior in society. The masculine mystiques support the feminine mystiques, and they are mutually reinforcing (Goodwin, 1994). All house activities are female activities such as cooking, cleaning of the house, and child care. Whatever women do in society is always looked upon as inferior. Parents encourage boys to play with each other in activities that show strength and superiority and limit girls' activities to cooking and child care. The messages that are sent to the children are considered by the society as positive and not intended to marginalize individuals or groups. This traditional view conflicts with a westernized curriculum of the school. Schooling may therefore seem too irrelevant to what is still perceived by many parents as a girl's only future role. Curriculum content and the medium of instruction divorce the student from sociocultural traditions (Duany, 1994b; Hassan, 1995)

Ninety-three percent (28) of the women indicated that they felt a similar societal/familial pressure to marry after terminating secondary school. In the Sudanese society marriage is a family matter, it is arranged by the families and a woman's opinion regardless of her education is judged by traditional norms. Two of the women indicated that despite parental pressures, they attended a university since they were

accepted, and their parents could not stop them. The cases below provide examples of parents' experiences with and attitudes toward education of women. One woman said:

My mother was 14 when I was born. She was from a poor rural family. None of her relatives were educated. Her marriage did not last long and she got divorced when I was two.

How did your family come to the urban center?

Both my parents went to live in the city, going their separate ways, and I was left with my grandparents. At the age of five I joined my mother in the city after she remarried. There I was able to go to school. My mother supported me in my primary school years. When I was fifteen, I went to live with my father as required by Sudanese law. He wanted me to get married.

Can you share with us what happened?

I got engaged to my cousin, because in our culture they practice cross-cousin marriage. I was not very happy because all my friends would go to the university and I would not. So I left my father's home and went back to my mother's home. There I was able to continue my education.

What are your plans?

In a period of a year I will graduate with a BSc. in education, and I will be teaching at the secondary school in my hometown.

What do your relatives say about your education?

Some wish they had an opportunity. Although, what they talk about in the villages is marriage, not education. The parents also wish their daughter to marry an educated man, but they will not send their daughters to school. I am going to get a teaching job and I will be able to help my parents financially, not just with my husband's money, but my own.

Because of her determination, she will be able to get into the teaching profession. There are hopes for this woman to achieve her educational and personal goals, and she is hoping for a bright future. Her wish is to change the Sudanese traditions, norms, and values and to encourage more support from the families to accept their daughters' need for an education. The woman quoted above refused to live with her father, although the law requires at the age of seven the child should live with the father, not the mother. She preferred to stay with her mother to become educated. She illustrated what her aunt thought about educating women:

My aunt does not really care about what I will do with the degree. To my aunt, getting married is the decent thing a girl can do for her family. Education is not that important to her.

This study revealed many obvious reasons for the lower participation rate of the Sudanese women in education. School environments have been one of the factors that discourage participation. If fewer women complete primary and secondary education, then it is clear that even fewer will be found at the higher level. If women are encouraged to marry early, to be burdened with domestic responsibilities, and to defer their own educational aspirations in favor of those of their brothers, then again, it is clear that they will be under-represented at the higher level.

In the secondary school male teachers influenced female students in the choice of studies at the higher level by channeling them away from science and engineering specialties. Also, at the university level, male faculty members influenced female students by channeling them into traditional fields of studies such as teaching and nursing (Acker, 1994). Such influences occurred in classrooms as well. Sixty percent (28) of the thirty women interviewed indicated that professors gave more opportunities to male students when answering questions in lecture halls. These female students felt that the teachers or lecturers are sometimes unable to accommodate their individuality. The expression of individuality for these students took the form of rebellion against the institutional norms and values. Alma, when asked what appealed to her about the class discussion, said:

I like to argue. I like putting forward my own opinions when discussing with others. I do not like working logically and coming out with a precise answer. I have problems with many lecturers. I tend to be rather argumentative because the lecturers think only men are talkers. So I talk and cut across men sometimes. This might mean they think I am aggressive, but they might not have a bad impression of my academic ability. Oh yeah! Men in my class probably regard me as strong headed.

The various prejudices and opinions against women have become invisible psychological obstacles to the progress of women college students. There is a conflict between women's increased sense of striving to become stronger and keeping the

traditions where women are expected to be respectful to men. The question is whether women's experience in education is structured in such a way as to discourage them from pursuing their education further. The majority of women admitted that the most common factor affecting their studies was "lack of will power and self confidence," and that their character was not strong enough to face the male teacher or professor in the classroom.

Due to heavy reliance on teachers' information and learning materials, female students tend to follow rules in their style of learning. They pay more attention to grades and become extremely nervous during examinations. This results in a narrower knowledge base and weakness in the ability to think independently. One of the students described her first week in college:

My first week in college was a nightmare. I was scared to death. I was sitting at the back of the class seeing all these students dressed in nice cloth. I was asking myself what am I doing here with all these smart people?

This woman, like many others, is intimidated by situations in the Sudanese higher education where the majority are men. In such an environment women don't even try, and they are sometimes afraid to make choices for higher learning. Many female students believe that due to their efforts to study, their grades should be equal to their male counterparts. But their knowledge would likely not be wide enough because they lacked creativity in solving problems. Another woman said:

When I talk with an average male student, he talks with confidence, and I find that he has a much broader knowledge than I.

Female students spend most of their time and energy on their subjects of study in order to get better grades. They read very few books outside and beyond their narrow field, and if they do, they read love and romantic stories. Some female students give up their opportunity to perform experiments in laboratories for fear of damaging the equipment or because they think they lack knowledge and skills. They would rather be helpers or experiment recorders in order to avoid the creative work.

Two students, however, were more explicit about what they did not want than what they did want:

I know I'd much rather be involved with people than machines. I wouldn't want to spend most of my time putting the pieces of iron together. I am just not a machine person. I like to do things that are sociable. I'd much rather be involved with people than things that do not talk back to me.

Social factors interfere with women's plans on whether to continue or discontinue their educations. Female students at the university are over the age of puberty and considered to be mature. Love and marriage are part of the daily conversation among this group. They believe that love and marriage affect study. However, most respondents indicated that they do pay attention to those male students who admire them. For them to make good impressions on males, some of the female students admit that they willingly spend much time dressing up. They believe that Sudanese men are willing to marry a woman who is committed to care for her family. One woman said:

Sudanese men nowadays are looking for good-looking women, who are good at housekeeping and willing to do services for their husbands. I have more confidence. I'm probably intelligent, and I tell myself that I can do what I want to do when I have my degree. I feel I am doing something worthwhile, and that is interesting to me. I won't feel as if I've wasted opportunities or something.

These expectations put pressures on female students who have to give up high aspirations for academic study to pay more attention to clothing and looking good to find a husband. Some students imagined themselves with families, but have a problem with the conflict between education and having a family.

According to the students in this study, student-teacher interaction was more profoundly influenced by the teacher's gender than any other factor. In many classes male students outnumbered females. Male instructors call on male students before calling on female students. Because of cultural norms, most of the time, female students sit at the back of the hall to avoid eye contact with the teacher or lecturer. This is perceived by the teachers as avoiding classroom interaction. Since female

students do not volunteer, the teachers have to call on them because they appear to be not interested in the subject. One woman said:

Although I tell myself that I have to reach my goal, my actions always make me disappointed. I feel like I cannot do well because I have no self-confidence. I feel like a fool in public

Some female teachers or lecturers also favored male students over female students in regard to positive interactions and reinforcements, although the level of gender differentiation was less pronounced than in the male teacher's classrooms. One of the female teachers interviewed stated that she had to call on female students all the time. Otherwise, they would never participate during the lectures. The reticence of the women in the class was commented on by one of the female faculty:

I have to ask female students to give answers in the classroom. Male students volunteer to participate in the classroom.

She also said:

It is a part of my teaching style to involve all the students in the class, or the class will be dominated by the male students.

Another female faculty member also commented on female quietness:

It is amazing how quiet a lot of women are, especially the women in my class. It's normally the male students who talk; sometimes female students sit in a seminar for one-half hour and say absolutely nothing. I normally ask women to share some of their opinions, and sometimes it works well.

Gender differentiated interaction appeared in many classes and laboratories.

Words such as madam (haja) were used in the classrooms by the teachers when referring to female students. Women were often called upon by teachers to give quick answers. The women who were called upon tended to be ones not doing well in the class, those, who are too shy to speak in public, or those who do not have self-confidence. If they did not respond quickly, teachers made comments that degraded them. Sometimes the teachers made comments that caused laughter. They told women they were not good at certain subjects, and then the teacher called on a male student to answer. One student said:

I remember very well in one of my secondary school math classes when we were given a problem to solve. While other students were still working, the teacher passed by me and told me to read my answer out loud. I told the teacher that I was not finished. He then walked away telling me that if the work looked as good as my appearance, there would be no problem in the class. I felt very bad and will never forget it.

Throughout the class, references would be made about the appearance of the female students. Male students got praised for their academic skills while female students got comments that sometimes had to do with domestic work, such as, "You will make a good cook and housekeeper." Another student recalled the way she wore her veil in the class:

The lecturer noticed the veil did not cover my hair completely; there was a piece of hair showing on my forehead. He stopped, looked at me and said: 'Do not come to this hall with your hair showing to the public. You think you are beautiful, but you do not know how to do it. You think you are better looking than other students who cover their hair. I think you are not. We are not here to learn to look beautiful. This is not a beauty shop.'

Interviews with other women indicated that a significant number felt a similar societal support for marriage rather than education. However, the majority of women indicated that despite all the pressures, they will struggle to get their education. They said that it is really very hard to see why society is against women pursuing higher levels of studies. The majority of women indicated that if they wanted to succeed, it is better not to get married, because it will be very hard to do the school work and domestic work at the same time. One of the students shared a story of her teacher during the interviews:

One of my math classes in high school was taught by a female teacher who had problems with male students. They called her names because male students thought she was too demanding in her grading.

It is very rare to find a woman teaching at the higher level of education. These women described the conflicts between gender and career. It demands a great deal of determination on behalf of women to reach the standard of teaching in the secondary schools or college in Sudan.

The data collected here suggests that women were denied equal participation in an educational environment. Many gender-related comments were used to intimidate female students, reinforcing the negative interactions. Female students found it very difficult to be in an environment that did not accept their presence with male students. Even those who are seniors and getting ready to get their degrees indicated that they would like to see changes before they pursue a chosen career. Islamic society still does not accept women in high status professions. Societal restrictions have kept women from public positions. The issue of equal opportunity keeps coming up in the interviews. All the women reported that they would like to see change. One of the respondents said:

I think women should have equal opportunities. I wish there was a way to let people know how women feel about equality. I am not an aggressive change agent, but I do believe in equal opportunity in education. Women should have a chance to do certain things. They should be given the chance to choose between home and career.

The data has shown that Sudanese women are aware of gender bias in education. Even in situations where women are accepted in educational institutions, it becomes a struggle between what norms and customs are accepted by society and what women want. Women tend to believe that it is God's will that they have to fulfill certain roles such as child rearing because only women could care for a newborn. One of the women in the interviews said: "We know very well men cannot do it because of their nature." Women are also afraid of the future. If they do not marry they might become destitute when they are too old to work and do not have children to support them.

Because having children is seen as an investment for the future. The parents care for the young and the young will have to care for the elderly. That is the way it should be.

The general attitude toward women's education is unfavorable. The admission policies do not permit women into certain programs. University education for females is not recognized as are other contributions made by women. University education is

sometimes considered a burden to certain institutions to educate women. They then discriminate against women. One of the respondents said:

When conditions and qualifications are the same, men are preferred to women. This is the phenomenon happening frequently in the 1990s. Equality for men and women is in the law but printed only in official documents. In general practice it is not there.

Fifty-three percent (16) of the women reported that in secondary school they were discouraged from aspiring to further their education although they were doing well in school. One of the students reported:

I think some of the male teachers believe that girls cannot make it through law or medical school. You have to say to yourself that you want to be a doctor or a lawyer and just do it. Some of the women are able to attain an education regardless of limited access.

Another woman said:

When I was in my final year of secondary school, I told my male teacher 'I want to be a civil engineer.' He laughed, and said, 'there is no such thing as a woman civil engineer. You must be out of your mind. It is too hard of work for a woman to do.' So I said, 'I will teach at the higher level then.'

In these cases, women were willing to become what they wanted to be through their personal determination. One woman chose to be a doctor and was confident she could do it. Most of the time male teachers expected that women would fail simply because they were not clever enough to pursue a career that required much time and concentration. However, many women are faced with predictions of failure from family or teachers and are encouraged to pursue traditional female careers. This is further confirmed by another woman who wanted to be a civil engineer. She insisted that it is the only job she would like to do and enjoy, but chose teaching instead because it is perceived as a woman's job. This woman had a strong sense of self and refused to be put down by pressure from school authorities.

Another woman was influenced by a strong role model. In choosing a leadership position, she was attempting to transfer the autonomy and decision-making power that her mother had held as head of the family. She wanted to have more influence in the decision making of family affairs. She observed the power and

prestige her mother had, so she wanted to be more equal to men and wanted to replicate her mother's achievements for herself. This motivated her to make a specific decision to pursue a career that would allow her to be in a position of authority. She tried to avoid other careers that did not hold power and a capacity for decision making. The majority of these women reported that the structure of the educational system is not designed to allow women equal access. One woman recalled:

I wanted to be a decision maker, to lead and be the head of a big department. I have a feeling that one day I could be one, because my mother has been an assistant director all her working life. The system will not allow her to head the school, and I hate that. I wish something could be done to change the thinking that a woman cannot lead.

Another woman said:

Men always complain that women are given privileges in admission when they do not need a higher level of education, and all the training for women is a waste of country resources because they get married and stay home.

These comments tend to imply that male students regard women as being able to exercise special influence over the admission authorities. The implication is that women would be evaluated less severely simply by virtue of their gender and as being members of the weaker class, or perhaps that they could use gender attraction to ensure less rigorous treatment. Certainly there is no evidence that this has occurred, but the majority of women reported that male students are reported to have held this perception of their female colleagues. This view may be carried into professions by men, coloring their attitude toward women colleagues.

This observation is interesting from another perspective, because it suggests that women were put into a position where their work and intelligence were not recognized and rewarded by their peer group. If women were successful, according to the respondents in this study, they were usually more successful in schoolwork, and it was attributed to an unfair gender advantage. This attitude is one that would discourage many women from even attempting to pursue a course of study in higher education.

First, school authorities expect them to fail. Second, when women do succeed, their successes are explained by claims that their grading has been less severe because they have used sexual attraction as an unfair advantage. One of the female lecturers commented:

Women lecturers are not considered full professors; only female students recognize our status on campuses. So we have given up fighting for prestige. You are still a professor by doing the job. Women just have to give themselves credit.

These statements were made by women who are in positions as teachers, faculty, and administrators. However, this did not appear to mediate the experiences of the respondents. The first respondent was trying to establish herself as someone who could perform her duties well, and it was particularly important for students to be quickly convinced of her competence. The second respondent was in a busy administrative office where student loads were heavy and there was relatively little time to establish personal relationships with students. It was clear, however, that more personal relationships would be helpful for a female professor to establish her credibility. A male student would not assume that she was a professor even while she was lecturing. Until this fact had been established either through prolonged professional interaction or through an explicit statement, women's professional status was in question. These statements confirm that women professors must continue to strive for simple recognition of their professional status even after they have qualified as holders of Doctor of Philosophy Degrees (Ph.D.). While the status of male professors is likely to be accepted without question, women must prove to their male students that they are not just teachers, but professionals with the same qualifications and skills as the male professors. As Kadijia neared the end of her degree in public health, she remembered her mother urged her to attend a female school rather than the University of Khartoum:

Because women's education is not taken seriously, it is directed only toward major studies in nursing or home science. This does not remove the images already assigned to these careers. My mother wanted me to attend Ahfad University because it is a female institution. She thinks Ahfad University provides good training for women. It does provide better skills in homemaking. She always says there is no need for somebody to waste time at Khartoum University majoring in general science. She thinks women can benefit from the Ahfad program.

The majority of the respondents have been influenced by others in their choice of professions. They mentioned that their mothers gave them support to continue their education. They also said they wanted to become role models for other women. There is a strong tendency to think any high profession is held by men except for teaching, nursing, and secretarial work, which are traditionally held by women. The majority of the respondents expressed a determination that they would make sure that their daughters were given the same chance as their sons. They all agreed that it is time to change, and that women have to be given opportunities within their lifetime.

Parental Influence Upon Education

This section emphasized the important role that families and parents play in the educational participation and achievement of their children. This role has been recognized over the years in many research studies, including one done by Bedri, a survey conducted within the Ahfad University in 1985. The research underlined "the highly significant role that parental support and preference have in the encouragement of educational participation and the students' motivations to study" (Bedri and Burchinal, 1985). This study also found, as has other research, the particularly significant role mothers played in encouraging their daughters. The impact of family background is not just through economic advantage or disadvantage but by "parental valuing of education" (Summers, 1994; King and Hill, 1991). The most recent work from the World Bank emphasizes the way in which parental educational experiences

and attainments influenced the educational decisions of their children, especially females (Herz et al. 1991).

Seventy-three percent (22) of the women indicated that they had received strong support from their parents. Although school or college expenses were paid by the government, their families paid for clothing, supplies, and pocket money. These women also indicated that they had moral support from their parents. Eighty-three percent (25) of the women indicated that their parent's expectations for their education influenced their determination to continue their education. Ikhlass commented on her parents' support of her education.

My parents' encouragement and advice were important to me during my school years. My mother is a progressive woman. She encouraged me to study and be independent. Mother influenced me a lot.

She talked about her brothers who are not treated differently from her sisters. Also, free education has contributed to a change in some parents' attitudes toward women's education. Ikhlass' parents have taken advantage of free education for the welfare of their children.

My mother always expects me to study well whenever there is a chance, especially with my older brother, asking him to help me if I have problems with my homework. Also, my father asks us to study and do our homework before we do anything else. He promised to finance our education if my brother and I get admitted to the university. This has made me determined to work hard to pass the national examination so that I can get admitted.

During the Socialist government, parental expectations for their daughters' education remained high. The government's social justice strategies, including the provision of public financial support, created opportunities for women in the 1970s and early 1980s. This explains the growth of women's enrollment in all levels of education. The policy of free education was to reduce the expenses of the rural families. Currently the government lacks cohesiveness in educational policies while it

perpetuates women's subordinate status. Commenting on this situation, a female law faculty member at Khartoum University observed:

In the past some governments were concerned with women's issues, especially education. Currently women's issues are not being given attention, or the decision-making does not articulate women's views. . . . there must be a concerted campaign by the women's movement to elect more women legislators. . . . to facilitate the sensitization process. People fear losing their jobs.

In some parts of the country, especially urban areas, the policy of equal access has allowed some families to make use of the policy to benefit their children. However, to understand the subordinate status of women in Sudan and elsewhere, it is important to place the problem of education in the context of the prevailing structures and forces standing within the social and political structure. Zenab, a faculty member in the School of Education, University of Khartoum, talked about the support she got from her parents and how it had made a difference in her life:

Both my parents wanted me and my two older brothers to do well in school. My father came from an educated family. So did my mother. He and all his siblings have attended universities. My mother always emphasized that we should receive more education.

Some parents who have no schooling also encourage their daughters to continue in school in order to compensate for what they have lost. Aziza is a third year student at Gezira University. Like Zenab, she had the support of her parents.

Oh yes! My parents gave me the idea that with an education, I would not have to work for others all my life. My father is a humble employee. He works as a storekeeper at one of the big cotton farms at Gezira Schemes. He feels that his children must have a better education and have knowledge to be independent economically by getting good jobs.

The two women, Zenab and Aziza have enjoyed backgrounds that had a great deal of parental support toward education. They both attended single-sex institutions at the primary and secondary school levels. Single-sex institutions and separate tracking at the secondary and postsecondary level are common in Sudan. Some parents

supported this system because the school environment provided security for their daughters. However, this pattern has created gender-biased institutions. Scientific and technical subjects were often found only in educational institutions for males. This has adversely affected the concept of equalization of educational opportunities for women and deprived women of career-oriented educational courses in science and mathematics.

Many people came to believe that a good education would provide some protection against unemployment since well-educated people were more likely to be employed in the modern economy. Ninety-three percent (28) of the women indicated that education is a way to find independence, socially and economically. Socialist educational policies were based upon the promise that "education provided skills and knowledge to the individual that could be used in nation building" (Ministry of Education, 1985). Parents were encouraged to believe that a good citizen is a working individual, both men and women. Amal is a faculty member at Juba University in the department of History. She comes from western Sudan where Islamic traditions are very strong and women's education beyond primary school is ruled out, but she survived it. She asserts:

Both my parents encouraged me. My father, especially had suffered economically from a lack of education. He has been holding a very low paying job for more than thirty-five years. He felt it deeply, and always says that his children should go to school, and he will do anything to see that his children do well in school. Mother is a housewife. She works very hard as a market woman to help my father pay some of the household expenses. Both my parents were very much the heart of my success in attaining my education. They were very supportive and saw that my three brothers and I were well-educated.

Eighty-seven percent (26) of the women grew up in the 1970s with the idea of equality. They were expected to do well in school and were expected to go further in their education. This is not the case among rural women, although this policy was extended by the socialist government to the rural people in order to encourage women

to attain further education. The government slogans stated that the country is for the people and it needs educated people to build the nation. The policy emphasis was "it is through education that the knowledge and culture can be passed on to the next generation. Both men and women are needed in the nation building"

Eighty percent (24) of the women indicated that their parents gave first priority to their school work and that domestic work was secondary. Traditionally the domestic work is done by women, and these women were required to help with tasks such as cleaning the house, washing dishes, and caring for the younger siblings on the weekends and during the holidays. Forty-three percent (14) of the women who were educated during the 1970s indicated that although they were to do much of the housework, their parents allowed them to participate in extra activities.

"In Sudan, women bear the burden of the double, even triple shift, doing domestic work or subsistence work, working for income while they and their families still live in poverty."

The reduction of the domestic work for daughters in school shows that the parents value their daughter's education. This was indicated by all the women as a breakthrough from the traditional norms of the Sudanese society. However, the Sudanese society is still characterized by the persistence of conflicting traditional beliefs and practices that serve to legitimize female subordination.

Another form of support by the family is the preparation of children in the early years of their education. The parents support their children by giving them basic education. Fifty percent (15) of the women had educated parents (fathers) and indicated that their parents helped them with their schoolwork when they were young. Usually it was the father who had a higher educational background, although some of the mothers were educated at primary or secondary levels. Those mothers who were able to read and write provided help to their children. Zenab's father has a Master's degree in agricultural engineering from Khartoum University and brought home science

magazines. Zenab and her brothers and sisters read them. She and her oldest brother grew up aspiring to be scientists.

In this study it was difficult to assess the independent influence of the mother's education, because fathers often have more education than mothers and can pass on this advantage to both their sons and daughters. However, many mothers in urban areas contributed by paying school fees on their own because the father had many other children from other marriages. A well-educated mother has more resources for school fees as well as a more positive attitude toward education than does an uneducated mother. This research has found that mothers' with postmiddle education provided better guarantees for their daughters to seek higher education (Duany, 1994b; Bowman and Anderson, 1980; Weis, 1976). Mother's influence was especially notable at the secondary school level, where parents' demand on their daughters to be involved in domestic duties was higher than other categories.

Summary

The position of women in Sudan is determined not only by legislation but also by economic, cultural, and social factors. The majority of the population is rural. More than 82 percent of the population lives in rural areas and less than 20 percent live in urban areas. The gap between the rural and urban is considerably wider in terms of daily living. The villages are undergoing radical changes. The rural population is migrating to the urban centers. The government is facing great problems in attempting to expand educational institutions. The population in urban centers cannot cope with the economic conditions of the country. In fact, the urban areas are becoming overpopulated while the rural areas are being depopulated. The migration has been one-way traffic from rural to urban. As a result of these developments, the differences in standards of living, levels of education, occupational structure, and social stratification between rural and urban centers have widened. Consequently, the rural schools have

been neglected, and the majority of the population is left with no schooling. These schools graduate fewer students compared to the urban centers in which the majority are male. Only three percent of the age cohort graduates from the rural secondary schools compared to a 60 percent graduation rate in the urban centers. The rural location has many disadvantages: parental illiteracy, poor economic conditions, and the negative attitudes toward women's education.

The rate of participation of women in tertiary levels is low; only 10 percent of the total enrollment are women from the age of 19 upward. The cause of these low rates is the youthful age structure of the Muslim population in the northern part of the country, the early age of marriage of women, and the severe restrictions imposed by the society on women's appearance in public. The rate of participation of women in higher education is higher in urban centers than in rural areas because of the higher standard of living and greater opportunities for nonagricultural labor.

The fact that women participate in coeducational institutions does not mean that they enjoy freedom of movement. Their daily activities are organized by school authorities who keep their movements under strict supervision. Female students have separate dining halls and residential halls. The Islamic tradition of seclusion for women and their low status are justified by males as being Islamic by elite Muslim families, but they do educate their daughters with enthusiasm.

To answer why there are fewer women participating in the Sudanese educational system raises more fundamental questions of a philosophical nature within the broader perspective of the issue of women being under-represented in education. Women do not need higher learning because their traditional roles do not require much education. Women hold this conviction because the system has inculcated in them a negative self-image regarding their intellectual ability to succeed or their ability to take on a role other than being a mother. A woman cares for her family because of general attitudes

and beliefs about gender differences and their roles. Women accept their roles as duties and perform them. This ultimately influences their decisions as to whether they should continue their education. This results in the perpetuation of women being under-represented in education. Society's expectations and the educational system explicitly employ techniques of indoctrination to transmit certain values and rules that determine women's behavior. Women are influenced by values such as veiling, homemaking, and being dependent on a male relative or husband economically. Eventually these become norms.

Thus, the problem of women being under-represented in education is complex. On one hand, social beliefs, values, and expectations impose certain constraints on women as to which level of education they are to achieve. On the other, these external factors force the institutions and the communities to place women into a situation where they develop mindsets, internalize, and accept some stereotypical beliefs as valid. This biases their preferences for certain roles based on what has been placed upon them. The gender-related inequalities in education can best be redressed by dealing with both the system and the individuals who are affected. The school seems to have a crucial responsibility in this regard, where more opportunity exists for affecting the necessary attitudinal changes among women.

It is in school where clues may be found as to why, for instance, most young women choose social sciences rather than physical sciences. This leads us to the question of how individuals make decisions whether to continue their education or to get married. These factors are influencing such decisions, which educators should focus on as a starting point toward an attitudinal change among individuals. If a woman is saved from her own negative self-image, and if the system eradicates gender biases in all sectors of human endeavor, Sudan should be able to realize parity between men and women in education. What has to be explained is not why women's education

lags behind that of men, but what helps some to succeed. Only the society can distance itself from several aspects of the traditional culture and can prepare and motivate women to persevere and to overcome the many existing barriers. Moreover the actors are not always conscious of what they are doing. For example, the idea that education is not so important for women, is clearly voiced and is also seen as cultural. But many other elements, like the collectivist concerns of her family come into competition with schoolwork. It is taken for granted by many Sudanese parents that collective family matters about who does what get priority above school activities, and women's domestic work must be done before everything else. The respondents indicated that the interference with females' education is really a conflict with society. However, women's access to education is difficult to achieve at present. The purpose of education in the Sudan is to transmit Islamic values and culture (Hassan, 1995). While doing this, they are influencing and reinforcing elements of their culture.

Currently, policy change is not on the government agenda; things are expected to remain the same as long as the Islamists are in power. The school system is controlled by the government, and the core content is suggested by the government as well as related to the experienced need of the Islamic society.

Chapter 5

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION: A CHANGE IN THE STATUS QUO

This chapter examines the role the state plays in influencing women's education. In Sudan the political changes often were encouraged by the new idea of "progressive modernization." Many governments of Sudan in the past and today were faced with the enormous task of expanding its educational system in order to make basic education available to all citizens, while at the same time creating new structures and making curriculum content responsive to the nation's needs. As these reforms are undertaken, special measures are required to ensure that women will benefit from them and be prepared to participate fully in the nation building. However, opinions about how to educate women are perceived differently in Sudanese society.

This chapter will analyze state policies as they relate to the cultural context that influences women's access to and participation in education. It will also provide an overview of educational strategies for bringing women into the mainstream of educational development of Sudan. As it might be expected in the history of developing countries, the development of women's education has emphasized domestic roles. It describes the status of women from both their domestic and economic roles and how they relate to education. In the 1970s and 1980s the Sudanese Development Five Year Plan had programs intended to promote alternate and nontraditional occupations for women and an expanded role for women both in urban and rural areas. This chapter explores government intervention that targets women's education.

Contemporary Trends in Society: Educating the Community

Education has been a national priority in Sudan, and access to it the right of every citizen, since its incorporation in the constitution in 1956. Major policy preoccupations since that time have included debates about the curriculum. Efforts to

strengthen the professional training of teachers have continued. A constant goal has been the effort to provide access to a primary school for all children. The importance of political leadership in educational development has sometimes been overlooked. Cultural values are necessary, but presence of those values may not be sufficient to result in educational development for women. Political leadership is crucial in shaping policies in education.

Increasing school enrollments was a top issue for educational policies at the time of independence, but funding for this expansion has been inadequate (Bedri, 1985). By the early 1970s the socialist concept of turning Sudan into the food-basket of the Arab world gained sufficient currency to attract huge Western and Arab investments, both public and private. Education became a top priority for a bigger share of the national budget, as new institutions were established and enrollment increased. In fifteen years of socialist rule, women were gradually given the right to pursue further education.

Karima, a senior administrator at Khartoum University, who got opportunity through leadership support, learned to be competitive when studying side-by-side with men. The competitive element came out very strongly in her interview. Karima referred several times to her ambition, her determination to do as well as men in her field, as in this exchange during a focus group discussion:

Karima: "I am really determined. . . . I think to be in an environment of men, where it's a male dominated society, gives you the incentive to work hard, to say, I'm going to show them. . . ."

Zenab: "That you are as good as I. That's what my mother always tells me. Go out there and do something. Women are not kept in the houses (indoors) anymore."

Karima: "Yes, if not better, try harder. There are opportunities for women now."

The state had a strong influence on women's access to and participation in education. Change in leadership often led to changes in policies that affected the possibility of access for women. Some policies encouraged women to participate in education, while others denied access to women. These policies and how they applied them to women varied from one government to another. Although policies have often aided women in the lower levels of education, some have prevented women's participation in the higher levels of education. According to Karima:

I think there should be another way of changing things around here. Redefinition of government policies in a direction that meets women's practical and strategic interests might lead to policies that incorporate and involve the entry of women into positions of policymaker, which would explicitly address both men's and women's practical and strategic gender interests.

In Sudan, during the socialist rule, policies proclaimed equality between the sexes. The government gave a high priority to policies that improved women's access to education. The socialist government view was that the position of women could be improved through education not directed solely to home making, but also directed to increase the opportunity for women to earn their own living. Economic self-sufficiency was the only sure guarantee for women's rights. Unless a woman could support herself, she would always be at the mercy of male tyranny, no matter what rights the law gave her. Education and economic independence would not only end the tyranny, but also the veiling and exclusion of women (Ministry of Education, 1975). Asima, a Muslim women and a lecturer at Gezira University, stated a very fundamental and basic dilemma:

The obstacles holding women back from taking their rightful place in the modern educational system, on equal terms with men, are embedded in the overall Islamic way of life. The constraints are woven into the web of culture in such a way that patterns in the society might fall to pieces if one tries to tamper with the threads holding it together. The division of labor between the genders in Sudan (as in any other country in Africa of Islamic culture) is very strict and rooted in ancient as well as colonial traditions.

Asima's statement leads us to the goal of the current Islamic government that differs drastically from the socialist view. The Islamic way placed importance on the betterment of women through raising standards of education and preparing women to be homemakers. It emphasized that a woman's primary concern is the family and that within it she has both rights and duties (Qu'ran 2: 229). Amina is a school teacher and a former secretary of a Sudanese women's organization. She reflected on the status of women and changes in the policies:

I place the emphasis on educating women for responsible motherhood because I believe that only through the education of mothers and fathers can we expect behavioral changes in the young generation, who are, after all, the beneficiaries of the educational plans on the drawing boards today.

As Amina believed in Islam as the only way of life, she dismissed the changes that are happening in the modern Sudanese economy and in other parts of the world, especially in these poor countries. The government of Sudan has pursued a radical Islamic social and economic policy, combined with liberalization of the economy that excludes women. She emphasized education plus motherhood as the only way to bring change to the Sudan. Because culture cannot be separated from the people, only Islamic culture can bring genuine change to the people of Sudan. As she explained:

There are changes now taking place in Sudan that are not good for women. I would go so far as to suggest that because of the importance of women's roles in the society, they should be given option to choose. To participate in the formal educational system and also to be given remunerative compensation for their services as well as having social services channeled directly to them.

I would also say that a whole system of education and refresher education should be provided for women who wish to pursue a variety of career interests in their lives. I strongly argue for us to benefit from the experiences of other countries.

On the subject of gender differences and division of labor in the Sudanese society, that is, the Africans vs. Islamic Arab cultures, she stated:

Let us examine the statistics on the type of jobs that women hold in countries in which they constitute a fairly large percentage of the labor force. If we do this, we shall find that, all too often, the women have been assigned the menial, homemaking jobs. At the same time, their status has eroded because their contribution as responsible mothers has not been accorded at least as equal a status as a factory worker. They have not received compensation either in money or in kind from society, commensurate with the importance of their role.

She disagreed with many of the leaders in Sudan who base their policies on nonIslamic principles. Because the colonial education was rote learning, neither practical, relevant, nor geared toward the needs of the society, she said:

I do not support those policies. When we talk about education in Sudan, we have to identify what types of contributions we really need in Sudan to get ourselves moving in the right direction. Then let us structure our system of rewards, status and sanctions so that those contributions that are most useful to the nation will also be those that are appropriately rewarded. Motherhood is one.

Amina observes that there are many problems with women's work opportunities in the developed countries. For example, women enter the market in low paying jobs and at the same time suffer a decrease in their status in their domestic roles. Such negative outcomes must be avoided in Sudan, or women will be double losers. The Sudanese women are also hindered by lack of education to participate in the modern economic system. According to Amina, education will enhance women's status and improve women's socioeconomic conditions.

However, with the fall of the socialist rule in 1985 and the rise of the Islamic regime, women's progress has slowed. The government's explicitly announced policies on Islamic Law, "Shari'a," reveal the Islamic culture's contributions to the development of motherhood. The National Salvation Revolution (NSR), the ruling party in the Sudan, has a different view on women's education from that of the Socialists. The Islamists are concerned with improving women's status and well-being through Islamic principles. They wish to preserve the traditional culture and traditional roles of an Islamic woman. Thus, Arabicization and Islamization are the twin pillars

on which education must logically rest in Sudan (Hassan, 1995). However, they feel threatened by the influences of external forces, such as capitalism and westernism. These fears, present in Sudan today, are associated with a development toward fundamentalism that may be seen as a response to the threat of an invading Western culture. Assia said:

The problem with women's education in most Islamic cultures has to do with the belief that the home must be more closely ministered by females than males in order to nurture the young in the Islamic way of life. Women should be educated, particularly in obtaining a knowledge of the Qu'ran in order to nurture the young. This is a constant theme in the Sudanese culture.

Although the government encourages schooling, women face a multitude of restrictions. The majority of educated Sudanese women are not aware of the importance of education to their girl children. And those who are aware are often reluctant to join together, to speak up forcefully, to start campaigns, and to apply pressure on the government for equal access. They know it can be dangerous, too risky for them to disturb the traditional gender relations. Zuher is a third-year student in Khartoum University who commented on gender differences within her family; she said,

In my family the only way of life known to us as young people is Islamic. There are differences in the treatment of a female child from the male child, and my parents have made it clear in our family. When it comes to education, girls are supported.

For all the women in my family, my two sisters and me, our roles are more closely defined and our access to social and economic institutions is more limited than for my two brothers. Within the limited social context of female adult life, the Sudanese society reinforces women's conservatism and traditionalism, and encourages women to accept and to rationalize women's subordination in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Zuher indicates that although women's education is advocated, and indeed more girls now attend up to six years of primary schooling, the purpose of education is clearly seen to teach girls to be proper wives and mothers in the Islamic way of life.

Likewise, in the present government the genesis of religious political themes, constantly reiterated in the language of politics, gives Sudanese politics a very distinct cast in African Islamic societies. The effort to relate political positions to Islamic themes on the part of all Sudanese societies does not work at the moment. The efforts, however, by the socialist government to develop public policies affording and involving women in education was an effective political process. In addition to education, other new policies of the Islamic regime are justifiable by Islamic principle, according to the ruling class, but the majority of the population does not benefit from them.

In a society in which deeply ingrained patterns of female subordination generally are believed to find sanction primarily in religious rather than secular prescriptions, attempts at redefinition must also proceed on religious grounds. The socialist government had challenged the total seclusion of women from the public world by emphasizing that no "Qu'ranic" text denied full political and educational participation for women (An-Na'im, 1986).

The socialist leadership succeeded in introducing gender equality as an accepted ideal in religious life; however, the daily lives of women moved, if anything, further from such a reality in Sudanese life. At the time it was considered possible to help women significantly through policies directed at specific areas of women's needs, such as education. The socialist government, therefore, adopted a more direct strategy on women's issues. Nafisa, a primary school teacher, stated that:

Lack of education is an obstacle to women's participation in a modern economy. In the 1970s it was easy for women because the government maintained an interest in women's issues. Women were also included automatically into national policy planning. These efforts were aimed at improving the less fortunate groups in the society.

The Muslim fundamentalist radical policies and progressive religious ideas continued to do battle with conservative and retrogressive belief of "right" concerning women's proper place. While exhortations for education and political emancipation of

women were increasingly voiced, more and more women were moving deeper into total exclusion, which is now becoming virtually universal in both the rural and urban areas of northern Sudan. The debated issues are that Islam is a "total way of life" and the "Shar'ia" is sacred in its totality and is not subject to change in order to suit changing social conditions. The Muslim members of the ruling party, the National Salvation Revolution (NSR), do not want to compromise with the secularists on the laws that could govern the diverse societies in Sudan. These policies highlight one of the most important features of women's education. Policies undertaken now have their intended consequences at some time in the future. Therefore, embarking on women's education or training is not currently a worthwhile investment by the government.

Leadership Commitment to Support of Women's Education

Educational Institutions serve women from diverse social backgrounds. In 1956, at the time of independence and during the socialist government in 1969-1985, the government provided free education and assistance to all Sudanese citizens. Zenab, thirty-five years old and a director of a girls' primary school at Omdurman, indicated that:

Leaders can play a big role to enhance change. They authorized campaigns by women's activists and propagandists to encourage women to participate in education, although the government committed little public resources to establish and expand the programs required for women.

In the 1960s, enrollment of women increased from 5 percent to 8 percent of all students enrolled in higher education (Ministry of Education, 1984). Mary, who is teaching at the Nile Secondary School and who went to college in the 1970s, shared her experience of what it was to be a university student in the early 1970s.

It was very hard for a South Sudanese student at that time because of the political situation. There was one female student from South Sudan attending the university when I got admitted. We were three girls from the South who took the university entry national examination in 1970. We all passed and were admitted at the University of Khartoum. The

number added up to four southern Sudanese female students, but the conditions were not very favorable for southerners.

Mary gave reasons why the South Sudanese faced difficulties in admissions.

It's all political. The civil war between the North and the South has created a situation where educated southern Sudanese are seen as a threat to the ruling northern Sudanese. Although we passed the national examination, our admission was considered a matter of political accommodation. If we did not work hard in the university, we could be dismissed easily.

In 1970, the socialists came up with a slogan advocating the popularization of education. "The society has to develop education for self-reliance, education for economic development, and education for social welfare" (Ministry of Education, 1976). The government's priority was to improve the economy of the country by developing a well-trained workforce through quality education and well planned skill-training programs.

Amal is a senior administrator in the Ministry of Education. She talked about the policies of the socialist rule and their influence on women's education. The revolution motivated women to have an education so they could join the workforce as productive citizens. She stated:

Education was free. What students had to do was study hard and pass the national entry examination. Everything was provided by the government, free tuition, free meals, free money for living, free transportation, Even the pocket money was given to us.

Seventy-seven percent (23) of the women indicated the socialist government worked to increase the current statistic on women's enrollment. These numbers actually went from 21 percent to 41 percent for primary, 2 percent to 17 percent for secondary (UNESCO, 1992). The socialists' views of women's roles were tied to the actual ideology of working people and not to traditional roles only. Assia, a secretary at Juba University, commented:

Yes! Socialist government had made it possible for women to have an education and make it become a reality. A lot of women were encouraged to continue their education during the socialist regime.

She also emphasized the socialist government's policies for change.

This was the first time in the history of Sudan that a woman was appointed to a ministerial position. They even appointed southern Sudanese women to similar positions. There were women who were members of the national assembly. This is what we call change, equal opportunity to all people regardless of their gender, religion or ethnicity.

The fall of the socialist government in 1985 turned the clock backward.

Although the Islamic government's policies on women's education were explicit, one of the changes made was to abolish coeducation and encourage single-sex institutions. In 1989 the policy of gender segregation was passed and the plan for different schooling for men and women was adopted to become effecting in two years. As a result, women's enrollment immediately fell by 3.5 percent (Hassan, 1995). Schools already functioning as coeducational were to be continued, but the new ones had to be established as single-sex institutions beginning in the 1991-92 academic school year.

Zarha, a Muslim women, taught for five years as a biology teacher in one of the boys' secondary schools in western Sudan. Because of the new law, she lost her teaching position. Women were not allowed to teach at the boys' schools. She was one of the women who was forced to retire due to the new law that prohibited women from working in the public sectors. She reflected on how the new law was affecting women:

As a woman I have had an opportunity with the socialist regime. At my secondary school I was always at the top of my class, but our school was in a rural area and did not have enough teaching resources and well-trained teachers compared to those in the urban areas. Rural schools do not provide quality education. My passing grade-point average was not high enough to qualify me for any major university, so I ended up attending a teacher's college, graduating with an associate degree in secondary education. Many students from the rural areas ended up the same way.

To enhance education for rural women she said:

The only way for rural students to make it through the system is by closing the gap between the rural and the urban schools. The government put a lot of money in maintaining quality urban schools. If all schools get the same treatment, I think many rural students can improve their passing marks.

Half (15) of the women indicated that the improvement of women's education was for the welfare of society. One woman said:

The socialists did it. They provided women with opportunities to have access to all levels of education. Investing in women's education was a significant investment that the socialists did well.

Another woman talked about women's status improvement. She said:

There is currently no support for the Sudanese Women's Organization. It is the only institution that deals with women's issues. The organization does not have enough resources to run the organization's affairs. They are doing a good job but without major support from the government. Women's issues are no longer being recognized in this country.

Today the question of educating women for a suitable role is a central issue in the public debate over the status of women in Sudanese society. Seventeen (17) of the women in this study indicated change must come about. The only way it will do so is for women to take a lead and advance change and education.

Zina, also a Muslim woman, has only three years of schooling. She is a housewife and a market woman. Her daughter, Maah, was a first year student at Khartoum University. She talked about the current policies based on Islamic law "Shar'ia" where there is no separation of religion and state. Zina shared her disappointment with government policies and their effect on women's education:

It is not easy to get an admission. I wanted Maah to go to Shambat Agricultural College, but admission was sealed for men. Now she is attending Juba University's School of Economic and Social Sciences with her family's support. The system is highly selective. A student has to pass 80 percent or the student won't make it.

The 1991 reforms set out a radical restructuring and expansion program for schooling. The primary level 6-3-3 was replaced by eight years of formal basic

education followed by three years of secondary education, resulting in eleven years instead of twelve years of formal schooling as the maximum available. At the secondary levels, academic and technical schools were integrated, offering a mixture of academic and technical subjects alongside a core curriculum. Religion as a subject has become one of the requirements for admission to any major university. For males who are eligible to proceed to higher education, a period of national service is now compulsory before they continue their studies.

Ikhlass had only two years of schooling. She wanted her daughter to have a better education. Hannan, Ikhass's daughter, is attending Khartoum University, School of Economics; she wanted to study medicine but she did not get admission to Medical School. Her father, a medical doctor and a member of the communist party, had difficulties with the government. There are limited places at the institutions of higher education and students have to accept any place available. These concerns are evident in the following comment made by Maah:

I am interested in sciences, and I wish to study physics or biology. I applied for admission to the Medical School at Gezira University. I later got a reply from the school that I have to reapply.

She also said:

They told me that admissions to the physics and biology departments were closed, which I think was not the case. But I knew the reason.

The reasons were not clear, but she was able to share her feelings about her rejection.

My father is a very active member of the Sudanese Communist Party. His views are incompatible with the Islamic regime. My fate was affected by my family background. It was not easy to get admission with my father being opposed to the Islamic Government. The government tries to find all the excuses to disqualify students.

Antagonism toward women is being pushed to an extreme by the Islamic Government. Another new policy in the Ministry of Education is to abolish the overseas undergraduate studies and offer no more government scholarships to students

who want to study abroad. In 1992, an estimated 11,000 Sudanese were studying abroad, representing some 22 percent of the Sudanese undergraduates in which men are the majority. Also, the new law requires a woman to be accompanied by a male relative when traveling, which means a woman cannot get a scholarship to study abroad on her own if she is not married. The laws and regulations for admissions are becoming very complicated. Sarah is a senior in science education at Khartoum University where she is working hard to finish her degree with the hope of getting a scholarship to go abroad to do a Master's degree. According to her, the chances for getting the scholarship are very slim:

The laws are not only dealing with female students; they are against anybody who does not believe in Islamic ideology.

She commented more on the freedom to all people in Sudan:

Let me tell you one incident. One of our lecturers was jailed when he disagreed with some of the government policies denying women access. What the lecturer said was that: 'the public institutions should provide opportunities for all people. I do not see any logic behind these policies.' I do agree with this lecturer, women should be allowed to be in the public arena. This is the 1990s and the government is treating women as if people are in the stone age. It is very hard to believe that the government will turn the clock backward by restricting educational access for women. This country really needs a change.

Twenty-six (26) of the women interviewed wanted a change in these policies.

They wanted the change to happen in their life times. One woman expressed this in the following:

The Sudanese people have to change. This country needs to develop. The only way is to reduce inequality, alleviate poverty, increase opportunity for self-fulfillment for everyone. Only the people of Sudan can do it.

In the rural areas, only children who are academically superior have a chance to attend higher levels of education. These women have to demonstrate academic excellence through the national examination to get into higher education. Some of these women attending the university are under pressure because the policies of

dismissal are difficult to cope with. In 1990 the major aspects of educational reforms included the supplanting of English by Arabic as the language of instruction and the placing of greater emphasis on Islamic values (Hassan, 1995). Clara attends Khartoum University. She comes from South Sudan and did not have an opportunity to study the Arabic language. Her story provides a hint of the difficulties faced by southerners in studying the Arabic language and of how they coped to stay in school.

Arabic is a hard language to learn. But now I have to work harder to be able to pass my classes in order to graduate. These new changes are implemented by the government without considering the effect on the system, such as a lack of science textbooks in Arabic.

Lack of school materials, especially textbooks, poor school facilities, and unavailability of schools were perceived as a hindrance to students' performance. The library does not provide adequate materials and students find it very difficult to get any information. Language in Sudan reflects the paradigmatic shifts, including recognition that the need for quality education ought to be granted far higher priority in educational planning and that Arabic ought to be used as a national language. However, the lack of books written in Arabic resulted in shortages of textbooks in schools and universities. Women who are tied to domestic work could not find time to use the library. This is seen to be a challenge to centralized government, as Anna stated:

The library is very poor. In the library there are only three reference books for a biology class of 200 students. Although students are doing their best, many problems keep coming up every day. It is becoming double work because the students have to translate English texts into Arabic. I do not believe that students are really getting enough out of these arrangements. It is okay to study in Arabic, but let the government not change the system overnight without considering the implications for the system.

Anna also talked about the difficulties she faced during her studies in Khartoum University when she moved to Sudan with her family from neighboring Uganda in early 1970. After the civil war ended in 1972, President Numeiri granted the south limited self governance.

I finished primary and secondary education English at the neighboring country of Uganda. As a refugee I was not allowed to enter the university. My father is a fanner and uneducated, so the conditions of working in the urban center were impossible. My father had to stay in the village to do farming. He could not afford to pay my school fee. Also, as the oldest child in my family, I was not in a good position to be allowed by my family to attend or be far away from home. I have to help my mother at home.

According to Anna, educational opportunities were better in Sudan. Her chances to be admitted to one of the Sudanese colleges were better because she holds an Eastern African Secondary School diploma. The government policy was to give equal access to the children of the returnees as part of the resettlement, and she was able to qualify to attend one of the institutions of higher education. Grace was also one the women who benefited from these policies. She attended Juba University in the late 1970s; she said,

Chances of school were better in Sudan because education is free for everyone. Although schooling is free, the problem is that the number of places is limited. I stayed home for two years, got married and started a family, came back to Sudan in 1973. The University of Juba is no longer what it use to be. Now it has moved to temporary premises in Khartoum because it became impossible to operate in a war zone.

Another woman related her story of returning to school and how it has change her life. She found that education gave her self-direction and personal growth.

My husband is a very progressive man. He allowed me to go back to school and finish my education. He supported me to seek an admission at the teachers' training college. I was admitted as an adult student at Juba University, college of Adult Education in August 1977 and graduated in 1981 with B.Sc. in education. It was just time for change. Besides, rural education was of a lower quality than urban education, but I had an opportunity.

These women were educated at earlier times during the political changes in the Sudan. Their experiences differed from one government to another, from the parliamentary government to the Socialist Government to the Islamic government. The changes in government policies have greatly affected women's education. One government provided opportunities for women to advance in education and another did

not. Twenty-nine (29) of thirty women interviewed in this study have indicated that the educational policies of the Socialist government favored women's education. Twenty of the women interviewed in this study indicated that the Islamist policies of segregation in the educational institutions do not favor women's education. However, one woman who agreed with the policies did support her argument on the basis of cultural identity; she said:

As Muslim people, we have to live by the law of "Shar'ia," because Islam is not only a religion but a way of life and a culture of the people. Let us not make another mistake by following Western models and educating women for work. We should consider seriously using the educational system to reach the illiterate women, the young mother in particular, together with her daughter, and to educate her for her traditional roles.

While there is definitely a relationship between educational policy changes, or restructuring, and a country's economic growth, it is no easy task for the Sudanese government to try to determine exactly what this relationship is. The new changes have had significant effects on education because the policies are carried out without considering economic growth in the country. The nationwide educational system in Sudan provides free tuition, books and health services to students at all levels, and offers stipends, subsidized meals, and transportation to those who study away from home. This policy must be encouraged so that the government can provide and utilize its resources to meet the growing numbers of students.

Socioeconomic: Rural vs. Urban

Bedri and Burchinal (1985), Robertson (1985), and other researchers in Africa have suggested that the area of residence was predictive of school enrollment at all levels. Urban residence was also associated with the socioeconomic status and educational background of the families. The urban dwellers have greater educational opportunities for their children to attend the primary and secondary schools and the university. Generally, urban dwellers are exposed to more varied and modern ideas

through international media than are rural residents. Girls growing up in cities have greater educational opportunities than their rural sisters. The majority of women in this study come from the urban centers of Khartoum, Medani, and Juba. Two of the ten women who are now attending the University of Khartoum come from rural areas of the central Sudan, a town called Sennar. Their parents are rich farmers who own big dura (grain) plantations and control the export of cotton. For the women in this study, in the 1970's, the distance to school (higher level) was not a factor in parents' decisions to let their daughters continue with school, because the government provided free transportation plus living expenses to all the students. Education was widely seen as leading to clerical work and a lack of education as leaving little escape from farming. Sudanese education provided an opportunity to migrate to a city or to another country, especially oil producing countries. In 1990 this was changed and many educational subsidies were cut back to reduce the national educational expenditures.

Ten percent (3) of the women (the rural ones) in this study indicated that their parents were well-to-do economically compared to those living in the rural areas. Typical of this perception is a view illustrated in the following comment made by Sarah, who gave her family background:

I have a privileged life with a good and interesting education. My father works for the government, and he has good pay. He also owns a workshop where he sells parts for cars. He is making good money from his business. Although my father is entitled to government housing, he owns a very big modern house and two cars. We also have television and other electronic equipment in our house.

Sarah indicated that her father's educational background has helped in changing attitudes toward women's education.

Not only my family's educational and socioeconomic status, but their willingness to support me during my school years has made it possible for me to achieve and have an education. My brother was able to attend military college. So education is useful. With more education people are better off.

Like most other women, Sarah indicated that the socioeconomic status of her family provided the opportunity for her to attain a higher level of education. The Socioeconomic status and educational background of the parents in Sudan had great influence on women to access or to participate in any level of education. Eighty-seven percent (26) of the women indicated that their parents consider education as a means to further their upward mobility. Education was perceived as a means for future economic security.

For the majority of rural women things are still the same. Gender affects psychological, intellectual, and behavioral development. Male and female children and adolescents, anticipating their adult roles, develop differently (Faure, 1980). Horner (1972) contends that the women avoid success, particularly in competitive situations involving men, because of a desire not to lose femininity or to avoid disapproval and/or rejection. This represents an important aspect of explaining social controls. In contrast, Wiener and Kukla (1970) contends that black women in America with high achievement motivation employ both ability and effort just as men do. In an Islamic culture women have to protect their femininity because it constitutes part of the social construction of gender behavior, and serves as guidance for female interaction with men. As commented on by the respondents:

There is a great gender control in the Sudanese culture. There are constraints on womens' ability to claim further education. This exclusion practice has very much affected women's participation in education.

In the North where close-kin marriage, including cross-cousin marriage, is practiced, women are not allowed to marry outside a close-kin. There is a greater likelihood of wealth remaining in the hands of the family. A young woman has less opportunity to live far away from her family. This has affected women's education when the school is not near home.

Education may not be necessary for work, especially for those women who prefer self-employment using their manual or commercial skills, but it is seen as a key to wealth.

If I had gone to school, I would not be staying in this small house. I would have been one of those people who are living well.

The Influence of the School and the Teacher

Teachers are the keys to knowledge. The wealth of literature shows that inspirational teachers can and do make a difference in their students' participation and achievement (Hyde, 1991; Robertson et al., 1986; Wrzesinska, 1980). Within the effective school it appears to be the quality of the teachers above all that establishes the climate for students learning, as recent research has shown (Samoff, 1993). In almost two-thirds of the research on student-teacher relations in developing countries, responses from parents, students, community members and teachers cited the professional staff as keys to school effectiveness. Respondents believed that effective staff "set high but realistic expectations, engender a positive attitude toward learning and encourage students, and are themselves willing to upgrade their teaching and to monitor new ways for teaching" (McGraw et al., 1992, p.67; Bedri, 1985).

Sixty-seven percent (20) of the women appreciated their teachers' support. Personal relationships with teachers that were brought about in the educational environment could be strongly influenced by cooperation from parents. The women also indicated that they would rather be in a less competitive and a more cooperative environment. Zenab expressed:

A warm, friendly attitude by the teachers leads to a strong feeling of students' satisfaction. And a more rigid environment can lead to loss of interest in learning.

In the interviews on characteristics of effective teachers as role models, 70 percent (21) of the women indicated the following: (1) enthusiasm for knowledge of the subject, (2) an ability to communicate well, and (3) responsiveness to students' learning needs within a relationship of mutual respect. The need for teacher support is seen in the statement by a majority of the respondents:

Teachers who motivate their students help students learn better. I was one of the students who was motivated by my teacher. She enables me to transcend barriers and problems, and I was able to do well at school.

Curriculum content, structure, and delivery, and the leadership provided by the system all play a part in women's education. The majority of the women indicated that the quality and dedication of classroom teachers are the leading constraints for students to achieve in schools. Sarah discovered:

I was looking (in the beginning) during my college years for someone to help me. And I had a female teacher to whom I could talk, and I got the amount of feedback and reinforcement that I needed. Later I said to myself, 'Hey! I can do it.' Then I wasn't anxious to. . . . find out 'if this was okay?'

The other factor that influenced women's access and participation in education was age maturity; as women became older they began to have individual will and determination in what they did. Eighty-seven percent (26) of the women indicated this view in the interviews. In the interviews, women had positive expectations for themselves. They indicated that an encouraging educational climate can enable them to overcome obstacles to learning, and that this can be a powerful agent for educational participation and achievement.

All the women perceived that their decision to obtain any level of education was facilitated by the changing attitudes toward women's education in society. The women believed liberal attitudes toward women's schooling was the reason they were able to attend a school or an institution of higher education. These women were generally optimistic about social progress, based on the changes in the numbers of women who are educated. Most of the interviewees said, "times have changed," and society is progressing, especially for those women who are currently attending the universities. When they compared themselves with the women of the 1950s and 1960s, they felt privileged to have an education at what they perceived as the "right time" for change. Aziza expressed her feelings:

I am the only university-educated person in my family. This is perhaps because it is the right time, when change was needed. I attended the university in the mid-1970s. There were no opportunities in my lifetime, for my older sisters did not go to a higher level of education. When the socialists came to power, my older sister had already started a family and had to take care of her children. She was too busy to think about further education.

These women have shown a strong desire for education and are strong willed, competitive individuals. Some women articulated their views very strongly and clearly on women's education. Amal commented on the new changes that are taking place in the country. Amal, who attended the university in the late 1970s, responded that she was more independent than her older sister. She saw herself as a free woman who could make her own decisions. To her, the new changes were taking the society backward. After fifteen years of socialist rule, women have found some freedom and it was hard to go back to those traditional norms.

At the time, I thought I must be independent. I had a stronger urge than my sister did some years back. My sister was the eldest child in the family. She had no opportunities like my brothers who have the right to enjoy all the privileges in the family and in society as a whole. The boys have more freedom than the girls. I do feel that I am not entitled to that right, and must be on my own. With education I would not have to depend on my family or my husband economically.

The majority of women were proud of the fact that they had attended or were attending the university, by virtue of their individual determination and hard work. With all the difficulties the women had to face during educational years, they appreciated the support given to them by their parents which provided this opportunity. Another obstacle women talked about was the Sudanese family structure. Anna, from Juba University, is working hard to show her stepmother that she was better than her stepmother's children. She grew up in a polygamous family in which her father had two wives. Although her father was educated, he still held to the African traditions state that when a man is economically able he can maintain more than one wife. Anna had to compete with her siblings and cousins.

I am always acting to be a good girl just to prove to my parents that I am better than other children. I sometimes do things I do not want to do. My parents expect so much from us. There is always somebody commenting how well or how badly you behave."

In the extended families, parents' expectations are high and the children are expected to do better in whatever they do. These include personal responses to the various incentives that society provides for education such as work, status, economic and social position.

I wanted to let my family know that I did not want the rest of my life to be tied to all kinds of traditions where I have to work and share the money with my husband who may have another woman. Now I am married and my husband knows that I will not support his wife if he is going to have another one besides me. I am now in control.

Summary

Access to and participation in education is a key issue in the policies of every modern state. Almost invariably all are strongly oriented to enhancing access and participation, subject only to economic and cultural constraints. Indeed, such policy is one of the essential characteristics of the world's education. It constitutes not only of an obligation of the state to provide, but of individuals and their families to take part in the education of their children. These factors are not only determined by government policy and legislation, but also by culture, economic experience, religion, culture, job prospects, and a host of other factors over which educators have, at best, only influence. What has to be explained is not why women's education lags behind that of men, but rather what influences or helps some women to succeed.

Women's status in education fluctuated over time and a few women benefited from educational expansion in Sudan from 1956 to the socialist rule in 1969-83. The policies of the socialists in the 1970s made for improvements in education and economic conditions for the average Sudanese. Economic development policies were based on education as a means of the preparation of human resources in the country.

In that case education remained free, where both men and women from all walks of life could compete on a fair basis.

Families with better economic status and educational background were able to reside in urban areas, and their children had a better chance of schooling. They saw the school as an instrument for social and economic advancement. They recognized education as an opportunity to escape manual labor, low-skilled jobs, and unemployment. For the importance of parents' support, women testified with these statements: "My parents are satisfied if I do well in school." "My parents want me to go to the university." "My parents are proud of me because I do well at school." These statements suggest a psychologically supportive atmosphere at home. Parents who create such an atmosphere support their children in developing better academic self-concepts.

Schools and teachers who are committed to their profession often give more time to their individual students. If the teacher spends time to correct and go over the mistakes from classroom work with each individual student, and helps the student as a friend and a guide, this helps the students to achieve. The emphasis here is upon the teachers giving the time that is needed to help the student understand and complete the school work. To illustrate, interviewees said, "When it comes to school work, my teacher had high expectations of me." "My teacher felt I am not doing my best at my work." All these statements describe demanding teachers who want their students to succeed.

The policies of equal opportunities at school and work were implemented by the previous governments, but now the Islamic rule is enacting policies that make women as a group benefit less from these opportunities. However, some parents are supporting their daughters, and female students are determined and willing to pursue their education. An interesting side of the issue in this discussion is the role

expectations of a "housewife," a theme emphasized by the majority of female authors in their writing on education as a tool for changing women's status. Regardless of the social pressure, the majority of women would like to see increased exposure to Western education, because it has a measurable impact on the formation of women's attitudes and expectations. For these women, education can be used as a tool for upward social mobility. It can also be an efficient means of fulfilling obligations and responsibilities traditionally held by women, such as child care and the welfare of the society as a whole, as the women testify: "I can be educated and be a good mother as well."

Given the multiplicity of forces bearing on state policy and institutional goals in women's education, an organized and comprehensive portrayal of all the factors is needed for determining the diverse effects a specific policy or an institutional proposal may produce. Clearly, an initiative that aims to improve one aspect of women's education, for example, the early marriage may adversely affect another aspect of women's education, for example, retention and more schooling for women.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Summary

This chapter summarizes the results of the study, describes the implications that were derived from the findings, and formulates recommendations regarding educational policy for women's education. This study was designed to follow the explicit assumption that a priority goal of government is improving its educational policy on women's participation. I examined three aspects of females' access and participation: (1) constraints on females' access and participation; (2) opportunities for access and participation; and (3) policies of reform in the Sudanese system of education to improve access to schools and enhance quality and cultural suitability to promote female enrollment. The strength of these factors varies at the different levels of education. This study suggests that there is a need for careful consideration of priorities, especially in the rural areas where sending girls to schools has not been a priority.

This research was conducted in the tradition of ethnography (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Geertz, 1973), thus, I used a natural setting as my data source. Data collection predominantly took the form of interviews in which the researcher entered the environment, and became a familiar sight as he or she interacted naturally with subjects (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). Following each interview, I typed extensive field notes, with the analysis taking shape through checking and rechecking comments (Bogden and Biklen, 1982). The respondents were from the three cities of Khartoum, Medani, and Juba; and from four small, rural towns of southern Sudan; Nasir, Akobo, Leer, and Maridi. There were five female students from the three institutions of higher education: University of Khartoum, Gezira University, and Juba University.

Additionally, two female administrators, three faculty members, and ten women with little or no schooling were interviewed.

Interviews from the respondents were taped and later transcribed. More data was collected from government documents and reports, newspapers, and journal articles in both: Arabic and English. The Arabic documents were translated into English. This information was later used to compare notes with the data collected in the interviews and provided validity, reliability, and consistency in the analysis of the data.

Data was collected during more than 18 months, resulting in 20 micro audio tapes of interviews and 400 pages of detailed field notes. A comparative technique for data analysis was initiated at the beginning of the interviews. Events within a single interview were compared to each other and were then compared across interviews and within the field notes (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Through this procedure, dimensions and subdimensions became apparent (Strauss, 1987). In early interviews, I developed two codes for faculty/staff members and students. As interviews continued, I was able to note a correlation between the students and faculty members' stands on gender issues and the type of language they used to express their feelings. This evolving dimension became a major theme. In this inductive, analytic manner, I developed several hypotheses grounded in the data from the natural context (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

This research makes a contribution to the present body of literature in educational development, women's studies, cross-cultural studies, and policy analysis. The findings should be of value to the Sudanese Ministry of Education, International Development Agencies, educational planners of the SubSaharan Africa, and to the Middle East and many developing countries in their efforts to improve women's access to participation in education.

In summary, education, in general, is perceived widely as the route to improving an individual's opportunities for advancement. In this study, women indicated that education is increasingly becoming the means to a better life. The women believed that knowledge and skills are important; first, to improve food production, nutrition, hygiene; and health care; and second, to acquire skills for earning the money necessary to improve the quality of life or emerge from poverty.

To improve women's access to and participation in education, effective policy initiatives must take account of as many relevant factors as possible. They must stimulate more action on women's educational goals, at either the policy or institutional levels, and should not be formulated so as to invite their own demise. My review of literature in this study suggested that theory is critical in policy research, and that social research can serve an "educative" function rather than a decision-making tool, to aid policymakers to understand the complexity of social problems. Therefore the emphasis is on the individual's ability to master strategies in a flexible manner to extract meaning from a complexity of interactions, for the sake of perpetually improving society. My summary of the findings is organized according to research questions, as outlined in chapter one.

1. What factors affect or influence women's participation in education?

The major factors affecting or influencing women's access to and participation in education consist of four broad categories: (1) personal and social factors, referring to both internal and external factors bearing on the attractiveness of education; (2) economic factors, referring to costs and benefits to the individual woman; (3) institutional factors, referring to availability and relevancy of educational facilities; and (4) political, referring to factors that have a special bearing on public and political decisions. Below is an illustration of the complex factors that affect or influence women's access to or participation in education.

Factors influencing women's access to and participation in education

1. Social-personal
 - Community/parents
 - Prestige and status
 - Individual motivation/self-esteem
 2. Economic
 - Child's (female) domestic labor
 - Employment/economic independence
 - Cost of education
 3. Institutional
 - Access
 - School quality/curriculum
 - School schedules
 - Gender bias/environment/classroom
 - Gender role models
 4. Political
 - Public's perception of women's roles
 - Leadership commitment to support women's education
-

Administrators and faculty members interviewed for this study expressed favorable attitudes overall toward women's education, an indication that these women are willing to help other women to attain an education. The reaction of all women to schooling at the higher levels was also positive. The women believed that educational authorities must work with families to find ways to motivate and provide equal opportunities for all students. When women find support from parents and teachers, they maintain favorable attitudes toward education (Acker, 1994). Educated women may enjoy a greater advantage in the modern economy than educated men. Women with less education fear discrimination. Through education, women can erase the effects of that discrimination.

The five women administrators and faculty members in this study, who have had higher education, were members of a less privileged and slightly larger middle

class. While they shared some of the views held by the other women, the main difference in their outlook was a practical concern to change the school system by incorporating open, more community-based, experiential methods of teaching and learning in schools.

Nearly all the women perceived that their parents' support and encouragement for attending school was important at an early age. Most of the women's mothers did not have the same opportunity for schooling as their children. They lacked exposure and experience in the outside world. According to a recent survey taken in the northern regions of Sudan, 83 percent of the general public perceive women's education as not an important concern but rather a waste of women's time (Hassan, 1995).

Especially key players in policy-making were the government leaders and educators of the past. During the socialist rule of the 1970s, the objective was to educate the masses. Popular forces worked to provide leadership in raising public awareness on educational issues. The leadership was committed to women's access to education and gained great popularity among the women. The government policy targeted specific groups; youth, women, workers, and professionals, to ensure that they were aware of their roles as agents of change.

The governments of the 1970s supported and encouraged women's initiatives and provided opportunities for women's access to and participation in education. It also was a government responsibility to design legislation that protected resources for future generations and to ensure that there was continuity in educational policy supporting gender equity. The government was successful in the mobilization of popular groups such as youth, women, farmers, and trade unions to direct their attention toward national development and to influence political activities that guided the national issues.

As the Ministry of Education (1972) Educational Policy Planning, Section of Educational Statistics Khartoum, Sudan pointed out, far-reaching educational policy changes at the national level were placing new and increasing demands upon the teaching professional. The areas where school transformations took place show that enrollment of children, age 7-15 increased 62 percent nationwide in 1989. As the policy stated:

The impact of, and responsibility for effective implementation of all these reforms falls mainly on the nation and educators at the community levels.

Educators were an accessible group, and so it was easy to target a program at them. The 1970s-1980s Teachers' Association was the largest organization in the Sudan followed by the Women's Union. The unionization of the teaching profession was best incorporated into the teacher training curriculum, which is not the case of the current government policy. But the teachers' organizational approach could be used to educate current teachers and general public in creating effective student and family-friendly schools.

Social and personal: Cultural heritage and social constraints in many areas of the country hold back women from participation in education. The social roles of adolescent males often provide for free time, which is then available for schooling and after school study; Conversely, the free time of young women is taken up with domestic duties. The beneficial effects of women's education have been well documented, and current levels of women's participation in Sudan suggest that much can be done to extend these benefits to other developing countries. In Sudan, like many other developing countries, the social factors, such as a family's socioeconomic status and parents' educational background, paralleled urban residency and played a significant role in women's access to and participation in education. Parents with more education engaged in meticulous planning for the future of their children's education,

both at school and at home. The central, family-related goal was to safeguard the future of the children, especially the son. As material wealth, acquired by the family, provided security, investment in children's (boys) education became a greater option. Investment in the education of children gave a sense of limited control over the future because children are considered as future investments in the future. From the families' perspective, education of daughters is less attractive than educating the sons because sons are future heads of families.

Educated mothers who have higher status by the virtue of their schooling were aware of the larger economic benefits that befall those who are schooled, and are more likely to encourage their daughters to pursue further education. If the family can afford to pay servants to provide home help, then that can reduce girls' and young women's domestic responsibilities, and they are able to continue their studies.

Sociocultural factors, family backgrounds, and gender roles involve demands that compete with school attendance, and seem to have more influence than school factors in explaining this persistent inequality in Sudanese education. Sociocultural attitudes and traditions determine the status of women as far as their education is concerned. In cultures where female seclusion is practiced, especially in Sudan where Islam is a way of life, the impact of cultural norms on girls' attending school after puberty is substantial. The traditions are more severe in rural areas, where parents lack education. They are more reluctant to challenge traditional norms to educate their daughters. Culture and safety concerns leave parents feeling obliged not to send their daughters to school, unless schools are located close to home, separate from boys' schools and staffed by female teachers.

Also, early marriage results in withdrawal of young women from school. Marriage traditionally has been early, at puberty, or just after puberty in some ethnic groups, and before puberty in others. Early marriage is still common today in rural

areas. The pressure to marry at any cost, the survival of the tradition of early marriage, and customs, in some ethnic groups, for girls to prove their fertility before marriage, all contribute to the high dropout rate for girls at the end of the primary and secondary levels.

Economic Factors: Economic factors were indicated by the majority of women as the most influential factor with respect to families facing problems in supporting their daughters in school. Unlike the boy who is often allowed to concentrate on his schoolwork, the girl may be expected to divide her time between domestic duties and school. Young women's domestic duties have a great impact on family income. Their contributions to domestic duties allow mothers to work more in the farm or at the market. Sending girls to school results in a direct loss of family income.

Institutional Factors: Within the actual educational system, there are factors that may operate to the disadvantage of women. Class size is another worrisome factor from the point-of-view of women. One can hypothesize that larger the class, the less attention the women are going to receive. Fewer girls than boys win places in secondary education. Sudanese parents would normally hesitate to send a daughter to school where the teacher is a male, because it is usually considered unsafe to send your daughter to a coeducational institution. The school factors strongly influenced women's attendance and their level of achievement. The data illustrates that students can achieve educational success in spite of oppressive macrolevel factors. A devoted, caring teacher who works in close cooperation with students can sow seeds of education in an individual child at an early age. Additionally, the role modeling efforts on the part of an individual woman effectively raised awareness of the importance of education and combined with other factors to influence women's achievement. The data also shows that it does not take far-reaching institutional changes to create the conditions for individual students to experience success in school.

Political Factors: The government's commitment to leadership in implementing policies that encourage women's access to education also plays a significant role. It was not until the mid-1970s that Sudan initiated reforms to redress gender-based inequalities in education. Particularly important was the provision of education to all citizens. The socialist government declared a Decade for Education and sought to encourage citizens to participate in education at all levels, especially women. In addition, the government enacted specific policies to encourage women's enrollment, distinct from general educational policies.

Although attempts were made in the past in Sudan to improve women's participation, no government has dealt adequately with the quality of education women receive to prepare them to participate in social and economic life of modern Sudan. Many different policy changes have interacted to influence women's education, making it difficult to determine the impact of any one policy to improve women's education.

2. What is the interaction between social factors and state policies to influence women's participation?

The government attempts to support women's education, illustrating the complexities of translating a policy idea into a practical reality that embraces widespread individual participation in all levels of education. Broadening women's educational opportunities is not just a matter of creating new educational facilities or providing greater access to facilities already established. The situation for women in Sudan poses special problems of creating equality of opportunity in fact, as well as in principle. Government policies to encourage women to participate in education must deal with the realities of women's situations and address the fundamental areas that serve to keep women uneducated and in an inferior status. Making educational policies relevant to the requirements of women in a specific context will provide clarification of

the areas of greatest need, as well as utilization of the possibilities offered by the school system, both formal and informal.

In social research, interest in African women's education and the factors that affect it continue to grow. This is evident by the literature and research that has emerged during the past two decades (The World Bank, 1993). An examination of current literature and research also indicates that there is sufficient data on factors that affect women's access to and participation in education, but there is still insufficient data on factors that influence the nature and quality of women's education. Women's access to and participation in education in Africa as well as other developing countries has improved in the past fifteen years. Current educational policy accepts as its starting point that access and participation are becoming part of the phenomenon of the national educational planning in many developing countries.

Given the appropriate conceptual understanding of women's education in Sudan and an appreciation of the real constraints that exist, there remains the question of what, if any, opportunities exist to promote greater participation. It was noted in earlier chapters that only those women who have experienced and benefitted from education can fully comprehend the nature of the constraints and appreciate how delimiting the constraints are in terms of policy options.

These same individuals (women) are probably the only ones who can fully appreciate the potential that exists in the Sudanese educational system. While variations exist within and opinions differ among the individual women, they agreed that support for schooling must remain strong, and parental interest in the school activities of their children must continue to be positive. The potential of the female students is probably the greatest source of optimism.

A great deal of disparity exists in the Sudanese educational system. The inequalities were easier to identify because there was a very obvious dividing line

between those who participated in education and those who did not (the women and the rural population). The socialist policy of expansion led to increases in access and participation from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s. But this increase does not stand up to an analysis of improved women's status. In Sudan more years of female schooling are usually considered by the family as a waste of a woman's marriageable period. The parental support for education in Sudan has always been in favor of sons (Ali, 1972).

Educational systems in developed countries are the offspring of their own societies. This is not often the case in the developing nations. Their systems do not resemble these nations; they do not reproduce, in most cases, their own culture (Duany, 1994b). Moreover, they alter social situations in many subtle and not yet well-understood ways. It was indicated by members of faculty that Western education is seen by many people as foreign. Schooling has been considered as something that takes women out of the home and away from traditional female activities for some portion of each day over several years. It exposes women to new ways of thinking and to the outside world. It tends to delay their entry into the world of marriage and childbearing, and often makes them more desirable to marriage partners who are not of their kin or not accepting of traditional cross-cousin marriage.

Despite the progress that has been made in women's and girls' participation in education in Sudan, the idea is still prevalent that going to school can make girls too independent and demanding, and can encourage them to challenge their traditional roles in marriage and the community. Early marriage, heavy domestic duties (Brock and Cammish, 1991), and poverty also affect the figures for the drop-out rate of young women. In 1979, the socialist government, the Sudanese Ministry for Social Welfare, and the Women's Department spoke in support of women's education; "Education is for all, and gender discrimination should not be allowed in the school environments.

Parents have to be both able (in economic terms) and willing (in terms of attitude) to support and provide for their daughters' education. Provision of essential facilities in primary and secondary schools must be made, including at least two reasonably large rooms that are usable in all weather to teach home science to all students. It is necessary to introduce gender-free curriculum and other learning materials at all levels. At least two women teachers should work in each boys' school. This policy, while stating very general goals, also addresses, directly and specifically, the needs of the local rural schools."

Education becomes significant as it intellectually trains individuals with skills for the labor force. The 1972 Sudan National Policy of Education stressed that in primary education, a substantial improvement in the quality of education was necessary to develop human resources appropriate for nation-building. Currently, this is not the case. Educational policies were geared toward increasing the number of women in schools. Although Sudan is a poor country, the national government accepted the primary responsibility for education. The policies and expenditures for female education and training made by the central government were important policies of a leadership commitment. In order to tackle the root problems in the system as it has expanded (alienation of the Sudanese child; unsuitability of the formal structure for women; bareness of the school facilities), the Ministry planned policies to provide action that was needed to implement and direct educational policy.

Among those leaders who supported women's education was former president Jaafer M. Numerri, who made education a center of his presidency. In his presidential speech on education and development he stated:

Even when a state fulfills its role in providing access for women and girls in schools, unless education is compulsory, the availability and accessibility of places also becomes a constraint. It not only the decision about whether daughters go to school or how long they will stay there. When decisions are made within individual families, it is what

the women do their with education. Socio-economic, religious and cultural traditions, especially in remote and rural areas (82 percent of the population), may differ greatly from the equal opportunities policies expressed by the national government. The nation cannot afford to provide enough schools within walking distance especially in vast and thinly populated areas such as northern, western provinces and the tropical areas of southern provinces. Primary schools are on an average 20-50 km apart; secondary schools and universities are found only in urban centers. In these circumstances, young women and girls have far less chance of going to school than young men and boys (Duany, 1994a).

Nationally, in the 7-15-year-old age group, 53.9 percent of boys and 32.6 percent of girls are enrolled in school, but girls drop out toward the end of the primary and during secondary school years. Among 15-19-year-olds, there are three times as many boys as girls in school in the rural areas. In the 20-24 age group, men outnumber women seven to one. There is a sharp contrast between urban and rural enrollment, and among these percentages, lower figures for girls. As noted earlier, the variations in educational conditions are dramatic within the regions. Similar patterns could be found in almost any sub-saharan African nation. The point is that enormous variation exists in the reality of the classroom experience faced by students. However, the analyst must never lose touch with the reality of the school environment in moving from the analytical to prescriptive aspects of policy analysis.

3. Which factors can legitimately be labeled as problems?

Based upon the analysis of the findings of this investigation, conclusions were drawn to identify how educational barriers for women are embedded in political ideological context, and the economic, cultural, and religious norms of the Sudanese society. In looking at the educational opportunities available for women in the developing countries, the findings show that family decisions operate to affect the participation and attainment of females at all levels of formal education. This study found that the society supports boys' education at higher levels than girls, because education is considered an investment in Sudanese society. In Sudanese society, there

are rights, benefits, duties, and responsibilities of each member of the family.

Education is considered to be one of the rights of a son. The family's economic future lies in him (the boy), and his education is taken as a priority of the family. The findings also indicate that schools, including colleges, contributed to low attainment and achievement of women by sending negative messages to female students. Schools did not promote women's aspirations.

Factors that account for the greater educational participation of boys and girls in urban areas include the availability of schools, the greater opportunity for better schools, the greater economic and political power of urban residents, and the lesser need for child (girl) labor. Parental education and economic background improve the chance for a family to reside in an urban center. The parents who are exposed to wider knowledge support both girls' and boys' education (Summers, 1994). The study concluded that the delivery of enhanced access, participation, and learning is surrounded by and involves key policy issues. In the light of the foregoing analysis it is inescapable that the government address the following problems of girls' and women's education:

Attitudes of Women Toward Education: The majority of the women in this study appreciated their parents' support for education. The women showed greater motivational intensity and desire to continue schooling, especially at higher levels of education. Female students felt that the educational environment was competitive. As gender segregation intensifies, women's institutions can easily be neglected in the policy making.

The majority of women in this study believed in the right to educate women. However, they were aware of problems of role and status of girls and women in Sudan. To improve women's participation in education, more specific programs targeted to individuals and appropriate to Sudanese society are needed.

Although the public's attitude toward girls' education is changing, the majority of Sudanese people emphasize that girls do not need to go to school. This was strongly documented by the findings that participation among well-educated women from urban Muslim families, where education is taken as social status, contrasts strongly with the women's participation rate among the urban poor and rural population. The government also confronted the social and religious norms to create pressure for change and to speed up the process of increasing women's access to education. The lives of rural women, their role as change agents, and the enhancement of the quality of life for rural women were all included in the socialist government agenda.

Policies of Segregation in Education: The vast majority of the women interviewed did not support the new policies of segregation in the school system and public services. Although a few women supported the policies, they were in favor of equal treatment in schools and equal curriculum to all Sudanese students. These findings are consistent with the results of most studies done on women's education in developing countries. One of the most dramatic concepts involving education is that of developing an educational curriculum to educate women to become change agents. In her study, Bedri (1985), stated; "The first goal of the Ahfad University for women is that its graduates should be effective instruments for social change in Sudan, well equipped with all the necessary qualifications for leadership." The respondents in this study, especially the administrators, expressed the need for educational planners to understand the full pattern of gender biases.

The Issues of Culture and Gender: The Islamic culture is a substantial reference group. Women have to be segregated, as the responsibility of the society is to protect women. In the school environment, the critical players are the teachers and administrators.

Another important aspect in females' education is the informal education that provides opportunities, such as functional literacy. Some programs can be more effective than formal education; however, they are more difficult for the government to coordinate and initiate because of the lack of funds. This area can be targeted through women's organizations and the general media.

Women's organizations have played a major role in stimulating action and providing forums for informal education through special programs. The former governments found that women's organizations were important instruments for change. The public institutions were prepared to approach women's organizations with messages that motivated greater women's participation. Before policy implementation, the government had to approach women's organizations. The educational planners tailored messages in such a way that they were clear and relevant to the culture. It would not be difficult to educate the leaders of women's groups on women's issues, but it was essential that they themselves develop a coordinated program with public institutions in the country.

Parental Decision Making: The parental role in encouraging their daughters to attain any level of education was not very strong, especially by parents with little or no formal education. However, family education and economic background play a key role in women's education. In this study, the majority of women valued women's education. They indicated the importance of their role as parents to support equality for their children, both male and female, to attain any level of education. However, the majority of women with little or no education supported only primary education for daughters (Bedri, 1985). This was largely due to the cultural norms that are not easy to change in such a short period of time. Again, policymakers must get to the public and educate them especially the mothers. In Sudan, literacy among women is very low

(Hassan, 1995). Evidence shows that the entry competency of girls is influenced by the degree of the mother's education.

In the 1970s, the government provided for the participation of female students, teachers, parents, and community in education, especially in the rural areas. The formulation of explicit goals; for example, parental involvement in school management, was a part of the school system. This motivated the people to use the products of its education systems fully and effectively, thereby also maximizing students' motivation. These methods could be used today.

Urban/Rural Differences: The families who live in the urban areas had daughters who attended schools up to the secondary level or even higher. These findings are consistent with other studies by Summers (1994) and Robertson (1985). According to Summers and Robertson, the more urban the women are, the higher their expectations are attaining further education. The higher the income of the students' families, the less in agreement are their attitudes with the traditional roles of women. Rural families' opportunities are fewer. Fewer women attended schools mainly due to the difficulties women face in living in rural areas, caused by resistance from their families and the fear of the insecurity of a distant school (Islam, 1982). In this study women gave three reasons for low attendance:

- (a) Economic issues such as domestic duties; in rural areas from the early age of 6-14, girls begin to look after their young siblings and do housework, while their parents do other duties outside the home, as laborers or farm workers.
- (b) Cultural heritage and social constraints in rural areas hold the women at home. In the North, segregation of girls from an early age prepares them for future early marriage and motherhood. Apathy to coeducation was high among the illiterate parents.
- (c) Shortages of qualified women teachers and proer security for female students are problems. Parents were not willing to send their daughters to schools where men were teachers.

One of the reasons why the old Mission schools worked well for Sudanese girls in southern Sudan was that the system was based on teams of males and females. Both sexes taught, and the women focused particularly on the needs of girls as they began to mature. The purpose of education by missionaries was the evangelization of Africans. Sudanese educational records show that a very limited number of girls were allowed, to attend school.

State Policies vs. Sociocultural Implications: Governments with more implicit policies toward women, justified by cultural norms, are more effective in controlling social structure and interaction. Again, the majority of the women indicated that effect of state control on women, the growth of Islamic fundamentalist power, and the oppression of women as constraints on their education.

An increase in educational enrollment was achieved in the 1970s and 1980s as a result of opportunities that were created by the government. The government ensured that women's views were heard and acted upon. The government provided programs where women could create opportunities to discuss and formulate their own policies. Then, the government facilitated women's programs that were widely publicized and presented to educational planners. The national government's focus on women's issues, especially education, was effective in gaining publicity. The policy provided for appropriate relationships between state, community, and other agencies, such as schools, colleges, and universities, in delivering services and provisions, particularly as to the determination of financial responsibilities and funding arrangements to facilitate women's education.

The first step taken by the Islamic government after assuming power was the banning of coeducation in June 1986. The government declared that all educational institutions were to be segregated on the basis of Islamic morality. The educational authorities in Sudan regard the females' skills as most appropriate and necessary for

women in their role as mothers and housewives. Given the Islamic government's conception of the appropriate role and position of women in society, female students have been barred from attending certain traditionally male-oriented fields of study. For example, women judges were expelled and female law students can no longer aspire to become judges. This was done in accordance with the Islamic belief that women are not fit to judge, because their sentimentality and emotions make them act according to the dictates of their hearts rather than the ruling of their heads.

4. What efforts are being made to increase women's participation in education? In what ways are these efforts successful? In what ways are they unsuccessful?

Future work on women's education, or education in general, will have to address the issues presented in this research. A baseline can be provided.

The two objectives of access to or participation and equity in women's education, although compatible, may not coexist well. The gender dynamics that helped structure educational issues from the 1950s through the 1980s have not yet been altered in the Sudan. The UNESCO statistics (1992) indicate that women are participating in the lower levels of education in urban areas. Additionally, the research of King and Hill (1993) shows dramatic growth in the number of females in lower levels of education. Lack of women's participation in education, particularly in the rural areas and at the higher levels has generated questions in Sudan. The National Salvation Revolution (NSR) hopes to segregate individuals as to their future professions according to the dictates of Islam. Female teachers are still used in the first and second years of boys' elementary schools, and male math, and science teachers still teach in all-girls high schools owing to the lack of female instructors in those subjects. Textbooks for girls and boys at all stages are being prepared by the Ministry of Education.

With the gradual pressure on women to wear veils in public places, female students and teachers were among the first to be affected by the compulsory veiling law. The law requires all girls of seven years of age and older to wear dark colors (black, grey, brown, navy) and headcovers to school at all times. Given these facts, Sudanese female education has suffered a major setback since the National Salvation Revolution (NSR) in 1986.

Low women's status, defined by lack of women's access to or participation in education, suggests a necessary advocacy of preferential treatment for women's education. If the raw numbers of female students are there, or if it can be reasoned that the focus will shift from a quantitative issue - the number of students from particular gender groups - to a qualitative one that crosses gender boundaries, equality in education could be achieved. Statistics suggest that the educational systems have become less an instrument of social change than a means by which women's social status in the Sudan has improved.

In the last two decades, research on women's education done by international organizations such as UNICEF, UNESCO, and the World Bank has raised awareness of educational policies in the developing countries. Many of these policies were not implemented, but remained mere documents. Educators in the Sudan need to be aware of this research (especially this study), and to use it for effective planning in the field of education. A review of Sudanese Ministry of Education Reports suggests that gender inequality does not appear to be a current issue in educational planning because of a general lack of gender concerns on the part of the policymakers (Hassan, 1995).

Five women in leadership positions and the local community need to work together closely to establish priorities and goals. A community of aspirations, expectations, and values between the home and the school is central to the development of effective schooling.

Women leaders and organizations have a great role to play in expressing women's views in planning and organizing programs or activities. In the 1970s and 1980s, the women leaders acted as a reference group. These leaders were considered to have influence over the directions and activities undertaken by the government in support of women. The current status of women in the areas of education is discouraging. Those who support gender equality have become a minority; consequently, more women are going to be out of touch than ever with what is going on around them. This means that women's high expectations and goal setting in education, along with an encouraging educational climate, will be remote possibilities at best in present-day Sudan. Reaching parents and women's groups, keeping them informed, and making them feel welcome is a challenge in Sudan. Where families are economically or socially disadvantaged, there is a need for information and understanding of their children's educational needs.

The interrelationships between the social, economic, and institutional factors, and attitudes toward women's education, have resulted in restrictions in terms of themes that can be researched. Currently, the most urgent needs of women and the society cannot be addressed. This situation requires that policy directives be formulated based on these findings. The recommendations section immediately below is devoted partly to this effort:

5. How can these problems be diminished or removed?

The following recommendations are based upon the findings and conclusions of this study and upon data accumulated during the investigation. The strategy proposed in this section represents more of a change in emphasis than a change in the direction of educational development. It cannot be considered extreme; it provides measured suggestions for bridging the wide gap between the education of women and men. The major break with the past is not in the activities that are proposed, but with the

commitment to a specific strategy by the government for a significant period of time. These recommendations are for future courses of action, in the form of well-planned programs, aimed at closing the gap between females' and males' education. The wide gender gap in education can be narrowed by improving the rates of females' access, attainment and performance.

A critical debate on the research and its findings should take place as the first reaction to this completed report. It is necessary to subject the findings to the normal scientific communication provided by peer evaluation. Improving the methodology or research instrument, extending the corpus of knowledge on women's education or gender issues, or providing alternative approaches, can only be beneficial to the important discussion opened by this investigation.

The next step is to convert the findings into policy statements and actions, in an effort to implement the following recommendations as soon as possible.

Acknowledging changes put into effect and describing, in detail, the steps to be taken by concerned parties of what can and should be done to improve women's education. The bodies involved are: the Ministry of Education; the heads of departments at universities, directors of educational institutions and government departments (especially in education), as well as all decision makers involved in primary and secondary education. These measures and suggestions are as follow:

1. It is clear in research done by nongovernmental organizations such as UNESCO, the World Bank groups, UNICEF, and many others, that in order to achieve quality education, proper school management is needed. Quality of education requires commitment on the part of leadership and support in terms of resources. The government must place a strong emphasis on appropriate use of scarce resources in schooling. Women indicated three needs:

- (a) Smaller class sizes and contextualization (culturally, oriented curriculum) of the learning materials relevant to the needs of the society. Educational programs that are closely related in a supportive and secure environment. Emphasis on the development of social, cognitive and personal skills and the raising of self-esteem should be regarded as central to an effective system.
- (b) More well trained teachers, specialist counselors, school nurses, and other ancillary support staff are needed to enable teachers to find time for teaching and the students to have more time to learn. The teachers should be trained not only to emphasize traditional learning, but to make use of common sense that could be effective with learning.
- (c) More financial support to the departments of education to provide more educational facilities in all regions as needed. This could be left to individual governments.

2. Greater emphasis on education is needed if any impact is to be made on national development and social welfare. A preventive approach is recommended. The attitudes of Sudanese people toward women's education serve as an indicator against which the status quo for the system can be measured. The essence here is that thinking must be radical and proactive. The effect of any effort should not be curtailed by incoherent or fragmented reaction to reality though attempts to address local or purely situational problems. Instead, the ideal reality should be created by following a clear policy, based on a well-pictured vision. Traditionally, many Sudanese live their lives dictated by that which comes with fate or destiny by perceiving reality as predetermined. Change requires that a value-based gender-biased educational environment to be established first. It is of the utmost importance that a common spirit on gender issues be identified and fostered, to ensure that gender-free goals are set. Specific values would be as the inviolability of everyone's individuality; equality of opportunities for all; and the unassailable right of each individual to achieve optimal self-actualization, happiness and psychological well-being, economic welfare, and education. Women should have the freedom to balance personal and collective (national, community, cultural, and religious) interests.

3. Free education up to the secondary level would promote women's education. This is the acknowledgment of the need to improve the well-being of all segments of population. Achievement of national development goals will depend to a large extent on the quality of human resources in the total population. The priority should be the promotion of equal access to higher education. Additionally, the state has to ensure that most appropriate programs are available through use of pedagogy, resources, information technology, learning systems, teacher training, and availability of school facilities. For example, in 1956, the first independent Sudanese government achieved the necessary change in both attitudes and actions through a policy of expansion. Energy and resources were directed toward improving women's access in education. More institutions were established to increase women in the teaching force.

In Sudan the few employed women are teachers, social workers, and clerical workers. We must not only provide opportunities for women in traditional roles but also provide new roles. Education must provide change in women's status; this can trigger changes in other areas of life, such as marriage or attending the university as a married person.

The educational policymakers must follow up on specific issues of equality of opportunity if they are to identify specific needs, to specify causal and other factors that impede maximum enrollment of women in educational institutions. Where there is a demand for separate institutions for females at the elementary level, these should be established to meet the needs of the population.

Availability of school facilities near home will promote women's participation. These must be provided nearer to girls' homes, within walking distance, especially in rural areas. For the children of pastoral groups, mobile schools may be started in the form of seasonal programs. At the center of the process linking parental and community support with the intellectual potential of students is the teacher. Increases

in women's education will require that the intellectual potential of the pupils be exploited more fully than has been in the past (Duany, 1994b).

4. There is a need for more cooperation by families with female children to ease the burden of domestic labor so time and energy can be devoted by female students to their school work. The role played by the family in a female child's education is vital, as demonstrated repeatedly by a male child's achievement in any system of education.

Parents must be educated on the importance of women's education and encouraged to support their daughters to attend schools. The state must recognize that the example parents set in their homes is crucial as well as the values they teach their children. To speak of a program aimed at all parents is impractical, but the importance of parents as a group must not be neglected. The policy must initiate a home/school link to allow the schools to have curriculums that prepare students for a living. The school system will have to take into account the problems of school distance, especially in the rural areas, where the parents are concerned with the safety of their daughters. Building more schools in rural areas and increasing of agricultural education will be essential in many areas of the country.

The government must ensure that the traditional gender segregation, social status, religious, regional, and ethnic divisions and the prejudice associated with women's progress are denounced and, ultimately, eliminated. This would ensure that women would have full access to and participate in education. Such provisions would have to ensure that the hidden differences in teachers' expectations are also tackled, and that effective guidance and counseling are available not only to students, but also to parents and teachers.

To win the confidence of parents regarding the security of their female children, the government must provide residential halls. Additionally, the government should

make arrangements for the free transportation of girls to school, if it is situated far from their home. Free or cheap hostel facilities could be provided to girls for secondary and higher education. There should more cultural training of female teachers and provision of separate facilities for girls. Flexible school schedules can help to accommodate competing demands on girls at home and at school. The government must employ women as guidance counselors for girls in cases of coeducation to give assurance to the parents who worry about the security of daughters.

5. Pursuit of all these policies will serve to raise the status of Sudanese women, promoting access to decision-making positions in educational planning. To improve women's status in a given country is the commitment of that society to their education and training. Most important are the attitudes of parents. Where parents encourage the educational aspirations of their daughters, female achievement levels reflect this concern, and because women who have been educated also tend to have higher expectations for their children, the effect is cumulative.

6. Social equality can only be achieved in Sudan through equal treatment in the educational system. This study provides a record against which future enrollments of women in the educational institutions can be measured. It is essential that the government support women's education, making it possible for women to have equal access. The situation of women in virtually all societies poses special problems when it comes to creating equality of opportunity in fact as well as in principle. The programs must be directed toward equipping women and girls for participation and must deal with the realities of the situation and attack the fundamental attitudes that keep women entrenched in a lower status. Full utilization of the possibilities should be offered by both the formal and informal educational structures to close the wide gap in the Sudanese system of education. Sudan needs a system that promotes educational participation for both men and women.

7. The government should establish an institute to provide teaching, services, and research on women's issues. Currently, attracting women to attend institutions of higher education is not an issue in government policy. Islamic government and the nation as a whole would benefit in continuing with the former May Revolution policies on "education for all." The government must plan a flexible and adaptable system of education. It must pursue a variety of gender-oriented policies dealing with education, health, and public services.

8. With the current concern for improving women's educational opportunities in the world, the institutions in the Sudan should have a basis for information, for example, an analysis of women's enrollment compared to the other countries. Without an attentive study of women's participation, it is impossible to understand many fundamental women's social issues and processes that hinder their progress. If women do not have access to the knowledge and means to acquire a higher education, it is almost inevitable that the next generation of young women will share the fate of their mothers. Although budget figures for any given year are subject to considerable risk of misinterpretation, analyses of annual expenditures over time should indicate trends in the pattern of resources allocated to the education of their gender.

The Ministry of Education, which serves as the articulator of government educational policy, must give more support to women's education by ensuring that the system provides all the necessary means for the educational institutions to enroll a maximum number of women. Educational policymakers should take into consideration the fact that women in Sudan, at least those investigated by this study, recognize the value of education, and realize their potential to act as change agents.

9. Individual institutions must find and implement appropriate ways to improve women's education. After the World Conference was held in Nairobi in 1975, educational institutions were charged with reassessing and re-evaluating women's roles,

status, and choices. This should be matched with attention to women's needs - to allow women to consolidate their cultural identity and help them understand and communicate traditional knowledge along with the new knowledge and to use appropriate tools that help them reflect on their present conditions and future roles. Government policies, however, must be enacted by the institutions.

10. Society should be committed to women's education and training. Where parents encourage the educational aspirations of their daughters, female achievement levels will reflect this concern. Women in this study indicated the importance of their parents' support and encouragement. Nevertheless, most of the gains made during the 1970s and 1980s by the Sudan government came with the interest and the willingness of government leaders to increase awareness of the ordinary citizens to support education for females by increasing the government revenues. The Sudan government according to its constitution, it provides public education. The policies and expenditures for female education and training made by the national government are important to the society's commitment. In the 1970's the Ministry of Education proposed to improve and to expand girls' secondary schools and to improve assistance to coeducational institutions; it also proposed building a large number of institutions in the rural and urban centers. Letting women go to school, learn to read and have more schooling can benefit the family and societies as whole (Summers, 1994). Since education is a major social service, this means there must be a change in the way in which education is provided. There must be change in policies that reduce opportunities for women to access or participate in education. Schools do not function in isolation, and any educational system should be based on that essential principle.

Conclusion

Women's education cannot be neglected. Research has found that it provides social benefits to women as individuals as well as members of society (Islam, 1982;

Brock and Cammish, 1994). Studies across the African continent by UNESCO, UNICEF, The World Bank, and many others document the importance of women's education as stated; "Education is a cornerstone of economic and social development; primary education is its foundation. It improves the productive capacity of societies and their political, economic, and social status of both women and men. It reduces poverty by mitigating its effects on population, health, and nutrition by increasing the value and efficiency of the labor offered by the people" (Lockheed, Verspoor et al., 1991).

Education plays a crucial role in the development of individual consciousness (UNESCO, 1982). Unfortunately, the educational environment in Sudan provides too little for women. The Sudanese curriculum supports development that is consistent with traditional women's roles. Mezirow (1991) and Measor and Sikes (1992) describe education as a process of learning to transform the meaning we make out of our experience; Meighan (1986) also calls for transformational rather than informational learning in order to meet the demand of the modern life. Women's education should acknowledge and support personal development if the gender gap is to be closed in developing countries.

Education has also been found to provide specific information and a socialization to new attitudes that increase a woman's awareness and self-confidence in relation to the environment around her (UNICEF/UNDP, 1990). In later stages, higher levels of education provide people with training that encompass advances in knowledge, making it possible for individuals to participate in building national economies in which technology is increasingly complex and efficient, and providing the way for further improvements in productivity. Women's education is found by many studies to be closely related to children's health, as measured by nutritional status, and by infant and child mortality. Educated women have fewer children; their children live healthier and longer lives (World Bank, 1993). According to Cochrane et al. (1980)

one year of maternal education translates into a 9 percent decrease in child mortality. The more education a woman has, the more likely she is to seek professional health care, which in turn diminishes child mortality. Additionally Summers (1994) states that education changes the mother's preference for foods and increases her influence in decisions about the type and quality of food needed by her household.

Any strategy for Sudanese education should accept as its foundation the belief that basic literacy and numerical skills are the fundamental requirements for the promotion of sustainable social and economic development. There is also a need to strengthen the government's policy and planning skills related to the educational system, and to provide immediate and direct intervention into the operations of individual classrooms. Improved central planning and policy analysis skills should eventually have impacts on the individual classroom. The desired characteristic of appropriate educational programs must be an ability to mobilize community and other sector resources, human as well as financial.

The role of Sudanese women as a source of innovation in and transformation of society needs to be recognized and acted upon if the process of development is to include their considerable capabilities. In order to fulfill themselves and carry out important tasks in the development of the country, girls and women need an education that enhances their innovative abilities. This requires forms of education enabling women to understand and criticize the theoretical foundations of educators. Policymakers should be encouraged to construct a different epistemology that recognizes the partiality of the views of educators with regard to both content and gender bias. Only then would policymakers be in a position to address the problems and be sensitive to the needs of women. This study shows that women who were interviewed understood quite clearly the importance of education but were often ignored by the policymakers. If these women were allowed involvement in policy

making, they could provide perspectives that give voice to women's ways of knowing and learning. Women could help change policies so that Sudanese women in general could participate in the process of development and find real satisfaction in life.

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APPENDIX A

Methodology and Data Analysis

This section deals with the methods and procedures used to identify factors that affect or influence women's education at all levels. Before proceeding to the methodology of this research, however, some consideration is given to the importance of work in human life, consideration that is necessary in order to comprehend the significance of this study.

For the purpose of employing multiple methods of data collection, a method of triangulation was adopted for this study. Interviews were conducted with respondents from two groups. Group One consisted of women with access to institutions of higher education: twelve women from their first year to their final year, five women faculty, professional staff members from the three institutions of higher education, and two government officials from the Ministry of Education. Group Two consisted of five women who were not pursuing any schooling.

Another method was the use of group discussion. Female students, along with female faculty, staff, and government officials, all discussed issues concerning government policy. Because of the nature of the discrimination that exists in the educational environment and the work place, I attempted to understand the policies that affected women's education: access, equity and participation.

Data was collected over a two-year period from April to November 1993 and from May 1994 to August 1995. During the data collection period, 90 hours of interviews were analyzed for this research and 30 hours of observations of regularly scheduled lectures were recorded at the research sites. In addition, students were asked to have discussions with their parents about women's education, and then during group discussion they shared their parents' views with group. Women who were

knowledgeable about policy issues were interviewed to identify gender issues in this study.

Interviews were conducted with women to assess their access to educational opportunities that are provided by the government. Those who were interviewed were female faculty, staff, and government officials who knew the goals and policies on women's education. Also, women were asked to identify the key players in social change: those who are seeking change, and those who are in a position of advancing it.

The rationale for choosing one methodology over another was governed by the nature of the subject being studied and the underlying goals of the research. As Yin (1989) indicated, a qualitative study is the preferred strategy when the focus is on contemporary phenomena and when the researcher has no control over the events that take place. Since the purpose of this study was to understand and describe factors that affect or influence women's education, the methods chosen to collect and analyze data followed the qualitative study approach (Guba and Lincoln, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989). This methodology allowed for the emergence of a grounded theory concerning the factors affecting or influencing women's participation in all education based upon the data and its analysis.

Questions related to personal data, such as family background, parents' education, and economic conditions, expectation and support for their children, location of residences (urban or rural), siblings and peers, individual will and determination, and beliefs in progress were explored. These issues were addressed where applicable and assessed according to Stromquist's (1989) categories: institutional barriers, situational barriers and dispositional barriers. Further questions of government officials illustrated attitudes toward women's education. The questions were open-ended and intended to provoke responses. Moreover, each respondent interviewed was able to establish her own atmosphere and emphasis on the issues

discussed. Finally, the time commitments of women did require appropriate adjustment by giving women enough time to make arrangements for the meeting. All meetings were scheduled at least two weeks ahead of time.

Setting and Sample Selection

The setting for this research was primarily in the three cities of Khartoum, Medani and Juba in the Sudan. Three institutions of higher education were selected, Juba University (now located in Khartoum City because of the civil war in southern Sudan. The main campus in the southern Sudanese city of Juba was closed for security reasons.), Khartoum University, and Gezira University. These institutions were selected for historical reasons; they represent three different regions in the Sudan.

Both women who do not seek higher education and those who do were included, as well as some key female administrators and staff members in the universities and the Ministry of Education.

Glaser and Strauss's (1967) theoretical sampling was used to ensure diversity of women in age and levels of education. This was to maximize the range of information (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and to facilitate the discovery of theoretical questions, categories and interrelationships (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). With this diversity in mind, thirty respondents were interviewed using basic types of opinion questions. First, I tried to ascertain the women's opinions on various social and educational issues. Respondents were asked what they thought about each issue. Second, I sought to determine the position taken by respondents on various issues in order to reveal which issue affected them most.

The issues selected for questioning embraced a range of subject matter related to women's education, including institutional, economic, social, religious, and cultural issues. These issues were divided into two groups as follows:

Educational factors:

Government policies on access and equity

School environment (school related factors)

Teacher role model and support

Sociocultural factors:

Parents' aspirations: educational background

Women's aspirations and determination

Family's economic background

Data Collection

This research began with a review of relevant bibliographical sources. I examined government documents and reports, and collected in-depth, tape-recorded interviews with women. I also collected information from selected administrators and academic staff in institutions of higher education in the Sudan. I made two trips to the research sites. I spent ten months in research on policy issues, focusing my interest on the philosophical aspects of government policies and practices concerning women's education. Those policies and practices served as a basis for making tentative generalizations in analyzing the issues and problems in the standards used for admission of women to educational institutions. The early interviewing was part of the preliminary exploration that led to identifying key information.

The following points suggested by Taylor and Bogdan (1984) were addressed at the outset of each interview: (1) my motive for doing research; (2) protection of respondents through anonymity; and (3) logistics in terms of time, place, and probable number of interviews needed. I also shared my experience and the experiences of other women who used education as a channel through which they could acquire rights and social status in their communities. The purpose was to explore the actual and perceived experiences of women, to discover the past trend of policies and practices

relative to women's participation, and to be able to identify individuals or groups seeking change and those in a position for advancing it.

Semi-structured questions were used in the beginning interviews. The goal of asking general questions was to learn enough about a situation to formulate questions for subsequent interviews (sample questions are in appendix B).

The interviews were tape recorded whenever possible, as verbatim transcriptions of recorded interviews were the best data base for analysis. Notes were taken, as well, during the tape recording that provided reactions to the respondents' comments, signaled importance, and paced the interviews (Merriam, 1988). However, when use of a tape recorder was not possible, only notes were taken. The interview time ranged from one hour to one hour and a half. More time was given to those who needed it. English or Arabic and other Sudanese languages such as Dinka and Nuer were used during the interviews.

Documents regarding educational policies were obtained from the Ministry of Education. These documents included Educational Policy papers, memos, reports, research articles, journals, and newspaper accounts regarding women's enrollment records and women's participation in Sudanese educational institutions. Those documents in Arabic were translated into English because many documents of the Sudanese government were written in the Arabic language. Translations from Arabic into English in this study are my own except where otherwise noted.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) mention several criteria for meeting the requirements of a naturalistic study. The trustworthiness criteria include prolonged engagement, triangulation and a number of checks. Prolonged engagement is the "investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes: testing for misinformation introduced by distortions either of the self or of the respondents and building trust" (Lincoln and

Guba, 1985). A series of interviews with the same person allows for "those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued [to emerge] and focuses on them in detail" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Two interviews were conducted with each individual. The purpose of the third visit with the respondents was to cross-check the information on interviews until trust was achieved and redundancy of data was apparent. By allowing the interviews to move from open-ended questions to very specific questions, salient information emerged. These salient points were then pursued in further interviews for clarity and expansion. The documents were analyzed to support and enhance the interview data.

Two methods of triangulation were used. The first method used multiple sources of data. Several respondents discussed their perspective on women at all levels of education. These data were used to create a dialogue between and among the different respondents. The second method of triangulation was the use of two methods of data collection, interviews and document reviews. The interviews and documents were compared in order to find common themes and their inter-relationships. These provided a dialogue between each respondent's interview data and documents. Each of those dialogues provided an opportunity for congruency of the data to emerge (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

I kept a daily log and reflective journal throughout the inquiry. This allowed me to write about the unexpected information that I came across.

For more clarification, a cross check on issues was conducted throughout the inquiry. Respondents were provided with interview notes for evaluation purposes to ensure credibility of the data. Interviews were read to those respondents who do not write and read, and their comments were added to the final analysis. Finally, a faculty member at the University of Upper Nile was asked to authenticate the research methods.

Data Analysis

The constant comparative method of analysis was used to interpret the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Data from the transcriptions of interviews and review of documents were categorized into areas of interest and concern. These categories served to organize the information for ongoing interviews. Incidents and items of information were first coded into tentative conceptual categories. As these categories emerged, questions were raised that were used to guide further investigation. Findings from these investigations were then compared to the initial categories. As this analysis continued, special attention was given to data that challenged original conceptualizations.

The data were totally qualitative, and were in the form of notes reviewing government reports, transcribed notes from semi-structured tape-recorded interviews (both formal and informal), and file notes from government archives, organized by issue or concern. From these data, propositional statements were generated and referenced to the data sources. These propositional statements were used to plan subsequent interviews or procedural content analysis.

All information flowing through the interview was processed in light of myself as researcher on an organized or unorganized basis. Guba and Lincoln (1985) point out that the role of a researcher as an instrument has certain potential advantages over other instruments. Especially when using a qualitative approach, the human as an instrument brings a system of multidimensional perspectives lacking in nonhuman instruments. They point out what is needed is "the capacity to be responsive, to be flexible, to see organizations as holistic entities rather than as components, to rely on both propositional and tacit knowledge, and to search for that which is expert, which is a typical, idiosyncratic, unique, singular, or uncharacteristic of the mainstream" (Guba and Lincoln, 1985: 151).

The methods used in this research to produce the results are the real issues of the everyday life of the Sudanese educational system. Although the major criticism of the qualitative method has been a lack of scientific rigor applied to data collected and interpretation of findings, the criteria for verification are no different between types of inquiry. Any qualitative method should be able to demonstrate a reasonable level of internal validity or intrinsic adequacy, objectivity, and neutrality. The key to achieving these is in the ability of the researcher to identify, examine, propose, and verify the cause-effect of lack of women's education. This was done through the process of triangulation.

Triangulation was used because the process exposes data and interpretations to a series of verification steps. Pottou (1980) provides guidance in four general triangulation related perspectives. Data triangulation relates to the use of multiple data sources. Investigator triangulation relates to the use of different researchers measuring the same issue. Theory triangulation involves exposing propositions to their congruence with different theoretical perspectives. Methodological triangulation involves the use of various methods to study the same topic. Consistency of results after being exposed to triangulation methods is an indication of intrinsic adequacy and neutrality of conclusions drawn by the researcher. The data and interpretations of triangular verification are likely to be very close to reality.

The investigation was somewhat indirect. This involved three comparison modes. Consistency between the research findings and findings of the internal government policy was one point of comparison. Another mode, less direct, was a review of government reports and the study results. This involved a review of early government policies in which the government was able to justify the commitment in promoting women's participation in education. The third mode was the comparison of findings of the interviews with female students from the three institutions of higher

education, comparisons between North/South students, and finally between female students and women who are not attending schools. This was to examine the consistency of the policies, issues, and concerns across the institutions, each designed to provide education for all citizens.

This method involved the search for consistency in research findings and literature with women's participation, educational attainment, and social change. The multiple data collection methods analyzed various documents, interviews with faculty and staff in the three institutions, and government officials representing the system. Female students and nonstudents representing the women's population were also included and combined to draw final results.

Cochran et al. (1990) suggest that study of public policy can be divided into policy analysis and policy advocacy. Policy analysis describes and investigates how and why particular policies are proposed, adopted and implemented, and searches for causes and consequences of social policy. Policy advocacy, on the other hand, is primarily concerned with developing alternative policy proposals with a view to formulating recommendations for best cause of action. It also draws on ethical principles and ideological perspectives.

Cochran et al. argued that policy development begins with public recognition that a problem does exist, proceeds to define the problem, formulates policy demands, and finally follows with a policy agenda with alternative proposals.

My approach, in distinction to that advocated above, attempts to integrate policy analysis and policy advocacy. At the same time, it aims to involve women as a group directly in the process of policy development, facilitating critical reflection of their actions and the societal context within which they operate.

Delimitations of the Method

The philosophically based qualitative inquiry is particularly suited as a foundation for the study of complex interpersonal and interorganization interactions and their effects on the policy implementation and the outcomes. However, just as the perfect interpretation has not been done, the perfect qualitative study has not been conducted. It is impossible to get singular, true measures of concerns, issues, and outcomes if most variables are not exposed to critical analysis. Variances in these measures were dealt with through replication (repeating) of data collection, using different methods, and detecting (discovering) patterns of responses that give a good representation of reality or the multiple reality of a dynamic social situation.

Relative to the formative-summative purpose of qualitative research, I believe that it would be personally difficult to maintain objectivity and solicit candid impressions of issues and concerns when using the qualitative approach in a formative mode. While a qualitative approach has the potential for providing more useful information than other approaches, there is still a need for more integrated methods of qualitative research in an educational setting if a comprehensive study is desired.

Qualitative inquiry is an exhausting, intensive activity. "You just have to be there," is not an idle statement when it comes to qualitative inquiry (Strauss, 1987). The time and intensity of conducting hundreds of interviews, observing several classroom lectures, and reading through hundreds of pages of documents, organizing data, and reporting findings requires a commitment and level of interest that at times are hard to maintain. There is a need to update information files continuously, recording not only the directly-obtained data, but also perceptions of values, priorities, and situational conditions associated with those data.

Participants' understanding of the role of a researcher was critical in this study. Not only must there be a formal problem statement, but there must be an accurate

perception among participants as to the researcher's role and how the results would be used by the government. My role as a Sudanese woman and as a researcher was very important to the participants. My involvement in policy issues may affect data collection. During this research I made it clear that I would not be a participant in the decision-making in the Ministry of Education, and that my findings and recommendations would provide suggestions for decision-making in educational policies in the future. I was very careful about the language I used. For example, I used words such as "the necessity to combat feudal" elements in Sudanese society, but never used the word "patriarchy." I also used the phrase "emancipation of women" when referring to government policies, but rarely used the phrase "feminist movement." My intention was not to impose my ideas on the respondents in this study, but to give them freedom in their thinking.

There was some evidence to indicate that some of the government officials felt uncomfortable with my presence and identity. In fact, very often references were made which indicated that acceptance of my role was being questioned. On one occasion, I asked, "Why are there no women judges?" A faculty member who was not happy with that question told me that:

Women have so much more to do at home than just to sit and listen to people's problems. That does not mean there is discrimination in the Islamic society. You know the Sudanese people do value women a lot and we do give them special treatment. There is no need for a woman to work if the husband is able to provide.

I asked, what if the husband is not there?

There is a great deal of mutual respect and cooperation within the Sudanese family. If the woman is not married, or is a widow her family will provide for her.

On another occasion, a government official did not want to see me because I *did* not wear a veil. So I went to a nearby store to buy one. When I came back, he told the receptionist to let me in. As soon as I appeared at the door he stood up and bowed

his head. I reached out to shake hands, but he did not take my hand. According to him, men and women do not shake hands as a sign of keeping distance. This is unusual among Sudanese people. While he was standing he said:

Welcome! I appreciate your coming. What can I do for you? (Kh. July 1993)

I told him that I was interested in looking up some materials in the government's information center. While I was looking in the materials, I had a little conversation with him about why he did not want to see me in the first place. Is it because I am a woman? He responded:

I respect women, because my culture and my religion teach me values and respect for women. I cannot just accept other ways of life; my culture does respect women. (Kh. July 1994)

All he wanted was to let me know that the law required women to behave in a certain way. These statements highlight another important point about being an unobtrusive observer. The role of a researcher must be accepted, and the researcher must be willing to deal with the ramifications of the position, especially when the researcher is a woman in an Islamic community. Sometimes she is considered a loose woman when seen in public places and is often approached by men with unwelcome invitations to give her a "treat." According to Islam culture, respectful women do stay indoors with their families. They are not seen in public places where men and women mix. The situation that made me marginally acceptable was the present situation in Sudan, as an Islamic country. The government is trying to indoctrinate people to accept the policies of the new regime. My research would have been at risk if I were a foreigner, because the government was not allowing people of other nationalities in the country. These conditions were natural and more expected by me, but needed to be recognized and dealt with on a personal level.

Sometimes people tend to be discouraged and disappointed when things do not work the way they have planned. Because of the personal importance of our work, to me this was not a new thing to wait for hours, or sometimes days or even weeks, something which can be discouraging. With field work in Sudan, it may be more difficult to get the documents needed because the government policies and regulations are too difficult to follow at certain times. Sometimes the security is very tight, and researchers may not have access to materials needed to get useful information.

Two other concerns need be mentioned. One is the concern about where the literature fits into the design. If it is brought in too early, it could bias the researcher to the point where important issues and concerns may be overlooked or relegated to a lesser importance than they should. Yet, there may be a body of knowledge that may be very useful in identifying issues or concerns that are on a somewhat subconscious level, but are important to the ways in which individuals interact in a social setting.

Another concern is the treatment of very personal information and how the researcher deals with actual or perceived situations of discrimination or harassment. There were conflicts between myself and individuals who encouraged me to give up the research. However, I thought about what this research would add to general knowledge, and that one day these findings could be used to change women's social status in the Sudan.

Although this research took place during a period of civil war, which caused extreme interruption to the educational system in the whole country, I was able to collect the data needed for my analysis. Had a non-Sudanese conducted this study under such circumstances, the specific design and procedures used would not be the same as those used by this writer. However, I am confident that the results would be similar. I was not aware that northern Sudanese women would be willing to work and change some of the policies that discriminate against them until I had a chance to talk to

them face to face. Very talented Sudanese women could be role models, but the system is not making use of their talent.

APPENDIX B

Limitations

There were some limitations with regard to this research that should be noted.

The following are the limitations:

1. As with most women's studies, the results of this study were limited by the extent to which the information given by the women was reliable and valid. The problem of the civil war in the country between the Arabs/Muslims in the North and the Africans/Christians in the South, and the fear of the Islamic government, meant that some women were reluctant to speak out.
2. The research was conducted during a state of emergency, under conditions of escalating repression and the implementation of forms of state control, including suspension of women's activities, harassment of members of women's organizations by police and security forces, restriction of gatherings and a restrictive women's dress code. This hostile environment affected the openness of the respondents in sharing their political views, especially the South Sudanese.

This resulted in a second visit to the field to collect more data. This visit was risky at a time when women's organizations were primarily concerned with survival, and with the mobilization of women groups against the Islamic policies. Because of the difficulties created by the new regime, the majority of women's groups have disbanded, while others have changed direction and formed new organizations to conform with the new law. Women were trying to influence decisions on policies concerning their welfare that, when adopted, should be publicly exhibited in the form of statements, orders, regulations, law, or altered behavior. For women to survive as a group, they should continue to have strong influence on state policies. They need to move beyond policy statements and translate these into practice.

Although there are challenges facing Sudanese women, they must remain active. If they are to influence the state and public opinion for a future society, they must be well organized as a body that caters to the welfare of women. They should understand that policy implementation involves consideration of cost, defining goals, resource allocation, and concrete plans of action on women's issues. It also requires the means to measure the impact of the policy. To achieve any of these needs, mass involvement of women, and especially educated women is needed to take the lead to effect a genuine change.

3. During the second time of interviews, some of the women were not available.

However, some women volunteered to provide more clarification on the issues, which showed the reliability to be satisfactory. Also, enough data were collected to provide sample information. The purpose of the second visit to the field was to get more data with more specific information on the government's educational policy.

4. Since some of the interviews were done in the native languages, Arabic, Dinka and Nuer, then translated into English, the translation could have reduced the validity or reliability.

APPENDIX C

Advantages

There was an advantage to this research because I am a native of Sudan, which gave women more confidence to share their feelings. A unique feature of this study is the use of a variety of languages during the data collection. There were no problems encountered concerning communication with women. There were no barriers, which are usually encountered by nonSudanese researchers using the concept of "them" and "me." The women have been using words such as "we" when discussing cultural and social concerns of the Sudanese women.

APPENDIX D

Sample Questions

Religion

1. What part did religion play in your childhood? Does it play the same part now?
2. What effect did it have on you as a woman? What was your religion's view of women?

Education

1. What were your parents' attitudes toward women's education?
2. Did you feel they had the same attitude for women as they did for men?
3. What were your parents' academic expectations of you, your brother?
4. What were your teachers' expectations of you?
5. Did you feel they had different expectations of female and male students?
6. What were your own aspirations?
7. Were there courses that you wanted to take but were discouraged from taking?
8. What subjects interested you most? Did these interests change as you went through school?
9. What kind of student were you?
10. Were you competitive? With whom did you compete?
11. Talk about your educational experience. Were your parents supportive?
12. What reasons do parents give for not allowing the girls to go to school?
13. Tell me about your experience or a story about your school or university life.
14. Describe a typical day at home or after school.
15. As a result of your experience in school or university, describe how much you have changed in regard to the following areas: personal development, intellectual development, feelings of self confidence and feelings of independence, attitudes toward traditional norms and customs and religious beliefs.

16. What is being done by the government or individuals to bring about change?
17. In your case, what would you recommend for the administration to change or make better policies to improve women's education.
18. Do you want to become a role model for women?

Interview Form

Schedule for Interviews

Time: 1 to 1 1/2 hours

First meeting. Date: _____ Time: _____

Reasons: Clarification on the Study goals and interviewing.

Second meeting. Date: _____ Time: _____

Reasons: More clarificaton and comments on the previous interview. Revision of notes and getting more comments and continuing interviews.

Third meeting. Date: _____ Time: _____

Reasons: More comments on the notes and last meeting.

Instruments Used: Micro-Tape recorder, a journal, and a notebook.

APPENDIX E

Assessing Gender Issues in Sudan

The enrollment rates of boys and girls in Sudan sometimes differ because the supply of schooling is not the same in the urban centers as it is in rural areas. A gap can also occur because of differences in the demand for schooling.

The female enrollments decline in the upper grades. This is because as girls approach the age of puberty they are withdrawn from schooling by their parents. This withdrawal is justified with cultural and religious explanations. Also economic conditions of the family provide an explanation on the withdrawal of the female students to participate in domestic duties (Stromquist, 1989 and Anderson et al. 1989).

The following section can help identify the type of issues that need to be addressed. The policy makers of the Ministry of Education should search for answers if policy is to improve female participation in education. The questions can be posed at local and national levels.

Local level:

The home and school, participants (parents, teachers, students, school authorities and the community).

Parents, guardians or extended family:

1. What are parents attitudes toward educating their daughters or sons?
2. Do parents think that school will enrich or hinder their daughters' future?
3. Do parents have the same expectations for their sons and daughters regarding academic achievement?
4. Do parents attitudes differ between parents who have attended school and those who haven't? Do they differ across regions, between urban and rural areas? By occupation? Religion or cultural?
5. Are mothers' attitudes different from fathers' regarding schooling of females?
6. What is the standard level of education for females and males?

7. Who makes the decision whether a daughter or a son will attend school, the mother or the father?
8. What return on their investment do parents believe they receive by sending their daughters to school?
9. Who pays the direct costs of schooling for a son/daughter: the mother, the father, a relative or guardian?

Family background:

1. What are the significant Sociocultural barriers that hinder female participation in education?
2. Which cultural costs are involved in females attending school (attitudes and cultural norms)?
3. To what extent do parents perceive that schooling clashes with cultural norms (female/male social differences, cultural practice such as early marriage, incitation rites, and domestic duties)?
4. Does marriage affect female participation in schooling? How? What sex risks do girls who are attending school face? How well founded are these fears? How does the government deal with the issues?

Family economic background:

1. What are the significant economic barriers that hinder girls from attending school or that cause them to drop out of school?
2. Do direct costs (domestic duties) differ for males and/or females? Why? Do they also hinder boys' participation?
3. Do direct costs (national level, tuition fees, textbook costs, uniforms, transportation, and housing) differ for females and males? Why? Do they also hinder boys' participation?

Institutional level

The school setting:

1. What kind of enrollment process do parents go through? Does it in any way hinder females' participation?
2. Is the distance to school a factor in explaining why some females do not attend school or drop out early? Is the distance less important for boys?
3. Does the school's daily schedule and yearly calendar conflict with the female/male domestic duties?
4. Is the school facility viewed by parents as culturally appropriate for females?

5. Are there any special safety and security risks for females at school?
6. Does the school have facilities to respond to girls' needs (restrooms, changing rooms, a dispensary with a female nurse)?
7. Are parents or local communities involved in the determination of the school schedule? Are parents/community members involved?
8. Is there a Parent and Teacher Association? Which parents are most active in the association?
9. Are there any extra-curriculum activities that the students are involved in?

Curriculum:

1. Does the curriculum limit the future career opportunities of females? What are the limitations?
2. Do females have the same opportunity as males to study the same materials?
3. What role do parents, communities, and the private sector play in the design of the curriculum?

Learning materials:

1. Do textbooks or learning materials reflect through their language, visual images, gender bias or stereotypes in the presentation?

Teaching methodology:

1. Do teacher expectations of females differ from males? How? How do teacher expectations affect participation in the class? Can differences in achievement between females/males be based on teachers' classroom interaction?

Counseling:

1. Do schools provide special counseling for students, teachers, or parents?

National level:

1. The education policy makers at the national level. Are there specific policies that hinder female participation in education?
2. Is there an educational policy regarding females education? What specific policies exist that might encourage female participation? Do these policies pertain to all levels of schooling?

3. Are there laws that encourage female participation in education (allow pregnant females to attend schools, prohibit the female to marry early?) Are these laws commonly known and enforced? What, if any, laws discourage female participation in education?
4. Are there special programs that encourage female participation? Are these supported with sufficient resources to ensure successful implementation? Are local or community groups involved in these programs? Do these programs reach remote areas?
5. Is there a task force charged with monitoring and directing a national program to promote universal primary education? How does the public view the government's effort in this area, especially with regard to female participation in education?

Macro-development planning:

1. Does the country have a national policy on women's participation in economic and social development? If so, what is the policy and how does it relate to the education of females?
2. Are there specific policies related to gender? What are those policies and their implication on female education?
3. Are there fiscal and monetary measures that safeguard sustained investment and budgetary support to meet targets for female education? Can they be identified?
4. What structures and mechanisms exist for ensuring that gender issues are considered in the design and implementation of development programs?
5. Is there an information system or research department that does the documentation of reports, statistics, publications on policy, enrollment, attendance, achievement, repetition, dropout, promotion and teachers?

Source: A. Odaga and Ward Heneveld, 1995.

