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**‘A CRITICAL ANALYSIS, FROM A PLANNING POINT OF VIEW OF FACTORS
INFLUENCING GENDER IMBALANCE IN VANUATU’S SECONDARY EDUCATION
SYSTEM**

VOMARANDA JOY BOTLENG

CERIFICATE OF CANDIDATE

I, Vomaranda Joy Botleng, certify that this thesis is my own work except those Sections, which have been duly acknowledged.

I also certify that this thesis has not been previously submitted to any other university or tertiary education institution.

Vomaranda Joy Botleng

Acknowledgement

Without the assistance of all the people mentioned below this thesis would not have been possible. Firstly I would like to thank my supervisor and mentor, Dr Thillanayakam Velayutham for his enthusiastic and perceptive advise in guiding me to write this thesis. I am very grateful.

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Abstract

Despite the tremendous efforts put into education by the government and private organizations to provide primary education for all, under-representation of girls in the education system remains a major challenge. In Vanuatu, there seems to be a significant difference in the number of girls making the transition from primary to secondary level of education in comparison with boys. Since there has been very little research into this area in Vanuatu, and since Vanuatu is in its transition from a traditional stage of development to a more modern society, a study of this kind is necessary and timely.

This study aimed at investigating the factors influencing girls' participation in Vanuatu's secondary education system and proposing strategies or programs that Vanuatu can apply to increase girls' participation in the educational system (and thus reduce gender gap). The research questions that guided this research were:

- i) What are the reasons for the failure to provide education for all at the secondary level of education with particular reference to girls?
- ii) What factors affect girls' participation in Vanuatu's secondary education system?
- iii) What strategies or programs could Vanuatu implement to improve girls' participation in the education system (and thus to reduce gender gap)?

The study was carried out using a three stranded approach: a review of international literature on gender and education, an analysis of documents on Vanuatu education and participation of girls in the education system, and an empirical inquiry which involved interviews, observations, and questionnaires. The aim of this approach was to find mismatch, if any, between what was written (in the documents), what was said (in interviews) and what was actually happening in the schools (observations in school and questionnaires). This mainly involved a policy analysis approach.

The findings of the study showed that the following are some of the main factors that do not facilitate girls' participation in Vanuatu's education system:

- i) Vanuatu has a competitive education system limiting places for, especially girls at secondary schools

- ii) The high unit cost of education coupled with a fast population growth rate and a declining economy is putting pressure on both the government and parents. Where a family has insufficient resources to meet the high cost of secondary education, boys are given preference to attend school over girls.
- iii) There is evidently inequitable distribution of educational infrastructures and resources among the provinces to meet girls' enrolment.
- iv) There is lack of resources and boarding facilities for girls in schools
- v) There is lack of 'women's voice' in the schools' decision-making bodies and school leadership and lack of qualified female role models particularly in rural secondary schools. This limits women's ability to influence decisions concerning resource allocation for and welfare of female students in the schools.
- vi) Because majority of the secondary schools are boarding schools scattered throughout the archipelago, parents are generally reluctant to send their daughters to boarding schools for the fear of their daughters becoming pregnant, suffering sexual harassment, 'Black Magic' or fearing for their daughters' security and morality.
- vii) There is a generally lack of awareness of the benefits of educating girls at the institutional and community levels.
- viii) Parental attitudes and commitment to girls' schooling affect girls' participation in the education systems.

On the basis of the findings of the research, recommendations were made in relation to possible reforms at these levels:

1. Reform at the educational system level

- i) There is a need for a more decentralized system of government and management of the education system to improve service delivery and improve allocation of educational infrastructures and resources, and spending of funds more effectively spread out to other provinces.
- ii) Incentives should be provided for female teachers.
- iii) Proactive measures to be taken by the government to ensure successful implementation of the VASTEP project and that the standard at the Teacher Training College is continually upgraded.

- iv) Non-Formal Education has to be fully recognized by the government to provide for girls who have been pushed out of the formal education a 'second chance' education to improve their skills to enhance active participation in industries and economic activities.
- v) Continuous assessment of the use of resources in schools by the government.
- vi) Building of single sex secondary school for girls.

2. Improvements at the school level:

- i) Teachers to incorporate their normal subject teaching with career guidance, Education guidance and Personal and Social Guidance.
- ii) More effective assessment and reporting system needed to be applied.
- iii) Teacher improvement of pedagogy and subject knowledge is needed to provide environment free of stereotype views.
- iv) There is a need for Gender awareness at the institutional level to help improve attitudes toward girls' education.
- v) Provide incentives to encourage women participation in the decision-making bodies of the school.

3. Initiatives at the community level:

- i) Awareness of gender issues and benefits of girls' education.
- ii) Workshops conducted to teach people the importance of time and financial management.
- iii) Training to be provided to rural women to equip them with entrepreneur skills.

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Acronyms used in this thesis

AODA	Australian Overseas Development Aid
AusAID	Australian Assistance and International Development Agency
CDU	Curriculum Development Unit
CFTC	Commonwealth Funds for Third Country
CRP	Comprehensive Reform Program
DP1	First National Development Plan, 1982 - 1986
DP2	Second National Development Plan, 1987 -1991
DP3	Third National Development Plan, 1992 - 1996
GNP	Gross National Product
GPD	Gross Domestic Product
HRD	Human Resource Development
INTV	Institut National de Technologie du Vanuatu
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NPSO	National Planning and Statistics Office
PEO	Principal Education Officer
PIC	Pacific Island Countries
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USP	The University of the South Pacific
VASTEP	Vanuatu-Australia Secondary Teacher education Project
VG	Vanuatu Government
VNCW	Vanuatu National Council Of Women
VNPSO	Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office
VT	Vatu, Vanuatu Currency

Glossary

Bislama	Vanuatu's national language
<i>Kastom</i>	custom; Traditional culture
<i>Misi</i>	short for 'missionary'
<i>Moli (Malo dialect)</i>	a chief
<i>Ni- Van</i>	someone from Vanuatu, especially of Melanesian descent
<i>Skul -</i>	School
<i>Storian</i>	a Bislama word meaning 'to chat' or 'tell a story'
<i>Taem blong Storian</i>	an informal gathering to discuss matters of interest
<i>Tankiu asena</i>	Thank you very much
<i>Tohotaitai (Malo dialect)</i>	god
<i>Waetman</i>	White man
<i>Warimatavosai (Malo dialect)</i>	heaven

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale and Background of Study

Unlike the olden days when education introduced mainly by missionaries was geared towards the spread of the Gospel or the spread of Christianity and evangelical training for the locals in many Pacific Island countries, rapid changes are taking place as “Pacific nations become part of the global economy” (Dunlop 2000, p.71) and in turn are impacting on educational planning and development. Under-representation of girls in the secondary education system may be one such consequence. This concern needs to be addressed in order to achieve a balanced and comprehensive educational development in Vanuatu.

There has been very little or no research into this area by ni-Vanuatu. Past researches and studies were either initiated or undertaken by expatriates and were mainly done by international agencies such as the World Bank or the UNICEF. Therefore the researcher has initiated this research study for the following reasons:

1. to meet the need for research done by ni-Vanuatu on gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system.
2. to assist Vanuatu, in its transition from a traditional stage of development to a more modern society in its attempts to improve education of girls at the secondary level.

In preparation for the research study, this chapter looks at the significance of the study to policy and educational planning in Vanuatu. It also discusses the rationale and background of the study and the main aims and focus of the study. The benefits of educating girls are also discussed. The main aims and focus of this study are discussed on the next page.

1.2 Aims and Focus of Study

The primary aim of this study is to investigate factors that influence girls' participation in Vanuatu's education system. Another aim is to find out how the government policies affect the access of girls to education and how they impact on their participation and their ability to profit from education. The study would focus on the extent to which the concept of education for all is implemented in Vanuatu, particularly with reference to girls at the secondary level.

Since Vanuatu is in transition from a traditional stage of development to a more modern society, an overall review of the state of girls' participation in secondary education is necessary and timely. This proposed study will therefore assist the national policy makers, educational providers and sponsors in deciding on the best strategies that could be applied in Vanuatu to improve girls' participation in the secondary level of education.

The objectives of this study are:

- i) to gather views and investigate structural and cultural factors that affect girls' participation in Vanuatu's education system.
- ii) to help the policy-makers, educational authorities and the general population to be aware of the importance of educating girls.
- iii) to find ways of improving educational opportunities for girls within the formal education system.

In order to achieve the aims and objectives, this proposed study involved three main approaches:

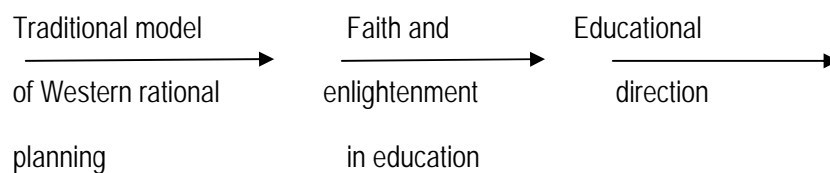
- i) a review of international literature on gender imbalance in education
- ii) an analysis of policy documents on girls' participation in Vanuatu's education system
- iii) an empirical inquiry, which was in the form of interviews and school visits.

The main reason the researcher proposed to use this three-pronged approach is to explore the match and mismatch, if any, between what is written (in the policy proposals and the official documents), what is said (in the interviews) and what is happening in the field (via school visits).

1.3 The significance of this research to educational policy, planning and future developments in Vanuatu.

Davies and Ellison (1997) stressed, "... strategic planning is based on there being a predictable environment, which can be identified so that appropriate strategies can be implemented in a rational way" (p. 79). This is based on the Western-style educational planning as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Traditional model of Western Rational Planning.

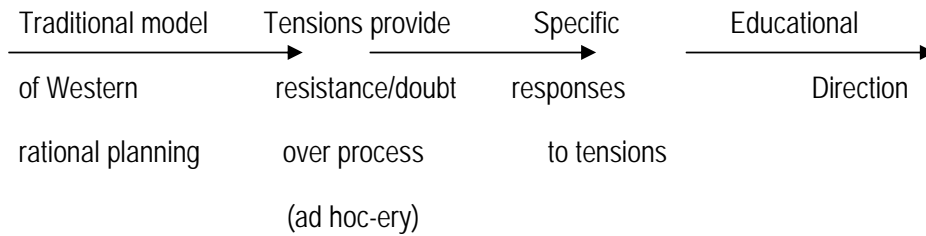


(Source: Hindson, 1995 p. 327).

But in Vanuatu, as in other Pacific Island countries, the socio-economic and political environments do not provide the predictability expected by Davies and Ellison (1997). Therefore, an educational planner needs to scan the environment to anticipate changes and identify trends within Vanuatu and at the global level. Furthermore Vanuatu has a unique environment that is changing rapidly and therefore an educational planner has to take into account its characteristics. The schools are scattered over 60 islands. Despite the administrative decentralization of public services, including education, to the provincial level, policy making and planning in education largely remains centralized. There are virtually two educational systems (the Anglophone and the Francophone despite attempts to integrate them). It has over 105 languages, a national language and two official languages, and has diverse cultures (Johnstone 1994).

Therefore, to simply apply the model in Figure 1 (without an intensive research into the issues) to planning processes to solve gender imbalance in Vanuatu education could pose problems. Hindson (1995), recognizing these difficulties, has suggested an "Adapted View" of his earlier model. With Hindson's (1995) adapted view of the 'Traditional model of western rational planning' outlined in Figure 2 on the next page, this research attempts to investigate the factors that influence gender imbalance in the secondary education in Vanuatu. It is expected that this study would throw light on the factors that contribute to gender imbalance (and how these factors work) in secondary education in Vanuatu. Further, it is expected that the research will contribute to improving educational planning and implementation processes in Vanuatu with regard to gender equity in education. The adapted view of educational planning (Hindson, 1995) is shown on the next page.

Figure 2: Adapted view



(Source: Hindson, 1995 p. 328).

1.4 Statement of the Problem

In the past, attempts have been made both at the international and the local levels to provide education for all as reflected by the public expenditure on education discussed below. However, *under-representation of girls in the secondary education system still remains a major challenge* in many education systems including Vanuatu's secondary education system. Thus the questions relating to above statement are listed:

- i) What are the reasons for the failure to provide education for all at the secondary level of education with particular reference to girls?
- ii) What factors affect girls' participation in Vanuatu's secondary education system?
- iii) What strategies or programs could Vanuatu implement to improve girls' participation in the education system (and thus reduce gender gap)?

1.4.1. Public Expenditure on Education

Generally, the public expenditure on education may give an indication of the enrolment and participation of students in education. Vast amount of money has been spent on education by nations worldwide (Coombs, 1985). In the 1980s, according to UNESCO (1987), developing countries such as Bolivia, Philippines and Equador were spending over one-fourth of their national budget on education.

According to Throsby and Maglen (1990), in the South Pacific the public expenditure on education is significantly greater compared to developing countries in other parts of the world. For instance, the total education expenditure as a proportion of Gross National Product in 1983 and 1984 was 7.8 % in Tonga, 6.4 % in Fiji as compared to an average of 4.0 % for all less Developed countries (ibid.). The Australian Official Development Assistance (AODA) for education to the South Pacific countries between 1986-1987 shows that Solomon Islands and Vanuatu received relatively a greater part of the aid. This aid, in Vanuatu, was allocated to support the expansion program of secondary education in 1986. Table 1 on the next page shows details of the Australian aid for education to the South Pacific, with Vanuatu being the largest recipient of aid from AODA, namely, 27% for primary and secondary education.

Table 1: Australian Official development Assistance (AODA) for education to Pacific Island Countries (PICs) by educational level and country 1986 – 87.

Countries	Primary and secondary %	Tertiary %	Vocational and Technical %	Teacher training %	Other %
Fiji	4	94	2	-	-
Solomon Is.	15	48	36	-	-
Vanuatu	27	46	24	-	3
Tonga	1	67	24	7	1
Western Samoa	-	52	29	-	18
Kiribati	-	46	52	2	-
Other PICs	8	32	60	-	-
Unallocated/ regional	-	86	1	1	12
Total	16	64	14	2	4

(Source: Throsby and Maglen, 1990, p. 97)

In Vanuatu, The government expenditure for education has increased consistently since 1991 (UNICEF 1998) as shown in Table 2 on the next page. In 1990, the government allocated 807 million Vatu to Education in its national budget. This represented over 16% of the total Government Budget. It was estimated that in 1993, 5.1% of GDP went to education. In 1995, budget allocation to Education had further risen to 1,179 million vatu. In 1996 it had further risen to 1,269 million Vatu representing almost 20% of the total budget of that year. In addition, aid funds to education amounted to 1,909 million vatu in 1995. This is more than one third of total external assistance to Vanuatu (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997b).

Table 2: Education Expenditure, (Million Vatu), 1991 – 1996.

Year	Total VG Expenditure	Education Expenditure	Education/Total VG	Ni-Vanuatu Population	Education Expen/Pop
1991	4,625	905	19.6	148,000	6,464
1992	4,954	951	19.2	152,100	6,252
1993	5,194	1,037	20.0	156,300	6,635
1994	5,354	1,123	21.0	160,700	6,988
1995	5,939	1,179	19.8	164,900	7,150
1996	6,800	1,269	18.7	169,400	7,491

Note: VG – Vanuatu Government

(Source: UNICEF 1998, p. 46)

1.4.2. State of girls, worldwide and locally in the 1990s

While more attention has been paid to providing education for all, it is questionable whether this has led to the improvement of education for girls. This is what the general literature indicated as the state of girls' education in the 1990s. Studies related to the findings of girls' enrolment are considered below.

Worldwide:

UNICEF (1992) statistics highlighted the following:

- In 1990, about 130 million children had no access to primary school worldwide. Of these, 81 million were girls, that is, about 62.30% of girls are not in the primary school. This contributes to the lower percentage of girls entering secondary schools.

- About two thirds of the world's estimated 948 million illiterate adults are women
- In at least 29 countries in 1986-89, less than 30 percent of the women could read and write. In some least developed countries female literacy rates were less than 10 per cent.
- Nearly one third of the children in the world who start first grade are likely to leave school before completing fourth grade. In line with the general trend in gender disparity it is likely that the majority of these children would be females.
- School enrolment of girls at the primary level lagged behind that of boys by 29% in South Asia, 20 % in Sub-Saharan Africa and 18% in the Middle East.

In the Asia and the Pacific region:

Sakya (1987), in her report on the education of women in the Asia and Pacific countries, came up with the following findings:

- It was estimated that 100 million primary school-aged children in the region never enroll in schools.
- Despite progress in educational expansion since the 1960s, the number of female illiteracy has increased in the last 15 years from 390 million in 1970 to 415 million in 1985
- Asia and the Pacific countries host 75% of the world's illiterate population of 15 years of age and over.

Although, not specifically referred to the number of girls affected in the Asia Pacific countries, it could be assumed that this may be the general trend in the Pacific region where female illiteracy and participation in the education system are low compared to the males.

Available statistics also showed that in almost all countries in the South Pacific, there are more illiterate women compared to men as depicted in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Proportion of adults who are illiterate, by gender, as a percentage of the total population.

Country	Males	Females	Females compared with males
Cook Islands	7	6	- 1
Fiji	5	9	+ 4
FSM	23	34	+ 11
Kiribati	6	9	+ 3
Marshall Is.	21	31	+10
Nauru	5	5	=
Niue	3	3	=
Palau	6	12	+6
PNG	65	79	+14
Samoa	4	4	=
Solomon Is.	61	80	+ 19
Tokelau	8	10	- 2
Tonga	1	1	=
Tuvalu	5	5	=
Vanuatu	63	70	+ 7

(Source: UNDP Human Development Report 1999, UNDP, Suva In *Directions*, 2000, 12(1): 70-84.)

According to the Vanuatu National Statistics reports (2000), about 82% of these illiterate females in Vanuatu live in the rural areas where there is limited access to education.

Although the situation in Vanuatu may be better than in Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Marshall Islands, but one should not be complacent as these figures are not so encouraging as in the Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu. Women who have low literacy levels are unlikely to take part in higher education and have limited employment opportunities and thus indirectly affect girls participating in the education system.

Performance indicators for the education sectors in the Pacific islands also reveal low participation rates in some countries, notably Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The School retention rates are low especially in rural areas and amongst females (Throsby & Maglen, 1990).

In Vanuatu:

Gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system could refer to both i) access to secondary schooling and ii) girls' performance in school.

In terms of access to secondary schooling, Vanuatu is no exception to the general trend in the South Pacific region where one finds more boys enrolled at the secondary level of education than girls. The school enrolments in Vanuatu in the 2000 academic year show that enrolment of female students' lag behind those for males at the Primary level of Education in all the six provinces. With the exception of Penama province and Shefa province, female enrolments in the other provinces lag behind those of males in the Junior

Secondary and Senior Secondary level of education. Enrolment in primary and secondary schools in Vanuatu is depicted in Table 4 on the next page.

Table 4: Enrolment in Primary and Secondary Schools in Vanuatu.

Province	Primary		Junior secondary		Senior secondary	
	Years 1 – 6		Years 7 – 10		Years 11 – 13	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
TORBA	740	687	82	74	*	*
SANMA	3409	3111	818	707	199	155
MALAMPA	3734	3503	561	499	*	*
PENAMA	2789	2517	601	609	57	66
SHEFA	4692	4383	1204	1243	388	332
TAFEA	2906	2612	444	413	4	2
Total	18270	16813	3701	3545	648	555
		35083		255		1203

*No senior secondary schools in these provinces. (Source: Vanuatu Ministry of Education, 2000, p. 2).

There is a sizable difference in the number of girls making the transition from primary to secondary level of education in Vanuatu, particularly, at the senior secondary level. When comparing enrolment of girls in Vanuatu with the rest of the Pacific countries, it is seen that while there is a 70% enrolment of girls at the primary level of education, there is only 18% enrolment of girls at the secondary level of education (Dunlop, 2000). This trend is even more marked at the tertiary level.

In terms of qualification attainment, available statistics from the National Statistics Office (2000) and a study done by Strachan (2002) (see Appendix 1) showed that:

- Rural females are most likely to have not been to school and have lower qualification than urban females
- Females are more likely to not have attended school than their male counterparts
- Males have more qualification and higher qualifications than females

The limited access to education and the low qualification attainment by females have indirectly influence girls' participation at the lower levels of the education system, as there are few role models and very few female teachers with secondary and tertiary qualifications.

1.4.3. Reasons for the lack of effectiveness of the attempts to provide education for all at the secondary education system.

As in most social and educational situations more than one factor seem to contribute to or related to the relative ineffectiveness of attempts to provide secondary education for all (EFA) globally and in Vanuatu. Besides socio-economic factors, untested assumptions may be contributing to the problems of realizing the goal of 'education for all'. Some of these assumptions are discussed on the next page.

Fallacious assumptions about Education

One of the main contributing factors to the gender imbalance in education could be the educational structures and administration themselves. The education structures and administration mirror the prevailing gender imbalance instead of challenging the issues that are faced by the educational system. The two misleading assumptions of education sponsors and providers are:

- i) where supply of educational services is met, that is, building of more classrooms (as in the case of Vanuatu during the education expansion period in 1986) and upgrading of teacher training, it was assumed that these would automatically provide education *equally* for both boys and girls (UNICEF, 1992).
- ii) it was also assumed that because education is a social good, once the supply of educational facilities is established, parents will send *all* their children to school (ibid.), including their daughters.

While the intention of the educational sponsors and providers was to provide education for all sections of the population, the special needs of girls in secondary schools have often been overlooked. The education sponsors and providers have not paid sufficient attention to issues relating to the following:

1. *Resources*: Are the resources distributed evenly between provinces and the urban areas to provide an equitable access to education for all students? Have special considerations being made to the boarding needs of girls in the secondary school?
2. *Participation in education*: Have the educational policies ensured and promoted girls' retention in the education system? Are there sufficient places in the secondary schools for all students, including girls, to allow them to progress to higher levels of education?

3. *Treatment*: Do girls in secondary schools receive, if not the same, equal treatment as boys?
4. *Relevance of education provided*: Is the school curriculum relevant to girls' present learning needs and future social and economical needs?
5. *Out-of-school factors' affecting enrolment of and participation of girls in the education system*: What are the economic, cultural, political and social factors that might adversely affect girls' enrolments and participation in the secondary education system?

It is therefore important to investigate the causes and consequences of inequitable distribution of educational benefits to boys and girls. Education for all at the primary level should lead to secondary education for most of those who complete primary education. Unless care is taken to see that no group or section of the country's population is disadvantaged in terms of access and participation at the secondary level, there is every possibility that girls particularly would be adversely affected at the secondary level of education and beyond.

The issues mentioned above led the researcher to develop two hypotheses that formed the basis for the present research. A qualitative approach, involving interviews, observations and document analyses was used to test these hypotheses. The hypotheses are highlighted and italicized, and follow discussions, if any.

Hypothesis 1: The Vanuatu education, while trying to make primary schooling more widely available to all children and trying to unify the two education systems (Francophone and Anglophone), it is limiting resources available at higher levels of education. ***This in turn***

may reduce facilities for girls at the secondary level of education thus limiting girls' access to secondary education.

*Hypothesis 2: Girls' opportunities for education depend on the policies of the government of the day. For example, Anglophone-dominated government would more likely to build more anglophone schools thus increasing opportunities for girls in the anglophone communities compared to the Francophone schools. **The prevailing government policies may determine the access of girls to education.***

1.5 Benefits of educating girls

Introduction of government policies to encourage girls' education will work only if people are convinced of the importance of educating girls. It is therefore important that some of the benefits of educating girls are discussed in this section.

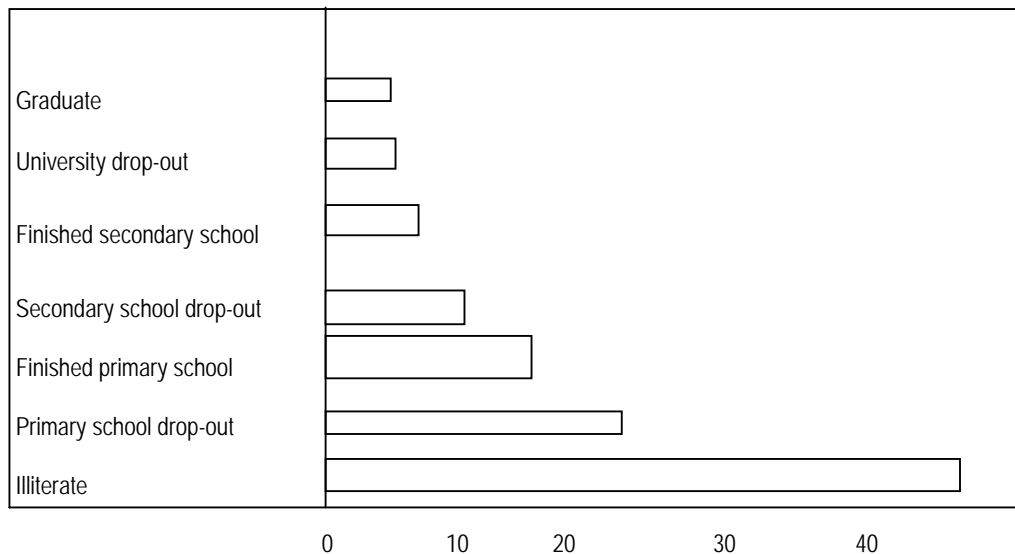
It has been suggested that there is a close relationship between a mother's level of education and her family's quality of life, including health and children's educational levels (Dunlop 2000). UNICEF (1992) also reports positive correlation of girls' education with social development, economic productivity and inter-generation education. Some of these benefits are discussed below.

1.5.1 *Social development*

A trend that is observed locally and worldwide, according to studies in several countries, is that increasing the levels of education for girls and mothers decreases infant mortality,

maternal mortality and fertility rates. For example, Diagram 1 below shows the impact of women's educational levels on infant mortality rate.

Diagram 1: The class structure of death: Infant mortality per '000 births, by level of mother's education, Argentina, 1998.



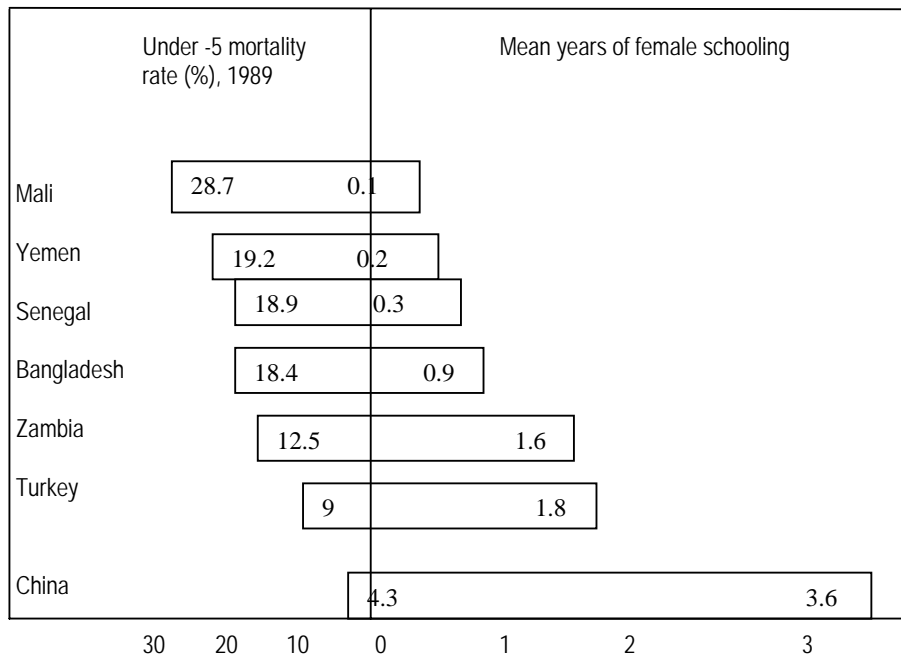
(Source: Cited in Dunlop, 2000)

As shown in Diagram 1 above, the more a girl is educated the lower the mortality rates and vice-versa. This is also observed in Vanuatu. Data from the 1989 census showed that maternal mortality, infant mortality and fertility rates decreased among educated mothers (VNPSO, 1991).

In Vanuatu, respiratory infections (asthma, tuberculosis, dengue fever), malaria, skin infections, malnutrition and diarrhoea are the most common diseases (UNICEF 1998). These may have resulted from poor hygienic conditions in the communities and the limited knowledge about how these and other diseases are contracted and spread and about nutrition. Educating girls may help improve family and child health as well as lower the infant and maternal mortality rates.

Studies in selected countries have also found that higher levels of education for girls increase children's chances of getting immunized and therefore increase their survival rates (UNICEF, 1992). Findings in selected countries are shown in Diagram 2 below:

Diagram 2: Female Education and Child survival – selected countries



(Cited in UNICEF, 1992)

In Latin America and Asia, it has been found that fertility rates among the better educated women have declined as a result of higher rate of adoption of contraception methods (Cochrane, 1982). Studies done by the World Bank (2001) in many of the developing countries also showed that better-educated women bear fewer children than less-educated women. Better-educated women, according to the World Bank report (2001, p. 83),

- marry later and have fewer years of childbearing.
- they employ better ways of controlling fertility.
- have more confidence and power to make decisions about reproduction.

- They also have higher aspirations for their children and recognize the tradeoffs between realizing such aspirations and having many children.

1.5.2 *Economic productivity*

Education of girls has a positive impact on the economic development of a country. Studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between primary enrolment rates and GNP per capita (King 1990). Girls who complete primary education are more likely to participate in the labor force and more so those girls who complete secondary education. This leads to higher productivity and improved wages. On the other hand fewer girls in the educational system will proportionately reduce the GNP.

1.5.3 *Inter-generation education*

Studies in several developing countries have also revealed that a mother's education improves the education attainment of her children, particularly that of daughters (King 1994). Table 5 below has the results of these studies.

Table 5: Differential effects of father and mother's education on child schooling (elasticity at means from regression estimates)

Variables	Male students		Female students	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Pakistan	.30 ^a	.05	.29 ^a	.14 ^a
Indonesia	.13 ^a	.07 ^a	.10 ^a	.12 ^a
Philippines	.07 ^a	.11 ^a	.07	.15 ^a
Peru	.100 ^a	.078 ^a	.079 ^a	.111 ^a
Ghana	.034 ^a	.007 ^a	.034 ^a	.007 ^a

(Source: King et al. 1986; King and Bellew 1989; Glewwe 1991).

Note: ^a *Significantly different from zero at the 5 percent level. Other variables in the regressions include parents' occupation and land wealth, and child's age and birth order. In the Ghana study, the coefficients were constrained to be equal for males and females.*

1.5.4. Science and Technology

Scientific and technological advances are changing the lives of people even in small and less developed countries like Vanuatu. It has been urged that science and technology should be made available to all (Dube 1988), including girls and women. If the girls and women do not receive education in science and technology, they are not likely to benefit from the developments in these areas, and in turn are not able to contribute to the nation's development.

1.6 Organization of the thesis

The chapters that follow contribute to the aims of this study, that is to investigate factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary system and to ascertain what strategies or programs Vanuatu could apply to increase girls' access and participation in the educational system.

Chapter 2 specifically deals with a review of relevant literature and development of a conceptual framework. As a means of analyzing the educational directions which have direct and indirect influence on gender imbalance in Vanuatu's education system, chapter two discusses the concepts of education and development and the failures of the educational system to address issues of gender equity which result in gender imbalance in the education system. The conceptual framework developed on the basis of the review of relevant literature enabled the researcher to clarify the issues related to the gender imbalance in education.

Because investigation of factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system is attempted, chapter 3 outlines some background information on the

geography, demography, government, economic activity and the education system of Vanuatu.

Chapter 4 describes the research methods and techniques used in this study and why they were preferred over others.

Chapter 5 presents the data analysis of the factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education. This chapter draws on secondary sources of data (Vanuatu educational documents), primary sources of data collected during school visits, the observations done in the schools and the interviews conducted during fieldwork in Vanuatu.

To conclude Chapter Six summarizes the findings of the study and makes suggestions for future direction or measures to be taken to improve gender balance in Vanuatu's secondary education system.

1.7 Summary

This chapter outlines one of the major challenges facing Vanuatu's secondary education system: *the under-representation of girls in the secondary education system*. It is suggested that the education sponsors and providers have been working on two fallacious assumptions about education, discussed earlier in the chapter. While it may be the intention of the educational providers and sponsors to provide education for all, they have overlooked the factors that affect girls' participation in the education system. One of these factors is the educational structure and administration failing to address gender issues that are faced by the educational system. Issues relating to the availability of resources to cater for the girls in schools, treatment received by girls in schools, the relevance of education to girls' future social and economical needs, and 'out-of-school factors' like economical, social, cultural and political factors warrant investigation in order to redress the gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system. How these issues adversely affect gender imbalance would be explored in detail in chapter five.

The chapter also outlined the significance of this research to educational planning in Vanuatu. On the basis of the research findings, educational planners and policy makers could develop appropriate strategies to specifically target the problems of gender equity in the secondary education system. The chapter also indicated that educating girls not only benefit the girls and women but the whole population with improved social development, improved economic productivity, better inter-generation academic achievements and greater participation of girls and women in science and technology.

The next chapter (chapter two) deals with the literature review and then develops a conceptual framework.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vanuatu, like other developing countries in their transition from a traditional society to a more modern society, sees education as a fundamental tool for development. The concepts of development and education are central to and highly relevant to the present study therefore writings of Dube (1988) and Fagerlind and Saha (1989) were consulted to see the development issues in general. International literature such as those of the UNICEF, the World Bank, UNESCO publications and NGO's reports on gender and education were also consulted to see how 'development' has influenced and directed educational systems. It is important, therefore, at this stage to look at the definitions of and the different views of the concepts, their impact on educational policy and planning and how they relate or impact on girls' participation in the education system.

2.1 Definitions of and concepts of Education.

Rabuka (1985), defined education as the process of "acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, skills and aptitudes through the various processes of intervention, both formal and non-formal, which prepares and sustains the acquirer for whatever pursuit he or she chooses in life" (p. 123). Rabuka (1985) had however overlooked the importance of informal education. According to Kaye (1985), "the first and by far the most important form of education is the socialization that we receive from our parents, elder, older siblings, friends and others" (p. 11). It is, therefore, a one-dimensional snapshot perception if unschooled women are thought of as the 'uneducated'.

Kaye (1985, p. 11) reminds that there are three domains of education and three modes of education. The three domains of education are:

1. *cognitive* (learning facts, theories, laws, ideas),

2. *affective* education (learning beliefs, values and attitudes) and
3. *Psychomotor* knowledge (learning physical skills such as cooking, playing instruments etc.).

The three modes of education are:

1. *Informal education*-This refers to the lifelong learning from experience. According to Samy (1985), this is what we learn from the social structures to which we belong.
2. *Formal education*- the organized full-time education
3. *Non-formal education* – organized part-time education outside the formal system (Kaye 1985).

This thesis focused mainly on formal education. This does not, however, undervalue or underestimate the importance of non-formal and informal education as references are also made to non-formal education in later chapters.

The main aims of formal education, according to Kaye (1985, p. 19) are:

- i) *Personal realization* – schooling enables each individual to realize his or her potential or her full intellectual, emotional, artistic and spiritual potential.
- ii) *Socialization*- schooling prepares each individual not only to become a full and effective member of the society, but also to prepare for the changes, which that society inevitably faces.

- iii) *Economic development* – schooling enables each individual to use his or her potentialities to make contribution to the economic welfare of society and thereby earn a living.

By the end of World War II, formal education was seen as the most important, and indeed as an essential engine for both the “take-off” into industrialization by less-developed countries, as well, as for the transition of the already developed countries to post-industrial stages (Fagerlind & Saha 1989, p.40). By the late 1950s and early 1960s, there was a general agreement among politicians, educational and social planners, and scholars that education was a key to moving societies along the development continuum (ibid.). This period also saw the ‘Declaration of the rights of the Child’ in 1959 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. These rights include two principles relating to education. One of the principles (principle 7) stated,

The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages. He (or she) shall be given an education which will promote his (or her) general culture and enable him (or her), on a basis of equal opportunity, to develop his (or her) abilities, his (or her) individual judgement, and his (or her) sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of the society (Jayasuriya 1989, p. 2).

The 1990 World Conference on ‘Education for All’ held in Jomtien, Thailand, had, in one way, reinforced this principle (principle 7 of the 1959 ‘Declaration of the rights of the Child’) and in another served as a reminder to other countries about this important principle concerning children’s rights to education yet to be realized. The 1990 ‘World Conference on ‘Education for All’ had, as one of its primary goals: “that every person - child, youth and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs”. The Declaration further stated as one of its objectives, “to ensure access to and improve the quality of education for girls and women” (UNICEF, 1992). This objective is also included in national development plans of a number of South Pacific

countries. For example, in Fiji's Sixth Development Plan, one of the long-term plans was to achieve ten years of education for *every* child (Gannicot, 1990). In the Solomon Islands, since its independence, it has made "progress in expanding access to education" (Gannicott & McGavin, 1990, p. 75). One of the main objectives of the education sector of Vanuatu, in the first National Development Plan (DP1) covering the year 1982 to 1986, was to ensure that *all* children over six years of age attend primary school (Republic of Vanuatu, 1982).

Although the concept of 'Education for All' was applied mainly to the primary education, the Tokyo conference in 1962 to discuss the Karachi plan (Jayasuriya, 1989) has made it very clear that, "universal primary education could not, and must not, be considered in isolation from the education system. Education has to be regarded in its totality, covering not only primary education but also secondary, higher and adult education" (ibid. p. 2). Also, according to article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in its opening paragraph it stated; "everyone has the right to education" and that, "Education shall be made generally available" and "...equally accessible to all on the basis of merit" (ibid.). These statements qualified the application of this concept to the secondary or higher level of education. In this thesis, these expectations focus on the secondary level of education.

Much effort was put into providing education for all as reflected in the public expenditure on education discussed in chapter 1, however, *under-representation of girls in the secondary education system* remains a major challenge for the education systems and for many governments in developing countries, including the Vanuatu government. More importantly, there is likely to be a potential wastage of human talent if these issues are not resolved by the educational system. This leads one to question, which is the effectiveness and motives behind education development in a country and development in general. It also highlights the fact that injection of funds into an education system is not a sufficient condition for a balanced and equitable development of the education system and its

contribution to that nation's development in general. It is therefore appropriate at this stage to look into the definition and concepts of development and its relationship to education and how the two operate to affect educational planning, policy formulation and implementation and how they affect girls' access to and participation in the education system.

2.2 Definitions of and concepts of Development

The word 'development' is a concept or an abstract idea, which has various meanings. To some development may mean the opportunity to learn to read and write, to another the freedom to vote in democratic elections (Scheyvens, 1995), and so on. To some, it symbolizes the achievement of political independence (Kanbur, 1995). Based on the evolutionary theory of development, Fletcher (1974), argued that there is a value-free meaning contained in the meaning of development. He stated,

Development can mean the actualization of an implicit potentiality, the simple example being the patterned growth and maturation of a seed, or an initial germinating cell, to the full adult form of the individual plant, or animal or human person. Without stipulating, at this point, anything too weighty or too precise, this can also certainly seem to apply to man and his social situations (p. 43).

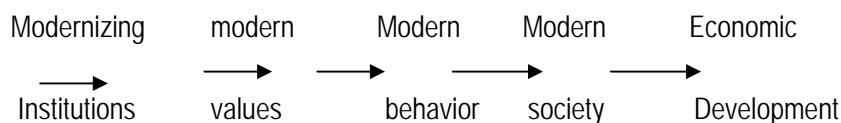
According to Fagerlind and Saha (1989), the evolutionary concept of development is based on the assumption that both societies and individuals have innate biological, psychological and sociological capacities, which can be evaluated, in terms of their level of actualization. They went on to argue that societies can, therefore, be judged as either 'efficient' or 'inefficient' in making possible the actualization of their human potential and any change which promotes or actualizes these dimensions of the society represents development in an appropriate meaning of the term (ibid.). Therefore based on the assumption that education contributes to the well being of individuals within the society

(Schultz, 1980), education is, in the formal sense, an essential component for the development process (Fagerland & Saha, 1989).

While the evolutionary concept of development stated above (Fletcher 1974) is value-free and not clouded by political and ideological overtones, in actuality, development is neither value-free nor left to itself. It is planned, promoted and implemented based on and driven by values – social, political, economical and cultural values etc.

Modernization theory of development emerged in the 1950s (Fagerlind & Saha 1989) around the time when education was seen as a key agent for change and when 'Rights of the Child' was declared by the United Nations (UN) as discussed earlier. It had contrasted sharply with the evolutionary theory. It was argued that a society could not develop unless the majority of the population holds modern values. The theory is also based on the notion that there is a direct link between five variables namely, modernizing institutions, modern values, modern behavior, modern society and economic development (ibid.) as shown in Figure 3 below. Influenced by the Modernization theory of development, many governments and development agencies tend to define development simply as economic development (Momsen & Townsend, 1987).

Figure 3: The process of modernization



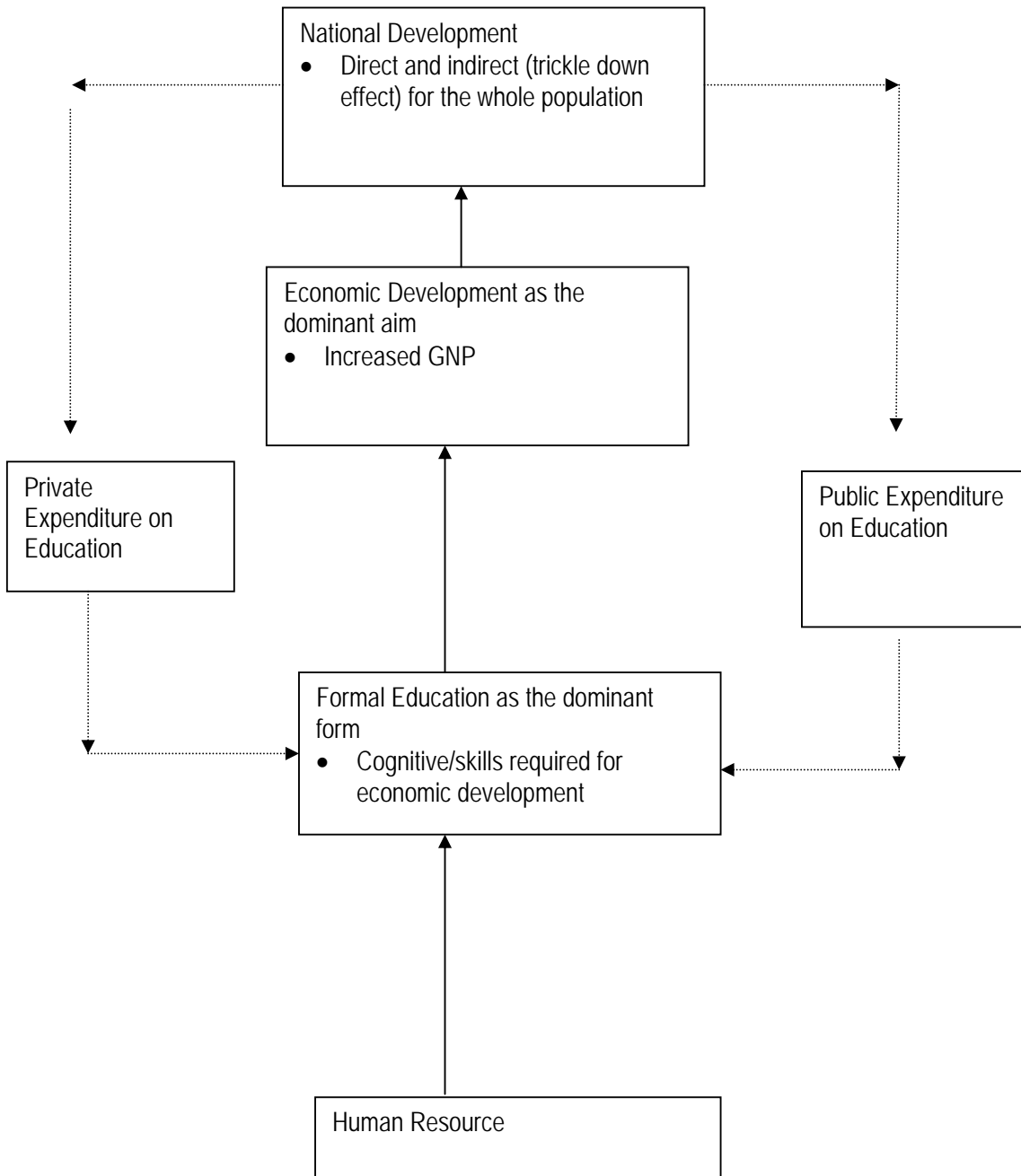
(Source: Inkeles & Smith 1974, In Fagerlind & Saha, 1989, p. 17).

Development, in early economics therefore meant, “the capacity of static national economics to generate and sustain an annual increase in their Gross National Product at the rate of 5% to 7% or more” (Dube 1988, p. 2).

2.3 Education as a fundamental tool for development and its impact on girls’ participation in education

Many post- colonial countries, including Vanuatu, aiming for economic self-reliance followed an economic-oriented model of development. Although economic development of a country is very important as other sectors can not function without it, the education system was manipulated so as to mainly serve economic development goals while neglecting development policy areas like the inequalities between girls and boys and women and men as well as between rural and urban dwellers. Formal education was regarded as the dominant form of education that could bring about skills needed for economic growth and also to bring about a change in attitudes and values to cope with modernization process (Dube, 1988). This approach to development aimed at economic development is depicted in Model 1. This study will attempt to demonstrate that this model of development has perpetuated gender imbalance.

Model 1: An economic-oriented model of development.



(Source: Model constructed by researcher based on literature review of Dube (1998) & Fagerlind & Saha (1989))

The fallacious assumption behind the western development theory (Dube 1988) encouraged countries to invest more on formal education to develop the skills needed for economic development as shown in model 1. It assumed that higher GNP (increase in economic growth) represents development in the form of higher national income. It was thought this will enrich a nation as a whole leading to overall national development. It was further assumed that the benefits from national development will automatically 'trickle' down to the less disadvantaged ones in the society (ibid.), such as girls and women.

To achieve these economic development goals, Human resource is seen as the most important commodity to invest in - a theory adopted by many developing countries. It was also known as the Human Capital theory. Based upon the work of economists such as Schultz (1961), Denison (1962), and Becker (1964), human capital theory rested on the assumption that formal education is highly instrumental and even necessary to improve the production capacity of a population. In short, the human capital theorists argued that an "educated population is a productive population" (cited in Fagerlind & Saha 1989, p. 47). This theory had considerable influence over policies concerning education and development strategies, for example in international organizations such as the World Bank, OECD, and UNESCO (ibid.). The arrows with dotted lines in Model 1 illustrate the contribution of education to economic growth and vice versa. On the one hand, education contributes to economic growth by producing skills and knowledge, which promote it and make it possible. On the other hand, economic growth potentially contributes further to educational expansion and efficiency through increases in national productivity, accumulation of national savings for reinvestment into the educational system and in the improvement of the human resources (ibid.).

However, in reality, the benefits from economic growth have only been confined to a small section of the population (Dube 1988; Fagerlind & Saha, 1989). In developing countries like Vanuatu, the benefits of education did not trickle down to the less disadvantaged ones

in the society as the economists have predicted (Dube, 1988). Only the negative socio-cultural effects were noted! For example, rapid urbanization stimulated by educational expansion and search for modern sector employment in many South Pacific countries resulted in a drift in search of waged employment. This not only brought in its train common social problems (such as the increased number of family breakups, land disputes and the number of women-headed households and poverty (Dunlop, 2000)), but also affected the demand for girls' participation in education and the supply of educational services. In more developed countries, according to Dube (1988), there is "growing evidence of individual alienation and social anomie. Individual and collective violence are increasing. The normative structure of society is becoming weak and many social institutions are becoming dysfunctional" (p. 5). The nations of the world are divided between the privileged and the under-privileged and within most developed countries there is a small privileged group surrounded by a large mass of underprivileged (ibid.). Undoubtedly among these underprivileged ones are girls and women. Anderson (1990) quoted by Scheyvens (1994) stated, "Today women are still poorer, have less access to or control over resources, and enjoy less political power than their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. This continuing and basic inequality depletes the world economically and morally" (p. 3).

Model 1 places greater emphasis on the improvement of skills and knowledge of human resources needed for economic development while neglecting areas like political and socio-cultural education. With economic growth as the dominant aim and formal education as its dominant form, education as a development tool in this situation, according to Fagerlind and Saha (1989),

Operates to maintain the status quo, enabling those in power to reinforce their privileged position and deprives those not in power, either by socialization into a passive role or by depriving them of the necessary cultural capital, from launching a challenge to the capitalist hierarchy (p. 62).

Experiences of several developed and developing countries have supported Fagerlind and Saha's (1989) arguments. For example critics in Great Britain, France and the United States contend that economic growth in advanced capitalist societies has served mainly the interests of those in power and has perpetuated the inequalities of the social system (ibid.). They further argue that schools in capitalist societies only reflect the values and interests of the upper and middle classes and operate to the disadvantage of the working class (ibid.). England held similar views during its rapid school expansion in the 19th Century: they contend that schools reinforce and reproduce the class structure of capitalist society by producing a docile and compliant workforce (Bowles & Ginytis, 1976). The French scholar, Pierre Bourdieu, has also shown that schools provide the dominant classes with "cultural and material capital" which enables them to participate more fully in the social system and its rewards (Bourdieu, 1973).

Carnoy (1974) argued that schools in many developing countries are simply a form of neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism. That is, the countries continue to serve the interest of the elite of the previous colonial powers (Fagerlind & Saha, 1989). The education structures perform this task through their selection mechanism and curriculum structure and this produces what Frank (1972) calls the '*Lumpenbourgeoisie*'. Lumpenbourgeoisie are "local elites who serve overseas interests rather than the interests of their own people" (Fagerlind & Saha, 1989, p. 59).

Locally, a review of Vanuatu's education system by Nako (1997) showed that the current education system is based on a broad educational framework that is:

- oriented towards urban jobs and promotes elitism
- portrays and promotes disparity amongst individuals and communities, both in rural and urban areas

- produces a disoriented sense of empowerment for the individuals
- Not concerned with the vocational sector.

(Cited in Republic of Vanuatu 1997b, p. 5).

Considering these criticisms, it is questionable whether such education will contribute in the long run to satisfactorily deal with the “complex reality of the human condition (e.g. gender/ethnicity)” (Kedrayate & Schulz 1996, p. 38). These need to be addressed for continued development. Therefore, the *under-representation of girls at the secondary level* in many countries, particularly in developing countries like Vanuatu calls for a re-visitation of the developmental goals of the education system. A review of the existing educational structures is very important to throw some light on the causes and consequences of the inequitable distribution of educational benefits between boys and girls.

While educational sponsors and providers have put in tremendous efforts for providing an equitable education system where all children can attend as discussed earlier in chapter one, injection of funds alone into education is insufficient to provide an equitable development of the education system and to bring about a better gender balance. Factors such as access to education, the actual participation in education, their treatment in school and performance of students and the effects of education on adult life (Fagerlind and Saha 1989) have not been taken into sufficient consideration by educational planners and policy makers in many developing countries including Vanuatu. These factors coupled with other social, cultural and economic factors have contributed to making many education systems in various developing countries to face the problem of inequity. The problem of inequity, according to Fagerlind and Saha (1989), relates to the inefficiency of the education system. Saha (1988) argued that some forms of inequity are likely to reduce, at least to some extent, unrealistic aspirations among youth for high educational and occupational attainment. The problems of inequity in the education system are discussed below.

2.4. The problems of achieving equity in the education

2.4.1. Access to education

According to Fagerlind and Saha (1989), 'access' refers to both the "opportunity to participate in education and the availability of facilities" (p. 171). In many developing countries including Vanuatu, the government, church groups and other private organizations have established educational structures to provide access to secondary education for all those who are considered as able to profit from. However, the fallacious assumptions held by the educational sponsors and providers about education, discussed earlier in this chapter, have not made it possible for the educational planners to assess the following factors in relation to girls' education and to make sure that:

- resources are distributed equally among the provinces and appropriate facilities and resources are made available to rural and urban areas, so that girls are not denied access to secondary education
- secure boarding facilities for girls are provided in all secondary schools. This will increase acceptance by and confidence among parents to send their daughters to boarding schools
- the cost of education at the secondary level of education does not prevent or reduce girls' access to secondary level of education
- there are sufficient places for girls at the secondary level of education.

Moreover, while it is often assumed that material facilities in schools provide equal opportunities for both boys and girls, in many developing countries, for social, economic and cultural reasons, boys are favored with access to schools. For example, girls attend to domestic chores, sibling care, farm work and family production (UNICEF, 1992). Therefore girls cannot take full advantage of schooling or are forced to drop out of school.

In many countries, all the benefits of the women go to the husband's family when a girl marries. Therefore any investment in females' education is seen as a loss for the girl's family (Nelson, 1979). Furthermore, in many villages people hold the view that educated girls will no longer want to carry out expected domestic duties, like working in the gardens, doing the house chores, etc. Such involvement has prevented girls from gaining formal education (Pastner, 1974). This study aimed at investigating these factors in the context of Vanuatu.

2.4.2 Participation in formal education

Fagerlind and Saha (1989) have defined 'participation in education' as the "extent to which individuals enroll in and attend formal education" (p.171). A UNESCO study of fifty-four developing countries showed that of 100 students entering grade 1, only sixty reached third grade and in lowest income countries, only thirty-seven reached fifth grade and fewer girls make this progress in school. It was found that the drop - out rate among girls is higher than that for boys (UNESCO, 1989). The study also showed that the girls' enrolment ratios at the secondary level of education are lower than the boys' enrolment ratios in many countries (ibid.). Some of the common factors that prevent girls from participating fully in education are discussed below.

1. In many countries, changes in educational policies have affected girls' participation in education. For example, according to Oglesby (1994), international debt crisis in the 1980s has led many governments to cut back on health and education. These have further led to major changes in educational policies in many countries, with a prevailing emphasis laid on education for industrial and commercial objectives. This in turn had an effect on girls' education provision in these countries.

The rise in secondary school fees in many Pacific Island countries also affected girls' participation in the education system. In Vanuatu, for instance, the rise in secondary school fees doubled to 30,000Vt in 1986 (Van Trease, 1985). This was a burden to many rural parents. In such situations and in a system stretched for resources, girls are more likely the ones to be left out of the education system.

2. Bullying and excessive harassment of girls by boys in schools have prevented the progression of girls to secondary level of education and higher. For instance, a study by Scheyvens (1995) revealed that secondary school girls in the Solomon Islands were often teased 'unmercifully by boys and bombarded with stones" and "...boys make fun of and intimidate girls in the classrooms" (p. 310). These result in girls developing lower self-esteem and adversely affect their academic performances and on many occasions affected their participation in the education system.

Girls not participating fully in the education system, is not only a waste of resources invested on education, but is also a waste of human resources and a missed opportunity for a better future for the girls.

2.4.3 Equal treatment and academic performance

It has been suggested that students are not treated equally by the teachers and administrators (Fagerlind & Saha, 1989). The practice of streaming and curriculum tracks by many secondary schools, attention – giving inside and outside of the classrooms, and stereotyping are examples of the differential treatments received by students in secondary schools, which also affects students' academic performances, particularly girls' academic performance(ibid.). Some of the common practices that adversely affect girls are discussed below.

- i) Curriculum tracking is found in many secondary schools including secondary schools in Vanuatu. This involves assignment of students to different sequence of courses depending upon their future goals (Stockard & Mayberry, 1992). Typically one is designed for preparing students to enter college, another for general education and a third for vocational students (ibid.). Ability - grouping is also found in many secondary schools, mainly in double streamed schools. Oakes (1985) quoted by Stockard and Mayberry (1992) has argued that,

Although some tracking systems may provide academic advantages for students in the top tracks, the evidence consistently indicates negative results for those in the lower groups... Instead of feeling more comfortable about themselves, students in lower tracks tend to develop lower self-esteem, lower aspirations, and more negative attitudes towards school (p. 14).

- ii) Stereotyping in schools also play a part in affecting the student performances in education and in particular it affects girls' participation in the education system. According to Yates, Werner and Rosen (1974), school educational materials fuel the development of stereotypes and particularly the sense of inferiority among girls. According to a study done by Dr. Lenore Weitzman of the University of California and Director of a research study of the 100 most commonly used school textbooks, Weitzman came up with the following findings:

- The illustrations and stories in the textbooks tend to convince girls that they should be passive and dependent people, aspiring a little more than lives of service to their future husbands and children.
- Most stories tend to center on boys rather than girls and these tended to demonstrate qualities of strength, intelligence, love of adventure, independence, and courage. Boys tended to be active, playing baseball, swimming, climbing rocks and occasionally rescuing girls or even adults. Girls, on the other hand, would appear in frilly dresses, play with dolls or doing housework.

- When adult men appear in text, they are depicted in a variety of occupations, from astronaut to taxi-driver, to policemen, to cowboy, to scientists, etc. But women are often portrayed as performing simple, time-consuming chores. (Yates, Werner & Rosen 1974, p. 4).

In another study done by the Commonwealth School Commission in Australian schools revealed the following findings:

- i) There are fewer resources for girls than boys in the schools.
- ii) Teachers are devoting more of their time to boys than girls.
- iii) Teacher interaction with girls does not encourage creativity and inquiry to the same extent as with boys.
- iv) School hierarchies provide fewer role models for girls than boys.
- v) School materials are using 'sexist' language.
- vi) Teacher education courses for both teachers in training and practicing teachers do not give detailed attention to non-sexist curriculum development and non-sexist teacher behavior.

This study will investigate some of these factors in the Vanuatu education system to see the effect on the girls' academic performance progress.

2.4.4. *The effects of education on adult life*

According to Fagerlind and Saha (1989), although men and women may receive the same type of education, the “value of education for the attainment of jobs, income, political power and social networks may be different for women and men” (p.172). For example, women tend to concentrate in a few female stereotyped occupations such as school-teachers, nurses, clerical workers and other lower level white-collar jobs (ibid.).

At the secondary level of education girls tend to concentrate in arts subjects and home science courses and remain outside science and maths-based education. According to Nayar (1989), the science and maths-based education opens many doors to the high productivity and high-tech sectors of the economy, which girls and women also need in this fast changing society. But unfortunately girls do not enroll in and pursue science and mathematics programmes as much as boys. This results from the following circumstances:

- i) girls do not receive sufficient guidance at the secondary level of education on career choice
- ii) traditional gender biases in the choices of courses and careers (ADB, 1997).
- iii) lack of female role models in the schools.

This study will investigate factors such as these in Vanuatu's education system that contribute to gender imbalance.

The issues discussed in this chapter call for an alternative approach to development and education to be appropriately adopted if a nation is to achieve a balanced, holistic and integrated development. Discussions so far referred to inequity in the education system. It is appropriate at this point to briefly consider what gender is all about before we look at

the alternative approach to education and development. This is discussed in the next paragraph.

2.5 Social Construction of Gender

Gender refers to the “socially constructed and institutionalized forms of identity, which are, attached to biological sex differences” (Goetz, 1992, p. 6). Gender is used in the thesis and not ‘girls’ alone as this thesis is not only concerned with education of girls per se. It is also concerned with the “social construction of gender and the assignment of specific roles, responsibilities, and expectations to men” (Rathgeber, 1990, p. 494), which in turn directly or indirectly affect girls’ participation in the education system.

According to the World Bank report (2001) one of the reasons why gender issues in education was hard to challenge was that policy makers often treat gender issues largely as ‘women issues’. Evidences, however, show that the costs and consequences of gender inequality are much broader as not only women are affected, but the whole population. For example, the World Bank report (2001) stated,

When low investments in female education translate into poorer health and nutritional practices by mothers, all children feel the effects. This can have significant impacts on the health, well being, and productivity of an entire generation. And when gender discrimination or social norms that restrict women’s activities prevent large segments of the female population from participating fully and productively in society – whether in the economy or in community or national affairs – then a great deal of a country’s talent, skill and energy remains untapped. This again, can have important consequences for countries’ capacities to generate economic growth, to reduce poverty, and to govern effectively (p. 69).

Gender issues must, therefore, become development issues (World Bank, 2001) to which educational issues also belong. Therefore, these should be addressed by the education system as well. The failure of the education system in challenging gender issues in the past calls for an alternative model of and approach to education which could radically alter the present pattern in redressing the under-representation of the vulnerable and the weak sections of the society, which includes girls. If real and holistic development is to occur, with education as the fundamental tool, structural change in education along with value change and attitude change must take place (Samate, 1994), and the focus has to be on people and to ensure a more equitable distribution of goods and services.

2.6 An alternative approach to education and development to reduce gender gap in Vanuatu's secondary education system.

This research attempts to develop an alternate model of development (Model 2) depicted on page 53 largely based on the work of Liberation Theorists and progressive thinkers such as Emma Goldman who deal with development and reform issues of the developing countries.

This alternative approach to education and development should therefore use Goulet's (1971) three core values to represent common goals sought by individuals and societies. These core values are:

- i) There is the need for life sustenance

- ii) People need a sense of self-esteem.

- iii) People's desire to be free from servitude, to be able to choose to have to what Goulet (1971) refers to as '...emancipation from...ignorance...misery, institutions, and dogmatic beliefs (Cited in Dube, 1988).

The alternative approach to education and development incorporates elements of '*conscientization*' followed by '*empowerment*' which are needed by the 'oppressed' or disadvantaged groups in a society, especially girls and women. Liberation theorists argued that, "the main remedy for overcoming this oppression lies in the education of the oppressed to be aware of their condition" (Fagerlind & Saha, 1989, p. 26), a practice called '*conscientizacao*' by the Brazilian educationalist, Paulo Freire (ibid.). He envisioned the function of education was to "conscientize the individual, the group and the community by enlarging their cognitive map and by imparting a critical awareness of their condition and the causes underlying it" (Cited in Dube 1988, p. 85).

Dube (1988) further defines and elaborates on the definition of conscientization as,

"A process of cognitive and evaluative transformation ... it enables the individual to contemplate the environment and the human condition and gain an understanding of the forces that are shaping the contemporary world. Of special interest is the interplay of social, economical and political currents that result in inequities and injustices in the social order. The individual will begin to ask questions like Why? How? What next?" (p. 88).

Dube (1988) went on to suggest that conscientized girls and women will:

- begin to realize that being deprived of privileges in education may not be the result of any innate deficiencies in girls and women.
- analyse the structures, especially educational structures for failure on their part to challenge gender issues when faced with the issues which contribute to the gender imbalance in the education system.

- be capable of making responsible choices, especially in the education for their children.

Very much related to conscientization is the concept and process of empowerment. Roughan (1990) argued that empowerment is also a crucial aspect of development for women and girls and for other groups, which face disadvantages relating to aspects such as gender, ethnicity, class and religion. Straudt (1990) defined empowerment as, "...a process by which people acquire the ability to act in ways to control their lives". This view is reiterated by Longwe (1991) who stated that, development should be "...concerned with enabling people to take charge of their own lives" (p. 149). However, in a society where patriarchy is the norm, empowerment needs to be well defined. Griffen (1989) quoted by Scheyvens (1998) offers an appropriate interpretation of this concept. Griffen (1989) suggested that, for Pacific Islanders, empowerment means, "*...Changing the unequal power relationships between men and women, governments and people, decision-makers and people, planners and people, traditional leaders and people, and gaining back power for those people in society who have less control over their lives especially women*" (Cited in Scheyvens 1998, p.118).

This unequal power relation has kept the girls and women at the community level from adequately benefiting from current educational planning and policy implementation. According to Kearney and Ronning (1996), the power relationships are "asymmetric, faceted and fatalistic"(p. 85). Educational decisions, all coming 'from the top', without any input from the grassroots or community level due to this unequal power relations, have often resulted in outcomes such as the inappropriate policy initiatives and unsuccessful implementation of educational planning. This has resulted in groups that have in the past not been able to benefit from such development approaches, to continue to be disadvantaged despite large investments on education.

Through empowerment, girls, women and people in the community would be able to participate more meaningfully in planning, policy inputs and decision-making bodies of education. They would be also more involved in motivating parents to send their daughters to school and be involved at the community level to support education development in their communities. More importantly, they will be able to challenge the system for the

- i) inequitable distribution of educational resources which in turn limit girls' access to education
- ii) failure of the education system to retain girls in the system so that they fully participate in the education system
- iii) inequitable resource and administrative support received by teachers and school administrators
- iv) lack of career guidance within the school system in assisting secondary school leavers, particularly the girls.

Dealing with such issues by the education system may in turn improve girls' access to and participation in the education system.

2.7 Essential elements for successful change

Educational Planners in post-colonial countries like Vanuatu, need not rely only on educational models used elsewhere or inherited from the colonial powers to combat gender imbalance in the education system. Apart from the physical aspects of development in schools, secondary schools should have good and ethical leadership, more effective planning and realize the need for schools to become 'learning organizations'. It is appropriate at this point to look at what the general literature says about learning organizations, leadership and planning, which could equally apply to the South Pacific countries' education systems.

2.7.1 *The need for Learning organizations*

Schools, whether primary or secondary school, have always been viewed as places for student learning. However, in order for the alternative approach to education (Model 2) to succeed, views have to shift from seeing 'schools as places for student learning' to 'places for learning for *all*'. Schools can, therefore, be referred to as '*learning organizations*' (a concept which was applied to many educational institutions in Australia and abroad (Hill et al, 1995)). Other organizations can also serve as 'learning organizations', for instance, according to Velayutham (1996), the Ministry of Education and its Divisional and District Offices and specialized units such as the Curriculum Development Unit, Examinations Unit etc can also serve as such. Senge (1990) defined *learning organization* as, ... "an organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective

aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (Cited in Dobbins et al 1998, p. 85-86). The concept of ‘Learning organizations’ implies that learning has to take place at all levels if there is to be a successful implementation of educational planning and policies with regard to gender equity in education, and adequate participation of women in educational decision-making bodies at the institutional and system levels.

Firstly, individuals have to learn. Administrators and teachers in a school only act as the media that provide supportive learning environments and strategies, but the actual learning is the responsibility of individuals, in this case girls and women. If conscientization and empowerment are to be achieved, learning by the individuals is essential. Senge (1990) argued that learning organizations could not learn until individuals start to learn. Bennis and Nanus (1985) further stressed, “Learning is the essential fuel...the source of high octane energy that keeps up the momentum by continually sparking new understanding, new ideas, and new challenges. It is absolutely indispensable under today’s conditions of rapid change and complexity” (p. 188). This view equally applies to the need for learning by girls as well. If families are considered as organizations then women and girls’ learning is critical to the family as a whole. To fulfill Goulet’s (1971) core values discussed earlier in chapter two, all individuals must learn to take personal responsibility for their own lives. Steven (1990) wrote these beautiful words about the personal responsibilities in one’s life which equally apply to girls and women, “We didn’t ask to be born or to whom. Yet now that we are here it is common sense to make the best of life’s journey. How we do this is in our own hands. It’s a matter of good self-management and should not be left to the elusiveness of luck. If fortunate events help us along that’s a bonus” (p.35).

Although the personal effort on the part of girls and women is necessary, efforts at multiple levels through a variety of approaches are needed to deal with this multi-faceted and complex social problem. The UNESCO (1986) report argued that,

Programs aimed at a better sex balance in education should not only involve the girls themselves, but boys and the total village community...who must understand better the condition of women and why their education is important not only for justice reasons, but also for their own benefits and those of the country as well (Cited in Fagerlind & Saha, 1989, pp. 188-189).

The government of Vanuatu, through the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Vanuatu National Council of Women (VNCW), and national media, and at the school and community level through community, civil and citizen groups, NGOs, School Parents and Teachers Associations and church groups should all play their part. Their contribution could consist of enabling, facilitating, empowering and supporting fuller participation of girls in education at the secondary level. These suggestions would be incorporated in an alternate model of development.

In order to combat gender imbalance in the education system, schools may be seen as the center for change (Dalin 1994; Velayutham 1996). Collaborative Action Research could be an important learning strategy to aid this process of change. Kemmis and McTaggart (1989) defined Collaborative Action Research as,

Participative, collaborative research which arises from the clarification of some concerns generally shared by a group...where group members plan action together, act and observe individually or collectively and reflect together (In FOE 1997, p. 195).

Carrying out action researches in schools, not only will enable the teachers or learners in the schools to develop their knowledge about the problems of inequity in education, but also it will encourage teachers and all involved in the process to take responsibility for their

own learning and to value their ideas. It also encourages the learners to be reflective practitioners (Schon 1987, In FOE 1997).

Reflective practice and collaborative action will have to be nurtured in schools and this depends on the kind of leadership in schools.

2.7.2 Leadership

Good leadership in schools as learning organizations is vital for the successful implementation of educational plans and policies with regard to gender equity in education and for the learning organizations to function successfully in these fast changing societies. According to Davies and Ellison (1997), it is very important that those with strategic responsibilities in schools "develop the *educational leadership capacity* to challenge today's orthodoxy and to envision what the future education and societal framework will be" (p. 12). Fullan (1993) further argued that 'learning organizations' must look beyond just having management skills and strategic responsibilities and changing formal structures, but should now aim to change norms, habits, skills and beliefs. This kind of leadership in transforming schools into learning organizations is very essential for combating gender imbalance in education systems, particularly in the Vanuatu education system, where it is influenced by customary beliefs, traditional practices and patriarchy.

The important components of leadership that are needed in implementing any changes to the education system to improve girls' access to and participation in the education system should include aspects of leadership such as change management, vision building, team building, sensitivity and empowerment. According to Burnham (1992), these components "...are not offered as a hierarchy...they are highly interdependent and each presuppose the others to be fully effective" (p. 102). These are briefly discussed below.

Leaders in the secondary schools must love change and have a shared vision with others in the school of the way the school can utilize its resources and create environments that will allow changes to occur. Among the changes needed could be the implementation of the concept of "Education for All" that includes both girls and boys. According to Fullan (1995), management of complex change such as this does not, however, need "heroic warrior" leaders, but facilitators of learning! He further argued that *change* is about learning - it is an internal process that has to focus on behavior and attitudes - allowing people to initiate planned change rather than merely reacting to change. In the case of Vanuatu, the educational leader has to not only "allow", but also initiate appropriate changes to redress the gender imbalance in educational provision.

The instructional leaders in learning organizations such as the secondary schools, therefore need to build a collaborative team of learners, which is essential for encountering problems like gender imbalance in the education system. French and Bell (1995) defined team as, "... a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable" (p. 112). Teamwork, according to Burnham (1992), can release creative power and is "more likely to generate radical alternatives and are better placed to review and evaluate possible solutions" (p.105). As mentioned earlier, this team should include representatives of the central office, for example the Ministry of education, the Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Principal Education Officers (PEO) at the provincial level, private education sponsors and providers, parents and the community. Collaborative learning of this kind, through collaborative action research as the learning strategy, will make participants to become aware of issues and factors constraining girls' access to and participation in the secondary education system and the importance of correcting the existing shortcomings in education. Such an approach will further help improve girls' access to and participation in the education system. Moreover, building teamwork with the outside environment, for instance the Central Office, the school leader serves as a linking agent spanning the boundaries and bringing resources from the larger environment

to the local school (Levinson, 1970). This will help the implementation of action plans to combat gender imbalance in the education system.

Sensitivity in terms of personal relationships with members of the school community and empowering others in the institution, especially female teachers and female students is a fundamental requirement for leadership. It is necessary to sensitively handle these challenges in view of the long-standing cultural norms and expectations. This is very essential in the secondary schools to help boost female teachers' morale and motivation and to boost female students' self-esteem and motivation.

Empowerment involves releasing the potential of individuals- allowing them to flourish and grow, to release their capacity for infinite improvement (Levinson, 1970). He went on to suggest that this could be done by:

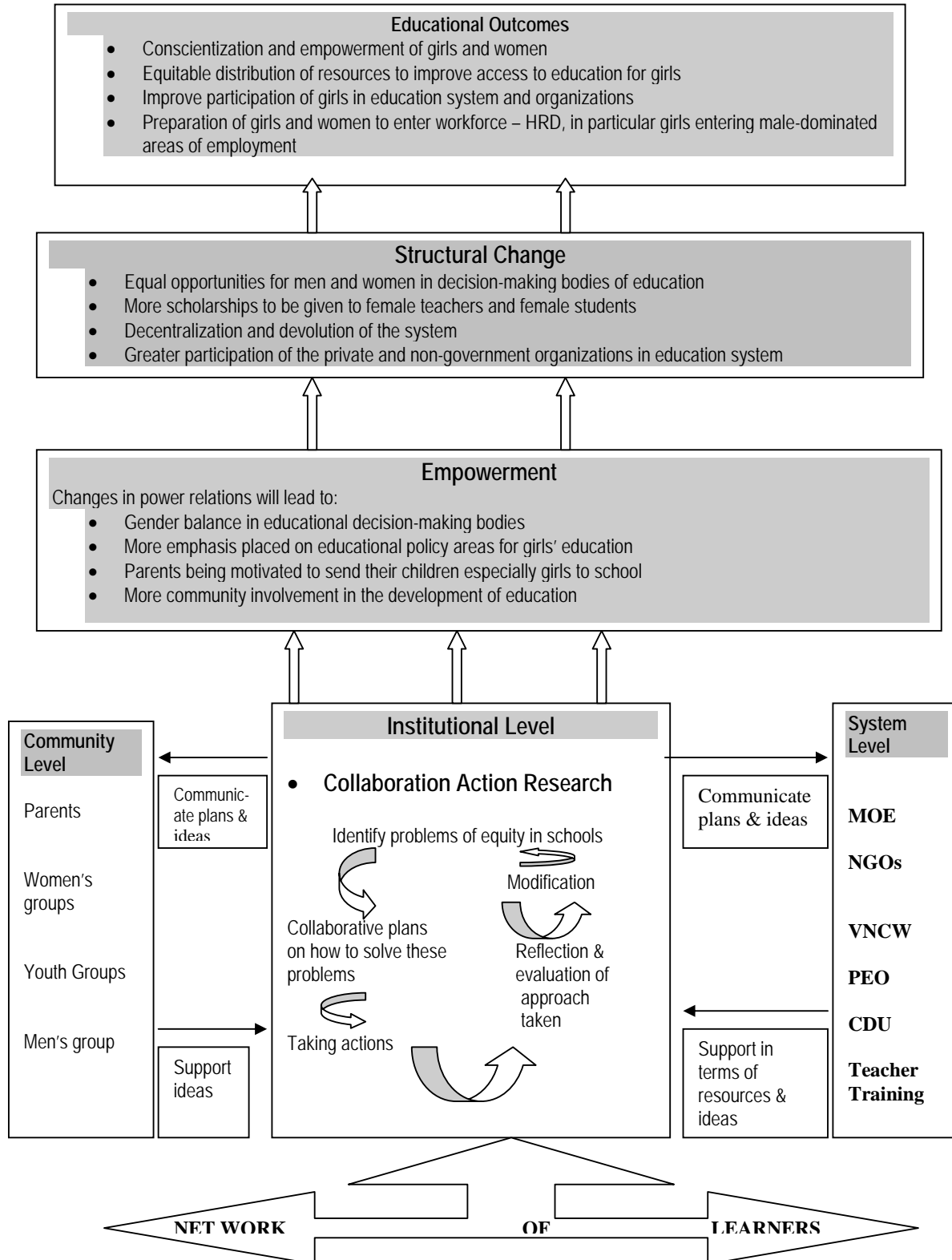
- i) giving recognition to their subordinates, especially female staff,
- ii) looking for their interests and learning from them
- iii) helping them grow in their jobs and
- iv) representing their interests in higher management.

When leaders demonstrate their commitment and concern for the achievement of women and girls in the school, the female teachers and students would feel supported and in turn would improve their self-esteem and motivation to learn in school.

Discussions so far have been about the essential elements for a successful change from the developmental approach depicted in Model 1 to an alternative approach in Model 2: *The Tentative Conceptual Model*. The need for a learning organization in which all have to learn in order for a successful implementation of strategies in schools to improve girls' participation in the education system was discussed. We also mentioned that leaders in schools and the communities have a role to play and that is to transform schools and communities into *learning organizations*. To facilitate that role of leaders, important components of leadership such as change management, vision building, team building, sensitivity and empowerment are essential elements needed by the leaders. This brings us to the *Tentative Conceptual Model* depicted as Model 2.

The Tentative Conceptual Model on the next page addresses an alternative approach that can be employed to improve the provision of education to girls at the secondary education system and thus reduce the gender gap.

Model 2: An alternative approach to educational development to achieve gender balance



In order to successfully implement the tentative approach depicted in Model 2, educational planning in schools needs re-visitation. It is appropriate at this stage to look at what general literature says about educational planning.

2.7.3 *Educational Planning*

With the impact of rapid changes brought about by developments in technology on today's societies, strategic planning in education need to be applied especially with regard to girls' education. As discussed earlier in this chapter, in many South Pacific countries, including Vanuatu, the socio-economic and political environments do not allow strategic planning to be implemented in a rational and systematic manner (Davies and Ellison 1997). Therefore planning for change with particular reference to girls' educational needs attention. Davies and Ellison (1997) further pointed out that, "In the educational context, rapid change over the last ten years and the future impact of technology on learning have cast doubt as to whether strategic planning over a three to five year period is possible" (p. 79). But with a clear vision of a future Vanuatu society in which both girls and boys could make useful contributions to national life, strategic planning to manage the anticipated changes is necessary.

Planning with regards to girls' education therefore need to be refocused on plans that are collaborative, accountable and futuristic. Planning to deal with gender issues in the education system (either at the institutional or at the system level) should be *collaborative* in which parents, teachers, students, girls and the education administrators have inputs to make to the planning process. In so doing there is a plan that is communicated to all stakeholders and a plan in which the power in school systems is distributed throughout the organization (Riches & Morgan, 1989).

On the other hand, everyone involved is held *accountable* for the implementation of the plans. More importantly, UNICEF (1998) has argued that:

Greater participation and involvement by community and parents in planning and management ... translates into better knowledge of the education system, closer linkages with the school understanding of the teaching/learning process (p. x).

However, it is necessary to assign the responsibility to everyone involved so that everyone is accountable.

Planning to deal with such complex social problem such as the gender imbalance in the education system requires everyone to learn. The learning process by its very nature is 'evolutionary and developmental' (Velayutham, 1996) therefore educational planning should be *futuristic*. This is to accommodate unpredictable influences of external environment for instance, pressures from those with entrenched views on gender, business organizations that prefer male employment or anti-feminist groups in the school systems. The school must therefore have a tentative, but shared vision (Velayutham, 1996) of what is best for the school to do to challenge gender issues in education and build on that vision. Bennis and Nanus (1985) defined vision as, "...a mental image of a possible and desirable future state of the organization. It can be as vague as a dream or as precise as a goal or mission statement...a review of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organization, a condition that is better in some important ways than what now exists" (cited in Crawford, Kydd & Riches 1997, p. 29). Having a vision and building on that vision will help the process of change in redressing gender imbalance in the secondary education system.

2.8. Summary

A tentative conceptual framework was developed based on the issues discussed in this chapter. The main issue to be addressed is the creation of an education system that will cater to all children. While the education system tried hard to provide education for all, the negligence of policy areas such as equality based on gender, among others, has resulted in gender imbalance in the education system. Moreover, education as a fundamental right and as an essential tool for economic development of the country operates to maintain the status quo, and experience suggests that policy formulation and implementation are both weighed in favor of the ruling elite of the society (Dube 1988). This kind of a process of development appears to have led to the current plight of girls and women. An alternative approach to education and development is needed to radically alter the present pattern in favor of the vulnerable and the weak sections of the society, which includes girls, to provide a gender balance in the education system.

For these changes to eventuate learning must take place at all levels, that is girls, educational leaders and the community must 'learn to learn'. This includes learning from mistakes in the past (for example, those based on unsubstantiated assumptions about education), learning to avoid the past pitfalls and learning to improve on future educational developments. If this kind of learning does not take place, inadequate participation of women in educational decision-making bodies will still prevail, gender imbalance will still persist and unsuccessful implementation of educational planning and policies with regard to gender equity in education will still continue.

Questions regarding the above issues were formulated by the researcher and built into hypotheses that would be tested with the interview questions, observation and questionnaire instruments. These will be discussed in a subsequent chapter and samples

of research instruments are included in appendices 3, 4 and 5. The next chapter (chapter three) looks at the context of this study.

CHAPTER 3:

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

This chapter outlines the background information on the geography, demography, government, economic activity and the education system of Vanuatu to place this study in context.

3.1. Geography

Vanuatu is one of the South Pacific countries, situated approximately 800 kilometers southeast of the Solomon Islands and about the same distance west of Fiji forming a “Y” shaped archipelago of some 80 islands. Only 65 of these islands are inhabited (Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office, VNPSO, 1999). It has a land area of 12200 square kilometers, stretching over a distance of over 850 kilometers in a north-south direction. It lies between 13 and 22 degrees south of the equator and between 166 and 172 degrees east of Greenwich (World Bank, 1993).

Vanuatu is divided into six provincial regions, namely Torba province, Sanma province, Penama, Malampa, Shefa and Tafea as shown in map 1 on page 58a. The capital, Port Vila is situated on Efate in the Shefa Province. The two main towns are Luganville, on Santo and Port Vila on Efate. Torba province lies north of the group while Tafea lies south of the group. These divisions are very important, as they are used to analyze and compare educational resource allocations by the government to each province compared to the two main towns on Santo and Efate. Are the provinces getting a fair allocation of the resources to support schooling of all, including girls?

Due to its longitudinal extension of the islands, the climate varies from tropical in the north to sub-tropical in the south. The northern part is hotter, wetter and more humid than the southern part. The islands in the north experience more tropical cyclones than those islands in the south (UNICEF, 1998).

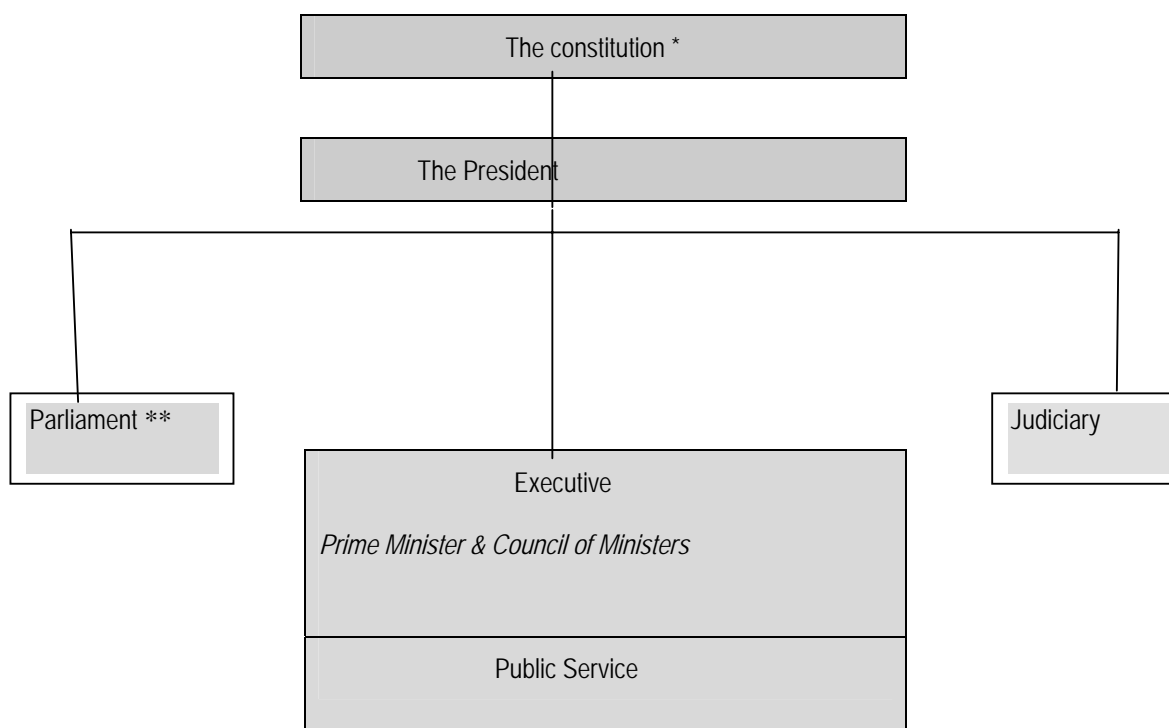
3.2 Languages in Vanuatu

Vanuatu has 108 local languages for a population of about 177,000 persons, or an average of about 1,600 speakers of each language. In addition to the local languages, a high percentage of the population also speaks the national language, Bislama, a Melanesian Creole. The official languages are English, French and Bislama (Vanuatu Ministry of Education, N.D.).

3.3 The government

The country has a Westminster-style democracy with a parliament, a cabinet and a Prime Minister, as well as a head of state as outlined in Figure 4 below. There is also a council of chiefs reflecting the traditional government before the arrival of the Europeans. The Council of Chiefs advises Parliament on issues of traditional and customary law (Vanuatu Ministry of Education, N.D.).

Figure 4: The structure of government in the Republic of Vanuatu



**The responsibilities of some bodies are defined in the Constitution and they are independent of all other bodies. In alphabetical order they are: Auditor General, Electoral Commission, Judicial Service Commission, Malvatumauri, Ombudsman, Police Services Commission, Public Prosecutor, Public Service Commission, Public Solicitor.*

*** Parliament makes the laws, which the Judiciary enforces; and votes the money, which the Executive needs to run the country.*

(Source: Republic of Vanuatu, 1997a, p. 14).

Prior to its independence in 1980, it was governed by the Anglo-French condominium, which featured parallel British, French, and some joint services (World Bank 1993). Among these services was the dual education system (the Anglophone and the Francophone) which has survived to this day and created problems for the post-independent

governments. Gannicott and Avalos (1994) commented, "One of the most expensive legacies of the Anglo-French Condominium was the survival after independence of English and French-speaking school systems, each with its own curriculum, examinations, textbooks, teacher training and administrations" (p. 36).

3.4 Population

The 1999 census showed that Vanuatu has a total population of about 1186, 678 of whom 98% were ni-Vanuatu and 2 % accounted for other ethnic origin. Out of these 1186,678 persons, 95,682 are males and 90,996 are females (VNPSO, 1999).

It was reported that, at one time, the total native population may have been as many as one million, but with the arrival of the Europeans in the 19th Century, their diseases spread rapidly and decimated the population. To this day some islands have been sparsely populated reflecting the consequences of epidemics of the 19th century (Vanuatu Ministry of Education, N.D.).

3.4.1 Population Growth rate

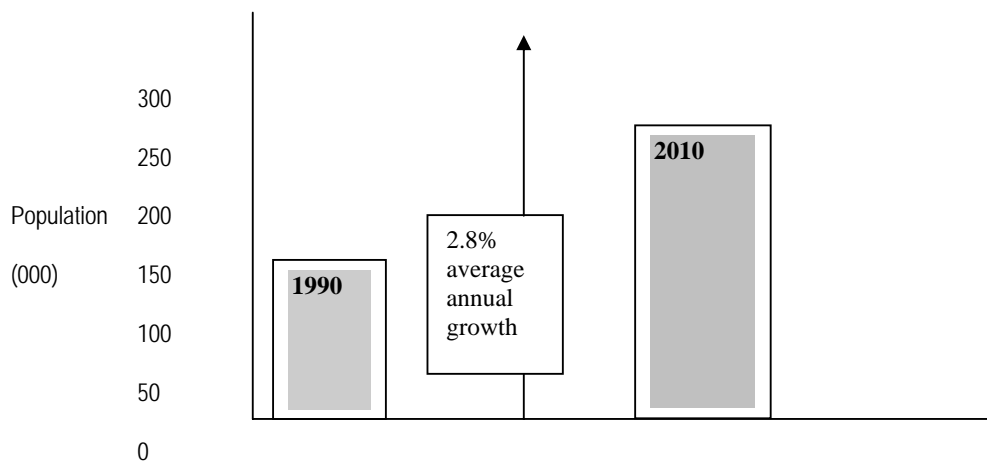
The population of Vanuatu is growing at a very fast rate. With the decline of mortality rate, coupled with a continuing high fertility rate, the annual growth rate averaged 2.6 percent between 1989 and 1999 (VNPSO, 1999). While the declining infant mortality rate indicates partial successes of the government services such as the health and education, the continuing high fertility rate amplifies the specific need of girls' education which may help to reduce fertility. Projections show that Vanuatu's population will be around 260,000 in 2010 (almost double the present level) (National center for Development Studies, 1994). This is illustrated in Figure 5 on the next page. With the increasing rate of population

growth, more schools had to be built and more teachers to cater for the growing population. World Bank (1991a) commented,

“Without more active family planning programs, population growth will continue to reduce substantially the benefits of growth and will further strain the limited capacities of governments to provide basic services and maintain adequate nutritional standards” (p. 65).

One of the basic services severely constrained by the population growth is education.

Figure 5: Projection of Vanuatu population growth to 2010



(Source: National Center for Development 1994, p.2)

3.4.2 Population Structure

Forty-four percent of ni-Vanuatu population is below the age of 15 and seventeen percent are under the age of 5 years. There are slightly more males (51%) than females (48%) and men dominate all age groups except between the ages of 20 – 34 years (UNICEF, 1998). The 1999 census report also revealed that the ‘age dependency ratio’ (the sum of

the young (0-14) and the old (64+) as a proportion of the working age group of 15 – 64) and amounts to 85.2% (VNPSO, 1999). This is very high compared to countries such as Australia, which has only 33% of its population being dependent on the working age group (ibid.). In a small country such as Vanuatu, this age structure also has its impact on the provision of girls' education, especially when education of girls is neglected by education authorities.

3.4.3 Density and the distribution of the population

About two thirds of the present population live on four islands (Efate, Santo, Malekula and Tanna). The rest of the population live in small, primarily remote coastal villages scattered throughout the archipelago as depicted in map 2 on page 63a. These islands have limited communications and transportation links to the two main urban centers (Vanuatu Ministry of Education, N.D.). Although Vanuatu is not a heavily populated country, it is becoming an urbanized and centralized society as more people are leaving the rural areas to settle in the two towns. The two urban centers, Port Vila and Luganville are increasing rapidly in size with 21.5 percent living in them (15.7 percent in Port Vila and 5.8 percent in Luganville). The 1999 census report showed that Port Vila has increased in size from 18,905 people in 1989 to 29,356 people in 1999 while Luganville has increased in size from 6,965 people in 1989 to 10,738 people in 1999 (VNPSO, 1999). This internal migration of people from one place to another particularly from rural to urban areas is also an important aspect of the study, as this will be used to investigate the impact this has on government services such as education. The internal migration of people from one place to another has also contributed to gender imbalance in education.

3.5. Economic Activity

The economy of Vanuatu with a land area of 12,000 square kilometers is dualistic, with most of the gross domestic output (GDP) coming from the services sector, and 80% of the population being supported by agriculture. The traditional sector comprises subsistence farming, which contributes about 20% to the GDP (Country Report, 1999). Although the economic performance of Vanuatu since its independence from its former French and British colonial rulers has been modest, a small country like Vanuatu does not function economically like the rest of the world due to its special characteristics. Many uncontrollable natural and human-made disasters affect the country's economy. Vanuatu's economy has suffered from natural disasters such as the severe cyclones that hit the country almost every year and earthquakes. The Current Reform Program (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997a) and UNICEF (1989) have further listed several reasons for the poor economic performance. The main reasons are:

- i) a generally poor standard of management in areas under government influence, largely because of poor skill transfer from expatriates to ni-Vanuatu and the appointment of senior managers on the basis of political affiliation rather than ability,
- ii) a high cost structure of business, making Vanuatu internationally uncompetitive,
- iii) continued duality of the economy, with inadequate linkage between the rural and the urban sectors; and consequently a slow rate of transfer of commercial attitudes and skills to the mainly rural ni-Vanuatu population,
- iv) low returns on public investment, mainly because of poorly chosen projects,
- v) deteriorating external terms of trade,
- vi) lack of economies of scale and remoteness from its major markets,

- vii) insufficient incentives for private sector development, and
- viii) political instability.

The above reasons result in declining GDP and economic growth. This in turn have an impact on government services like education and its planning and implementation processes.

3.6 Social Structure and its influence on gender values

The social structure in Vanuatu is principally patriarchal featuring men as the administrators or 'heads' of the societies. In the central part of the country, there are a few areas where women can attain chiefly titles, but do not play the role of an administrator (Republic of Vanuatu, 2004). Women's traditional roles and responsibilities in the societies include child rearing, household management, food production and family health and welfare. This still continues today. Men, on the other hand, hunt, fish or spend the day at the nakamal (a traditional meeting house) with other men. The late Grace Molisa, a representative in women's politics in Vanuatu rightly summed up when she said,

...women carry the world on their shoulders – mothers, teachers, growers, breeders, gatherers, weavers, they carry out 1001 onerous tasks, which facilitate the functioning of the social system. They are expected to be industrious, obedient, loyal, submissive, their investment in life and the future is having children, raising a family, and striving to give them a reasonable standard of welfare and prosperity" (VNCW Publication, Cited in UNICEF, 1998).

Reports from CEDAW, however, have shown some improvements in the status of women in Vanuatu where, *"more women are now employed in cash economy and in particularly in the labour force; women are speaking out and calling both government and society at large*

to be accountable to meet commitments; and women are taking a stand on issues that have been considered the domain of males" (Republic of Vanuatu, 2004, p. 9).

3.7 Education in Vanuatu

3.7.1 Education in Vanuatu in colonial times

Education in Vanuatu of colonial times may be divided into two distinct periods. Firstly the Christian missionaries introduced the Christian-style education in the early 1800s (Republic of Vanuatu, 1980). The missionaries' main intention in introducing the Christian-style education in the early 1800s was to Christianize and to teach Bible literacy to the locals. At that time it was more or less an informal mode of education and mainly adults attended classes taught by the missionaries. The main reading material at that time was the Bible and the medium of instruction was firstly the vernacular and then Bislama (Vanuatu's national language), English and French.

A more formal mode of Western-style education was introduced by Christian missionaries towards the end of the 19th century when schools were set up for students to attend. This was followed by a period when colonial powers formally introduced a system of education that produced the "educated" workers to run their system of government. This was achieved by working with and supported by the Christian missions. The colonial governments had indirect and weak control over education and introduced a system of education that was much similar to what they had in their own countries. Thus the English and the French established their own kind of schools.

In those days, according to '*storiari*' with old people at the community level, people had differing views about education or what old people at the community level referred to as

'skul blong waetman' (white man's school, education). An old man related, *"In those days, when 'misi' (missionary) wanted us to go to the 'mission' to learn A, B, C, we were afraid to go with him. Firstly, we were afraid of the 'tamaute' (white man) because he reminded us of ghosts. Secondly, misi wanted us to wear those pairs of trousers to the 'mission' and we did not like that because we thought we'd look funny in those outfits. We preferred our kastom clothing, mainly leaves wrapped around our waists"* (personal storian). Another old man interviewed liked schooling because he was able to spend more time singing and learning to speak the 'white man's language' (meaning English).

Women interviewed at the community level saw the 'white man's education' in those days as a 'vehicle' to use to quit *'kastom'*. They thought that living in *'kastom'* required a lot of work and commitment on their part. For instance, the wives had to raise as many as one hundred (100) pigs and plant yams for ceremonies like pig-killing ceremonies and marriage ceremonies. Many women also thought that the 'white man's education' offered by the *'misi'* was good as it has weakened and discouraged some of the *'kastom'* practices such as 'child marriages' (which had prevented many from receiving education offered by the missionaries in those days) and pig-killing ceremonies.

A more formal mode of higher education began towards the end of the 19th Century with the establishment of the Presbyterian Teachers Training Institute (T.T.I) on Tangoa Island, South Santo (Sanma province). The Training center aimed at training lay preachers and teachers for the church. Meanwhile the Church of Melanesia set up a training center at Vureas Bay in the Banks group (Torba province) (Republic of Vanuatu, 1980). According to Kalpokas (1980), in those early days, "the Condominium Government was not interested in running an education system, so voluntary agencies were allowed to develop education the way they wanted" (cited in Republic of Vanuatu, 1980, p. 231). Taurakoto (1972) further supported this statement by stating that, "It is clear that the two world Powers were

more concerned about the safety of the population from a sudden influx of sandalwood collectors and blackbirders, but did nothing about education" (p.4).

In the 1940s and 50s the two main education providers, the Presbyterian church and the Church of Melanesia sent a few of their students to the Solomon Islands and Fiji for higher education. The two churches advanced into opening the first High schools in the country, Onesua High School (Presbyterian) on Efate Island (Shefa province) and Vureas High school (Church of Melanesia) on Ambae (Penama province) in 1954 (ibid.).

The colonial rulers showed interest in Vanuatu's education only in late 1950s. In 1959 an increased interest in education was marked by the arrival of the first British Education Officer to the country. A meeting between the churches and the British Education Officer resulted in an agreed examination with a common standard for the primary school leavers. In 1959, primary students sat the then 'British Solomon Islands Protectorate Senior Primary Leaving Certificate'. With the help and initiative of the British National service to the then New Hebrides, Kawenu Teachers' College was opened in 1962 to train some of the first trained teachers of the country. In 1962, the British Secondary School (now Malapoa College) was opened (ibid.).

French education started in much the same way as the Anglophone schools. The main church that started the schools was the Roman Catholic Church in the 1940s in both the rural and the urban areas. The French provided free education then, that is, no schools fees were paid. All the teachers were paid by the French National Service. The French National service started building their own primary schools besides the British ones. According to Taurakoto (1972), the two education systems for a very small nation like Vanuatu have played an active part in dividing the population. He went on to rightly state

that, "When they (French and British) have successfully done their job in dividing the population we will all struggle together to find a solution which would bring an education system which would be common to all and therefore prepare the territory for self government" (p. 8).

What Taurakoto(1972) predicted came true in 1980. When Vanuatu achieved its independence in 1980, it was left with a dual education system: English and French. To this day these two languages English and French are the official languages used in the classrooms. It is also stated in the constitution, "The principal languages of education are English and French". Although attempts have been made since Independence to unify the system, what has been accomplished instead is the development of a common curriculum for both English-medium and French-medium schools (AusAID 1996). The dual education system for such a small population is a waste of finance, time, and personnel (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997a).

These have also provided some indication of the different approaches adopted by the Anglophones and Francophones. This study also aims to investigate with a view to find out if the development of these two school systems made any contribution to the under-representation of girls in the secondary education system in Vanuatu.

3.7.2. Post colonial education in Vanuatu.

The government of Vanuatu, since its independence from the former colonial rulers, sees education as a fundamental tool of development and was "committed to improving access to education to all citizens and to improving the quality and relevance of education to the modern world" (Johnstone 1994, p. 6581).

3.7.2.1 Goals of the Education system

One of the main objectives of the education sector in Vanuatu's first National Development Plan (DP1) was to ensure that *all* children over six years of age attend primary school (Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office, 1982). In Vanuatu's second Development Plan (DP2) the objectives included: i) increase in access to primary level and investigate the possibilities of introducing compulsory primary education for the total 6-12 age group. ii) give each child entering primary school the opportunity to complete a full primary course (Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office, 1987). The Ministry of Education formulated its long-term objective of ten years of high quality education for the majority of children. In the short to medium term, priority was placed on the improvement of quality across all levels of education in Vanuatu while striving for a sustainable expansion of the education system (Johnstone 1994).

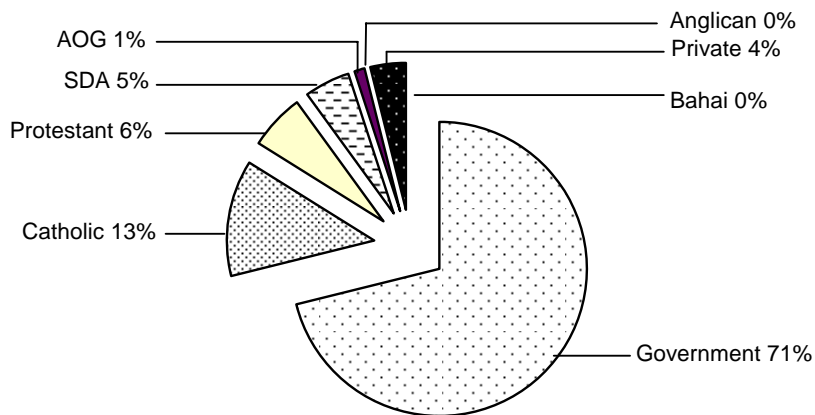
3.7.2.2 Educational Providers

The Ministry of Education is responsible for the formal education. Most of the formal education is provided in public schools, but there are also a number of schools with religious affiliations and some schools are run by private organizations (*ibid.*). In the year 2000, the government operated a total of 30 secondary schools. The government gives subsidies to support 16 of the church-run secondary schools either through direct funds to the schools or the government paying teachers in the church schools. There are 12 secondary schools that are privately owned and run. Due to the financial constraint faced by the government, it has not been able to provide financial support to the private schools. These private schools have been mainly operating from school fees paid by parents, the community or the promoter's support (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997b). These church-run and private secondary schools follow the government schools' curriculum and sit the

government external examinations (Vanuatu Ministry of Education, 2000; Johnstone, 1994).

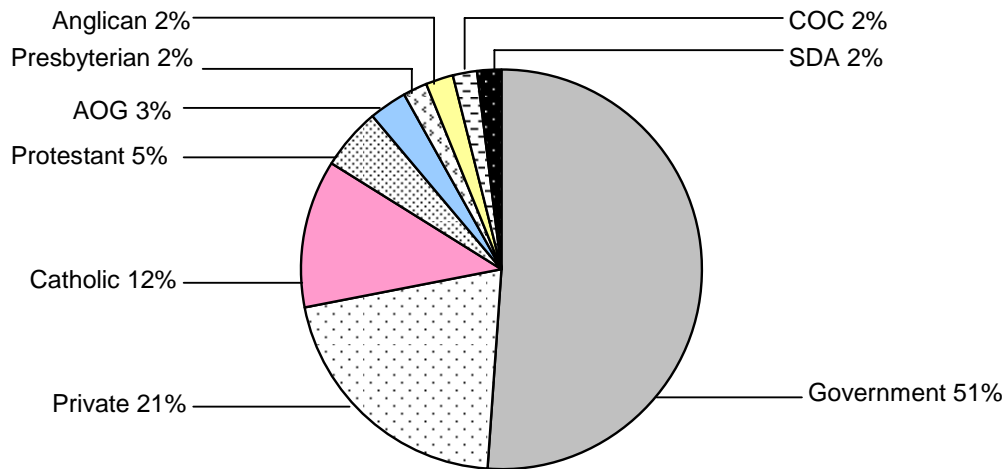
Thus churches in Vanuatu have also contributed to educational development by establishing both primary and secondary schools. Some churches have also established vocational schools for the school 'push-outs'. As shown in Figures 6 and 7 below, the churches run about 25% of the primary schools and 27% of the secondary schools. (*Vanuatu Ministry of Education 2000, p.5- 6*).

Figure 6: Primary schools by Administration.



(Source: Based on data from Vanuatu Ministry of Education 2000, p. 5).

Figure 7: Secondary schools by Administration

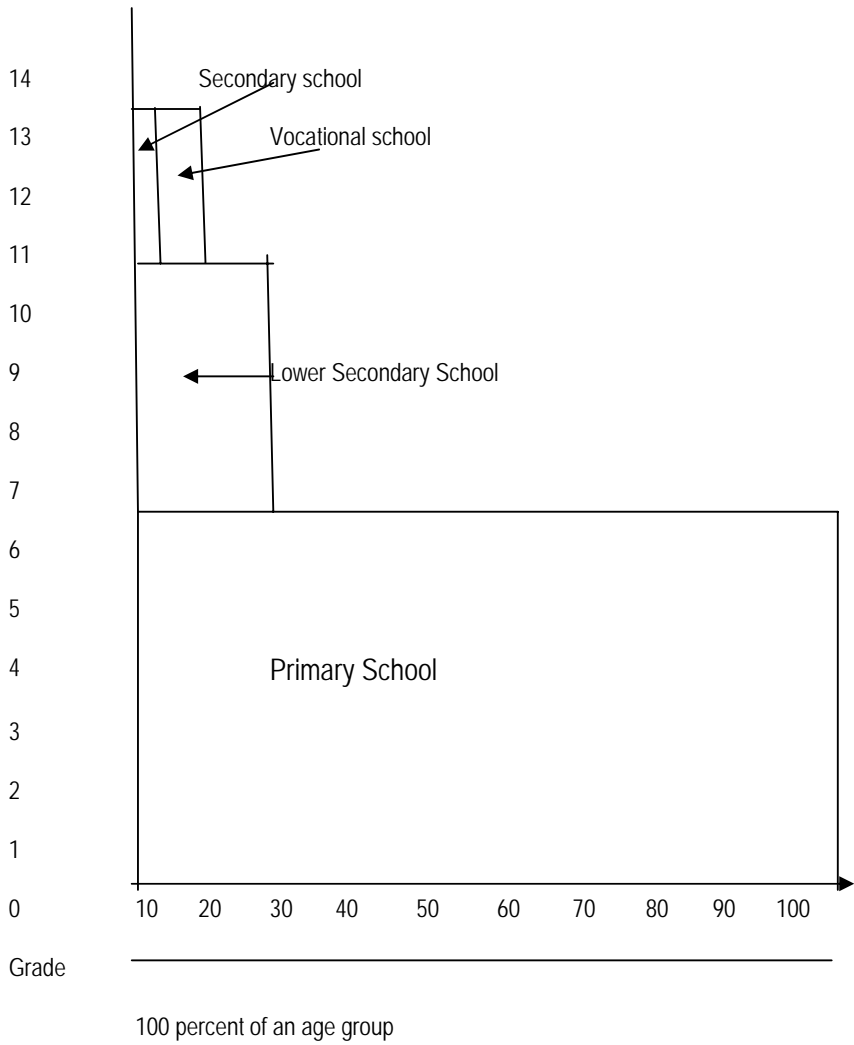


Source: Based on data from Vanuatu Ministry of Education 2000, p.6)

3.7.3 The structure of the formal education system in Vanuatu

The Vanuatu education system, as shown in Figure 8 below, provides six years of primary education, at the completion of which students sit the 'Year Six Leaving Examination' to determine their eligibility for secondary education. Secondary education consists of four years of junior secondary education and two to three years of senior secondary education. Students completing the four years of junior secondary education sit a 'Year ten (10) Leaving Examination' to determine eligibility for the senior secondary education. Some of the students who do not make it to the senior secondary cycle attend government-assisted vocational schools, INTV, in Port Vila. At the end of Year twelve, students sit the 'Pacific Secondary School Certificate' (PSSC). Students with top marks go on to do Year Thirteen Bursary. At the end of Year Thirteen (13), students take the University Entry Examination to determine their eligibility for tertiary studies.

Figure 8: Structure of the formal education system in Vanuatu



(Source: Johnstone 1984,p.6581)

The medium of instruction from primary to higher levels of education is either English or French. With the recent introduction of Vernacular Education, schools in the rural areas use the local dialects in pre-school and early years of primary education and some schools in the urban centers use the national language, Bislama.

3.7.3.1 Pre-school Education

To complement and supplement the informal education provided by the family and the community and to help prepare children for entry into the formal school settings, communities have set up Pre-schools in the communities to cater for the 3-5 year olds. Most pre-school education developments are planned through the Vanuatu Pre-School Association (Johnstone, 1994).

3.7.3.2 Primary schools and Secondary education

Primary schools are scattered over more than 60 islands. In 1984, it was reported that almost all ni-Vanuatu children had access to primary schools with more than 95 percent of 6 year olds enrolling in schools. Demand for places in primary is also increasing due to the high birthrates and also partly due to the urban drift (ibid.). By 2000 there was a total of 398 primary schools. These data are outlined in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Total number of Primary and Secondary schools in the country by Province.

Province	Primary schools	Secondary schools
TORBA	19	2
SANMA	79	13
MALAMPA	92	9
PENAMA	61	9
SHEFA	77	16
TAFEA	70	9
	398	58

(Source: Vanuatu Ministry of Education, 2000, p. 5).

Progress beyond primary schooling is by passing examinations. Students sit a Year six Leaving examination at the end of year six, then a Year Ten Leaving Examination at the

end of Year ten. Students at Year Twelve sit the 'Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate (PSSC) and students in year Thirteen sit a Bursary Examination preparing them for entry into University. With the availability of extension courses from the USP centre and at the USP's Emalus campus in Port Vila, students who do not make it to year thirteen take up USP preliminary courses.

Junior secondary schools have increased significantly since independence and especially through a major expansion program in 1986. In 1994, the total number of secondary schools reached 31. Fifteen (15) were government operated, 5 were government-assisted (Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and Church of Christ schools) and 11 were private schools (operated by SDA, Protestant churches and others). In 1986, the government added 11 new junior secondary schools utilizing existing primary school facilities (UNICEF, 1998). It is useful to see how this major expansion actually translated into equitable access to all sections and groups, particularly girls. By 1993, the government claimed to have provided junior secondary schools in all but one province. Nevertheless, only about 20-25 percent of primary graduates entered the junior secondary level (*ibid.*). In this context, this will investigate if the major expansion program in 1986 resulted in equal access to all students of secondary school age group, particularly girls.

3.7.3.3 Post-secondary Education

Access to post-secondary education within Vanuatu is limited to the newly established USP law school in Vila, the USP extension centers, Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education (VITE) for teacher training and Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT). Students wishing to continue on to tertiary level of education must attend overseas institutions (ADB, 1997). The University of the South Pacific (USP) has been the most popular choice for most students although some attend institutions in Papua New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand (UNICEF, 1998). Francophone students either go to New Caledonia or France to

do tertiary studies. Students studying overseas either are privately supported or are on government scholarships. The main scholarship sponsors are the Australian government (AusAID), New Zealand government (NZODA), UK, France and the CFTC (ibid.).

3.8. Summary

This chapter has outlined the contextual background of study. The factors affecting girls' participation in the education system are influenced by this context of Vanuatu with its special characteristics.

A small nation spreading over 12,000 square kilometers of land area has schools scattered over 60 islands. The villages are scattered around the coastal zones of the archipelago and have poor infrastructure and limited communication links to the urban centers. It has a rapid population growth rate, but a declining economy. There are over 100 dialects with Bislama, English and French as official languages. It has a dual education system (Francophone and Anglophone despite attempts to integrate them). The education system closely follows those of the colonial rulers and therefore inherited some of the legacies left behind by them.

Educational planning and policy formulation have to take into account these special characteristics so as to produce a policy that can be easily implemented in such a context to meet the aspirations of the weak and the vulnerable sections of the population, particularly the girls. The next chapter outlines the methodologies adopted to investigate the issues raised above.

Chapter 4

Methodology

4.1. Background

Previous chapters have discussed how educational providers and sponsors have put in much effort to provide primary education for all. Many developing countries, including Vanuatu, have tried to fulfill this objective by including it in their national development plans. However, *under-representation of girls in the secondary education system remains a major challenge*. While social and economical factors may affect girls' participation in education, the failure of educational planning and administration to appropriately address gender issues may also be contributing to the gender imbalance in the education system.

Therefore, the factors influencing girls' access to and participation in Vanuatu's Secondary Education system need to be investigated. Since there seems to be no other research done in this area by a ni-Vanuatu, this research aims at investigating these factors and to suggest strategies that may help improve girls' access to and participation in the secondary education system.

This research was carried out using a three stranded approach, which will be discussed in detail in this chapter. It is however more appropriate at this stage to look at the rationale behind choosing the research approach that this study took.

4.2. Rationale of main Research Approach chosen

According to Cohen and Manion (1984), humans try to understand the environment and solve their problems through '*experience, reasoning and research*' (p.11). One of the

immediate sources that both children and adults call upon to solve problems is from 'personal *experience*'. The person draws upon his or her "individually accumulated body of knowledge and skills derived from encounters and acquaintance with facts and events in his environment" (ibid.), to solve the problem at hand. If this fails, he or she turns to opinions of people, very often experts or older people in Pacific Island countries.

Others try to understand the environment and solve problems using *inductive and deductive reasoning*. According to Gay and Airasian (2000), inductive reasoning is based on developing generalizations from a limited number of specific observations or experiences. Deductive reasoning, on the other hand, is based on developing specific predictions from general principles, observations, or experiences. While these approaches to understanding the environment and to solve problems are commonly used, there are limitations. Gay and Airasian (2000) commented, "Relying on tradition inhibits change in one's perspective, thus stifling exploration and eliminating potentially new and fruitful understandings. As for depending solely on experts, even experts are not infallible" (p. 4). This is well illustrated by a story told about Aristotle:

Aristotle one day caught a fly and carefully counted and recounted the legs. He then announced that flies have five legs. No one questioned the word of Aristotle. For years his findings was uncritically accepted. Of course, the fly that Aristotle caught just happened to be missing a leg! (ibid.).

Relating this to educational problems and how educators try to solve educational problems, for example, challenging gender issues that are faced by the system, educators have been too dependent on personal experiences. Cohen and Manion (1984), in quoting Borg's (1963) words argued that,

“Perhaps a main reason for the slow and unsure progress in education has been the inefficient and unscientific methods used by educators in acquiring knowledge and solving their problems. An uncritical acceptance of authoritative opinion that is not supported by objective evidence and an over-dependence upon personal experience has been characteristics of the educator’s problem-solving technique”(p. 30).

Gay and Airasian (2000) have also supported this argument by stating that, “Personal experience can be subject to idiosyncratic interpretations and even prejudices. Moreover, most of us have relatively limited experience on many of the issues we might seek to understand” (p. 4).

However, while inductive and deductive reasoning and experience are of limited value when applied individually, they become very important when they are combined together as they provide, “rich fertile sources of hypothesis and questions about the world” (Cohen & Manion 1984: 11). They are generally more “viable than tradition, experts, personal experience, or inductive or deduction reasoning alone” (Gay & Airasian 2000, p. 4). This inductive-deductive approach, which is often described as a combination of ‘Aristotleian deduction’ and ‘Baconian induction’ (Cohen & Manion 1984) and more recently termed ‘scientific and disciplined inquiry approach’ (Gay & Airasian 2000), is very relevant for this study. Cohen and Manion (1984) quoted Mouly (1978) in describing this approach as,

“A back-and-forth movement in which the investigator first operates inductively from observation to hypothesis and then deductively from these hypotheses to their implications, in order to check their validity from the standpoint of compatibility with accepted knowledge. After revision, where necessary, these hypotheses are submitted to further test through the collection of data specifically designed to test their validity at the empirical level” (p. 14).

This combination of both experience and reasoning is what we simply call *Research* and is regarded as, “the most successful approach to the discovery of truth” (Cohen & Manion 1984, p. 15). Kerlinger (1975) has defined research as, “ the systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among natural phenomena”(p. 11). The three characteristics which distinguishes this approach from the other approaches discussed earlier are:

- i) Research is systematic and controlled, basing its operations on the inductive-deductive approach discussed above.
- ii) Research is empirical where the researchers turn to experience for validation.
- iii) Research is self-correcting because the scientific method has built-in mechanisms to protect the scientist from error as far as are humanly possible and his procedures and results are open to public scrutiny by fellow professionals.

(Cited in Cohen & Manion 1984, p. 15).

Research, being systematic and controlled consists of a special way of thinking and studying a particular phenomenon. This way of thinking about the conduct of study is called the *methodology*, which this chapter aims to outline. Cohen and Manion (1984), in quoting Kaplan's (1973) words, stated the aim of the methodology as,

To describe and analyze the methods, throwing light on their limitations and resources, clarifying their presuppositions and consequences, relating their potentialities to the twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge. It is to venture generalizations from the success of particular techniques, suggesting new applications, and to unfold the specific bearings of logical and metaphysical principles of concrete problems, suggesting new formulations (p. 26).

In summary, what Kaplan (1973) was trying to suggest was that the aim of methodology is to help us to understand not only the products of scientific inquiry but also the process itself (ibid.). Burgess (1984) went on to argue that research is no longer viewed as a linear model but as a social process. Therefore methodology “involves a consideration of research design, data collection, data analysis, and theorizing together with the social, ethical and political concerns of the researcher” (p. 2).

Methods, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998) are, “ a set of procedures and techniques for gathering and analyzing data” (p. 3). Strauss and Corbin (1998) went on to state that, “The importance of this methodology is that it provides a sense of *vision, where it is that the analyst wants to go along with the research*. The techniques and procedures (method), on the other hand, furnish the *means* of bringing that vision into reality” (p. 8).

Research methods use a variety of approaches. Therefore the researcher, according to Zelditch (1962), needs to ask questions such as: What kinds of methods are relevant for the particular topic under investigation? What kinds of information are relevant? How can the methods used be evaluated? (Cited in Burgess, 1985: 3). Burgess (1985) went on to say “A researcher who has a flexible research design and who utilizes a range of research methods can bring distinct advantages to a project “(p. 4). The researcher, in this study, has adopted a set of methods that “attempts to represent perceived reality more faithfully and fully than do present highly quantified and abstruse techniques”(Greenfield 1975, p. 92, Cited in Samate 1994). In other words, the researcher selected the methods taking into account the purpose, technique and research design appropriate for the research.

In this study, mainly qualitative research was employed. Qualitative approach, according to Gay and Airasian (2000) is, “ the collection of extensive narrative data in order to gain

insights into phenomena of interest" (p. 627). Qualitative approach was used in this study based on the belief that "meaning is situated in a particular perspective or context, and, since different people and groups often have different perspectives and contexts, there are many different meanings in the world, none of which is necessarily more valid or true than another" (ibid: 9). The South Pacific, for example, consists of many small countries with diverse cultures and social structures within each community. The factors influencing girls' participation in the education system may differ from society to society and even among different segments of a society. These factors may be cultural, social or economic. In this study, the researcher wanted to gain some in-depth information on factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system. Therefore qualitative approach was more appropriate. Quantitative methods were, however, not totally rejected as some quantitative means have been used such as tabulating data, working out percentages etc. during the data analysis process. Guba and Lincoln (1994), quoted by Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), have argued that, "Both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately with any research paradigm" (p. 21).

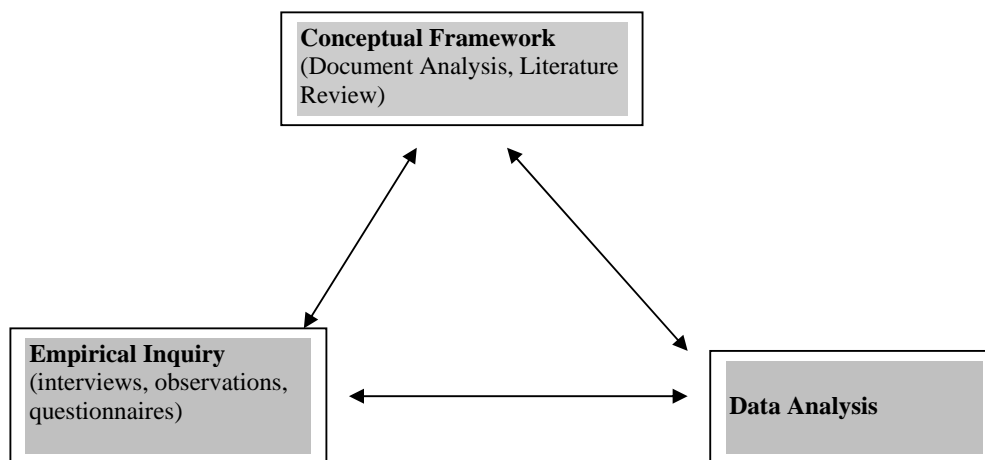
Contrasting the two methods, Driscoll and McFarland (1989) consider that quantitative methods often failed to come to terms with the complexity of social phenomena. Qualitative method, on the other hand, using techniques such as observation and in-depth interviewing can provide the researcher with insights into people's attitudes and the meaning of behavior. Because the aim of the research was to gather views and examine structural barriers that prevent girls from participating in the secondary school system in Vanuatu, the researcher used a variety of qualitative techniques such as observation, '*Taem blong Storian*' and semi-structured interviews or *storian* to collect data. The two later research approaches would be described later in this chapter.

The approach chosen also ensured that triangulation is served to enhance the credibility of this study. According to Gay & Airasian (2000), "Triangulation is a form of cross-validation

that seeks regularities in the data by comparing different participants, settings, and methods to identify recurring results" (p.252).

The researcher carried out the study using the following triangulation of methods outlined in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9: Triangulation of methods used in this study



4.3. Methodologies used in this study

As mentioned earlier, the researcher has adopted the inductive-deductive approach. The "backward-forward movement" (Cohen & Manion 1984) nature of this approach has made it very useful to the researcher as the researcher could go back and forth from the conceptual framework (document analysis and literature review in this study) to the empirical inquiry and vice versa checking for match and mismatch, if any, between what is written (in the documents), what is said (in interviews) and what is actually happening in the schools (observations in school and questionnaires). Bechhofer (1974) has argued that, "The research process ... is not a clear-cut sequence of procedures following a neat pattern but a messy interaction between the conceptual and empirical world, deduction and induction occurring at the same time" (Cited in Burgess 1985, p. 7).

The triangulation of methods is clearly outlined in figure 9 above. We will now look at the document analysis.

4.3.1 Document Analysis

In order to understand the status of girls in Vanuatu's secondary education system and also in other developing countries, document analysis was used to provide some background information. The researcher used two main sources. The first set of sources of data was from international literature such as those of the UNICEF, the World Bank, UNESCO publications and NGO's reports on education and gender. Writings of Dube (1988) and Fagerlind and Saha (1989) were also consulted to see the development issues in general. This is to see how 'development' has influenced and directed educational systems or the government to operate. The consequences of the approaches to development, one of which may be the inequitable distribution of educational resources. This may have resulted in the gender imbalance in the secondary education system.

The second source was the unpublished and published statistics from the Vanuatu Education Department, the Vanuatu National Development plans, Census reports, Vanuatu's Education Master Plan and annual reports. These documents were accessed through a good library search, especially from the 'Pacific Collection' section at the University of the South Pacific Library and the 'UNICEF' library in Suva. Some of the other documents were obtained from the Vanuatu Education department in Port Vila at the beginning of the year (2001).

The document analysis has led the researcher to understand the relevant theories and formulate appropriate hypotheses, which formed a basis for constructing interview questions, questionnaires and also assisted data analysis. It is therefore appropriate at this point to look at what theory means and the formulation of hypothesis.

A **theory**, according to Kerlinger (1975), is a "set of interrelated constructs (concepts), definitions, and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena" (p. 9). Cohen and Manion (1984) further added that, "in a sense, theory gathers together all the isolated bits of empirical data into a coherent conceptual framework of wider applicability" (p.17). Mouly (1973), quoted by Cohen and Manion (1984) expressed the view that, "If nothing else, a theory is a convenience – a necessity, really – organizing a whole sloughs of unasserted facts, laws, concepts, constructs, principles, into a meaningful and manageable form. It constitutes an attempt to make sense out of what we know concerning a given phenomenon" (ibid.). Theories that are formulated need to be seen in context and must be tested empirically. Hypotheses derived from theories, therefore, play an important role in this study as they are used as the 'working instruments' (Kerlinger 1975) which formed the main basis for observations, interview questions and questionnaires, and finally the data analysis.

Hypothesis is defined by Kerlinger (1975) as, "a conjectural statement of the relationship between two or more variables" (p. 18). It has been also described as an 'educated guess' (Cohen & Manion 1984). The importance of hypotheses, according to Kerlinger (1975) are:

- i) They help organize the efforts of the researcher. The relationships expressed in the hypotheses indicate what he should do and they also enable him/her to

understand the problem with greater clarity and provide him/her with a framework for collecting, analyzing and interpreting his data.

- ii) They are the 'working instrument' of theory, which can be deduced from theory and from other hypotheses.
- iii) They can be tested empirically or experimentally, thus resulting in confirmation or rejection of the hypothesis.
- iv) They are powerful tools for advancement of knowledge.

(Cited in Cohen & Manion 1984, p. 21).

Kerlinger (1975) went on to say that a good hypothesis should:

- state the relationship between the variables
- carry clear implications for testing these relationships
- be compatible with existing knowledge
- be expressed as concisely and clearly as possible.

The above were taken into account in formulating the hypothesis for this research.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) have rightfully stressed that, " When hypothesizing begins, the researcher, even if so disposed, can no longer remain a passive receiver of impressions, but is naturally drawn into actively finding data pertinent to developing and verifying his/her hypothesis"(p. 289). This active process of finding the data and following up with the data analysis was undertaken in this study.

4.3.2. Empirical Inquiry

Cohen and Manion (1984) have suggested that, "After revision...these hypotheses are submitted to further test through the collection of data specifically designed to test their validity at the empirical level" (p.14). To test the validity of the hypotheses formulated, data gathering was necessary.

The main techniques used to collect data were:

- i) observation in selected schools in Vanuatu
- ii) semi-structured interviews or *storian* at the System, Institutional and Community Level
- iii) administration of Questionnaire
- iv) "*Taem blong Storian*" (Fijian version of Talanoa): Informal conversation and discussion at the community level.

It was necessary that the researcher used more than one technique to collect data. This enabled triangulation of data derived from and analysis based on the different methodologies has enabled the researcher to obtain a more balanced view of the factors influencing girls' participation in the secondary education system.

These instruments or techniques are discussed in detail later in the chapter. However, before the instruments used to collect data are discussed in detail, gaining access and selecting research participants are discussed.

4.3.2.1. Gaining access and making initial contacts with the research participants.

Data collection in qualitative research is generally lengthy and in-depth. Therefore, how the researcher gains access to the research setting and makes contact with the potential participants from the very beginning is very important. The two important aspects of gaining entry, according to Gay and Airasian (2000) are *negotiation* and *compromise* between the researcher and the 'gatekeepers' (in this study, the Education Directors, the Principals of the secondary schools and the Community Leaders). These gatekeepers needed to be informed of the purpose of study, timing of study and how the findings would be used (ibid.). The process, which the researcher took in this study to fulfill these requirements, is described in detail in this section.

i) Making initial contacts with Interviewees at the System Level:

The researcher wrote letters (see Appendix 2) to six (6) Education Directors of the different school systems (administered by different religious bodies and the government) in Vanuatu to ask for their approval for interviews. In the content of the letter sent, the researcher outlined the purpose of study, timing of the research and the uses of findings. The researcher further asked for the interviewees' support and cooperation, agreement to be interviewed, an indication of their availability for the interviews, and assured the respondents of anonymity and confidentiality.

To people who do not know Vanuatu well, it is often called the 'Timeless Islands'. As the name suggests, time may not be strictly kept, which means that, there could be delays in replies to letters or no replies at all. In fact this can be very frustrating, especially to people who do not understand how people 'in this part of the world' live and go about doing things. Being a ni-Vanuatu, the researcher had expected that to happen. There was only one Education Director of one of the church administered schools who contacted the

researcher by phone to confirm the interview. For others who did not reply, this may not necessarily mean that they 'do not want see your face in their offices'.

When the first strategy failed, the researcher used an alternative strategy to gain access to the interviewees at the system level. She approached the Education Directors who did not reply, personally, in their offices to seek their approval for the interviews. Three of the six Education Directors who did not reply acknowledged the letters, but were not able to reply in time said they were expecting me. These three Education Directors did give the researcher approval to be interviewed. Two other Education Directors were on a tour to the outer islands of the country so could not be reached for an interview.

ii) Gaining access to the selected secondary schools

The strategy used in this study to initially make contacts with the principals of the selected schools was a brief personal call at six of the secondary schools and two of the secondary schools were contacted by telephone.

With the brief call at the six secondary schools, the researcher simply asked the secretary at each school if the principal was available for her to have a 'brief talk with'. Once inside the room the researcher explained why she was there. The researcher did not use the word 'interview', as she thought it might cause a barrier between her and the principal. The researcher did not find it necessary to write them a letter requesting permission to visit the schools because she had very limited time to do the research and as mentioned earlier, the principals might or might not reply her letter in time. Moreover, the researcher, having known the principals of the selected secondary schools, thought that writing them a letter would make her approach far too formal which again could create a barrier between her and the principals.

There were two secondary schools the researcher had to get to by boat as they were located in the off - shore islands in Santo. So the researcher found it necessary to initially call the school using the telephone and asked to talk to the principal. Once the principal was on the telephone, the researcher explained her intended visit to the school. Again she was careful not to use the word 'interview' over the phone. The researcher used the word '*storian*', a Bislama (Vanuatu's national language) word meaning 'to chat' or 'tell a story'.

None of the principals refused the researcher access to the schools. There was one principal who suggested another time rather than the time the researcher proposed to visit the school because the Vanuatu's President, Hon. John Bani was on an official visit to that particular secondary school. The researcher had to reschedule her visit to the school. Overall, the researcher did not have much access problems. The educational leaders in all the secondary schools visited were very cooperative.

iii) Making initial contacts with people at the Community Level.

1. 'Taem blong Storian'

In the community, the researcher personally went through a Church Elder to seek permission to meet with his people. She explained to the church elder the purpose of the '*Taem blong storian*'. The church elder thought it was a very important matter to have discussions on and so very willingly allowed her to talk to his people. Again there was no written consent given. 'Word of mouth' is regarded a stronger means of communication between people in the communities. The researcher was, however, careful not to use the word 'meeting'. As she found out, people in that particular area were not too fond of 'meetings' as meetings were often called to discuss 'problems' so the researcher made sure she used another word. The researcher used the phrase '*Taem blong Storian*' meaning 'a time to chat', which has a more acceptable connotation. That little phrase

worked like a magic—there was a very good turn out that evening. This will be discussed in detail later on in this chapter.

2. Individual Interviewees at the Community level:

The researcher went personally to the homes of the people she wanted to interview in the community. Again, back in the communities, the researcher made sure she did not use the word 'interview'. People are not too comfortable with that word and that can jeopardize the quantity and quality of information one intends to collect. The researcher used the word '*storian*'. She also brought with her some gifts such as a kilogram of sugar or a kilogram of rice or some washing soap to give to the people interviewed in the community. That, in the researcher's culture, helps better strengthen the relationship between a researcher and the respondents, as they will no longer treat you as a stranger trying to 'steal' information, but a friend to talk to. The researcher also found that offering to sit on the floor instead of sitting on the chair and carrying out the '*storian*' in places like the kitchen or under the shades of trees helped erase any cultural or hierarchical barriers and thus build good rapport between the researcher and the participants.

4.3.2.2 Selection of Participants

In qualitative research, a sample is selected because of some phenomena of interest (Gay & Airasian 2000). Qualitative researchers, according to Gay and Airasian (2000) choose participants whom they "judge to be thoughtful and who have information, perspectives, and experiences related to the topic of the research" (p.139). In this study, the researcher carefully selected key persons who were thought to possess and are likely to give in-depth information about factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's

secondary education system and how the system may be playing a part by failing to address the issues. The selection was also based on factors indicated by Samate (1994) such as: their current posts at the time of the interview; the significance of their roles to the questions under investigation; their experience and expertise in their specific areas.

As indicated earlier in the chapter, one of the main aims of the fieldwork was to see if what the respondents said matched or did not match with what was written in the educational documents of Vanuatu and why. Therefore, the researcher decided that it was appropriate to interview some of the Education Directors from both the government and non-government system of schooling at the system level. She also chose to interview some principals and teachers at the institutional level and also some people at the community level. The selection of key informants is summarized in Table 7 on the next page.

Table 7 : Interviews at different levels

Level	Position of Interviewee	Number of people the researcher proposed to interview	Total number of people actually interviewed
System	Education Directors for both Government and Non-government systems.	6	4
Institution	-Principals of Government schools	4	4
	-Principals of Government assisted schools	3	3
	-Principals of Private schools	3	3
Community	-Chief	2	2
	-Women	4	4
	-Youth	2	2
Total number of people interviewed		24	22

Equally important are what is happening in the schools may be different from what is written in the documents or may be different from what the interviewees at the system level said, especially concerning educational resources to meet girls' enrolment in the schools. Therefore it was necessary to personally visit the schools to see the facilities available in the schools and how they are organized and utilized. The schools were selected based on their accessibility and those that showed marked differences between enrolments of

girls and those of the boys in these schools. There were a total of eight secondary schools visited (seven schools in Sanma province and one in Shefa province). Observations and interviews were carried out in these schools. The secondary schools visited in Sanma province are shown in Figure 10 on page 94a.

With regard to schools where the researcher could not personally visit, questionnaires were used to gather data. These secondary schools are located in the Penama, Malampa and Tafea provinces. Secondary data such as school mapping reports were also used to collect data from schools that had the school Mapping reports. The researcher used schools mapping reports for secondary schools in Torba and Shefa province.

At the community level, the researcher selected Avunatari community on Malo Island, Sanma Province to carry out the '*Taem blong Storian*' (see Figure 10). This community was particularly chosen because of easy access to the community. As the study concerns gender issues, the researcher decided that during the '*team blong storian*', boys and men should also be invited as women could not be looked at in isolation. Scheyvens (1994) also shares this view.

4.3.2.3 Techniques Used to Collect Data and Data Collecting strategies

1(i) Interviews:

In this study, interviews were the most extensive and intensive form of collecting data. According to Gay and Airasian (2000), an interview is, a "purposeful interaction, usually between two people, focussed on one person trying to get information from the other person" (p.219). Reinharz (1992) further argued that interviewing is particularly relevant to studies of women as:

Interviewing offers researchers access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher. This asset is particularly important for the study of women because in this way learning from women is an antidote to centuries of ignoring women's ideas altogether or having men to speak for women (p. 19).

This was particularly useful and revealing as they were talking to and interacting with a ni-Vanuatu woman researcher.

The purposes of interviews, according to Cohen and Manion (1984, p. 243) are:

1. They are the principal means of gathering information that have direct bearing on the research objectives. Interviews make it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs) and why a person acts or behaves in a particular way.
2. They are to test hypotheses or to suggest new ones or as an explanatory device to help identify variables and relationship.
3. It may be used in conjunction with other methods in a research undertaking.

These guided the researcher in her interview during the fieldwork.

(ii) Preparation for the interviews

After selecting the key interviewees for the study, the researcher formulated questions for the interviews. In writing out the interview questions, the researcher has followed very closely Cohen and Manion's (1984) advice on formulating interview questions. The researcher made sure that the research objectives were translated into interview questions

and that the questions were relevant to what the researcher was trying to find out. The complete set of questions that were asked during the interviews is found in appendix 3.

The researcher followed Tuckman's (1970) advice very closely in rehearsing the questions and preparing for the interviews. The main points in Tuckman's (1970) advice, which helped the researcher in preparing for the interviews, are summarized below:

1. Brief the respondent as to the nature or purpose of the interview (being as candid as possible without biasing responses) and attempt to make the respondent feel at ease
2. Explain the manner in which he or she will be recording responses, and if he/she plans to tape record, he/she should get the respondent's assent,
3. An interviewer must remember that he or she is a data collection instrument must not to let his or her own biases, opinions, or curiosity affect his or her behavior.
4. It is important that the interviewer should not deviate from his or her format and interview schedule although many schedules will permit some flexibility in choice of questions.
5. The respondent should be kept from rambling away from the essence of a question.

(Cited in Cohen & Manion, 1984: 256).

The researcher chose the semi-structured interview format for use in this study. It was prepared on the basis of the review of literature and the tentative conceptual framework. One good advice Fetterman (1989) provided was the researcher should be well prepared and that he or she should enter the field with "an open mind, not an empty head"(p. 19). The researcher had made sure that everything was carefully planned and the questions were carefully discussed with the academic supervisor and moderators.

The researcher chose this interview format because the format has an “open situation” and a “greater flexibility and freedom” (Cohen & Manion 1984). It also has the following advantages:

- they are flexible and they allow the interviewer to probe so that he may go into more depth if he or she chooses, or clear any misunderstandings
- they enable the interviewer to test the limits of a respondent's knowledge
- they encourage cooperation and help establish rapport
- they allow the interviewer to make a truer assessment of what the respondent really believes.
- open situations can also result in unexpected or unanticipated answers, which may suggest hitherto unthought-of-relationships or hypotheses (ibid: 247).

(iii) At the Actual Interviews:

In the actual interviews, the researcher had approached this as more of a conversation or '*storian*' rather than an interview. During the interview, the researcher found it necessary to show the respondent that she understood him/her and that the researcher shows an interest in what he or she was saying. The researcher listened carefully throughout the interview, reassured the respondents by using such words as, 'Yes' or ' yes, *yu talem tru*' (yes you're right) or repeating the end of the respondents' statements. The researcher also used non-verbal communication such as nodding, smiling and laughing at any jokes. These helped keep the respondents more relaxed and talked freely about issues under discussion. Most of the interviews went on for longer than planned, which, the researcher found beneficial, as she was able to get more information from the interviews. Two respondents (an Education Director and a principal), after the interviews, prayed before the

researcher left the office. This, in ni-Vanuatu culture, has shown a great support for the study, which greatly inspired the researcher.

While the researcher had some structured, but open-ended questions on a piece of paper to ask the interviewees, the sequence and wordings of the questions were totally in the hands of the researcher. The researcher started the interview with some very general questions and then moved on to more controversial ones for example, questions as to why there are less number of women on the decision-making bodies and questions concerning finances.

The researcher had three basic choices of recording data during the interview; that is, to either take notes during the interview, write notes after the interview or to tape-record the interview. In other societies the last choice would be the most viable. In this study, however, the researcher found out from the first interview that the person interviewed was not too comfortable with the tape-recorder. The researcher, therefore, resorted to writing down notes during and after the interview in a notebook. Although the researcher had recorded most of what was said during the interview, the researcher only extracted what was relevant for analysis from the respondents' answers.

2 *Observations made during school visits*

While observations in qualitative research are usually used to record behaviors (Johnson, 1994), the observation used in this study was mainly to record the nature and conditions of educational resources, especially boarding facilities available in the schools for girls. Because of the nature of this approach, the researcher took the role of a non-participant observer. The observation process involved physically going into the girls' compounds within the school, observing and recording the condition and number of facilities, for

example, the dormitories, toilets, and laundry etc. The in-dorm observation involved observing and recording the condition and the number of beds and other facilities inside the girls' dormitories. These observations were made in the least intrusive manner as was possible and with a minimum of comments as to what were observed.

The researcher had some questions drawn up in a tabulated form in her notebook, which she referred to during the observation. The researcher then recorded her findings in the Table (see Appendix 5).

3. Questionnaire

Besides time and financial constraints, empowerment is one of the important aspects of this research. Therefore the questionnaire technique of collecting data was used. A questionnaire, according to Johnson (1994), "empowers the respondent, who may read all the questions before completing any, may complete and return the questionnaire at a time convenient to themselves or fail to complete the questionnaire at all" (p. 37). The questionnaires (see Appendix 4) were sent to twenty secondary schools that the researcher could not physically visit. These schools are located in the Penama, Malampa and Tafea provinces. The researcher collected the names and addresses of these secondary schools from the Department of Education in Port Vila.

To ensure a better return of the questionnaires, the researcher took the following measures:

- A one-page covering letter was also sent with the questionnaire. The letter indicated the aim of the survey, the importance of the survey, how the findings will be used. The letter also assured the respondents of confidentiality and anonymity

- A self-addressed (typed) and stamped envelope for the respondents' reply was also sent with the questionnaire
- The researcher made sure that there was plenty of space for the respondent to write in and that the layout was simple and attractive.

Most of the suggestions made by Cohen and Manion (1984) in developing an ideal questionnaire have been taken into account. These are:

"It is clear, unambiguous and uniformly workable. Its design must minimize potential errors from respondents... and coders. And since people's participation in surveys is voluntary, a questionnaire has to help in engaging their interest, encouraging their cooperation, and eliciting answers as close as possible to the truth" (p. 80).

4. *Taem blong Storian*

This term was coined by the researcher to refer to a traditional way of people gathering and discussing matters of common interest in an informal and open-ended way at the community level. '*Taem blong storian*', similar to the Fijian 'Talanoa', is an informal and unstructured group discussion. '*Taem blong Storian*' is a Bislama phrase meaning 'a time to tell stories or a time to chat together'.

In particular, dealing with gender issues and, as discussed in chapter two about the empowerment that women and girls needed, the researcher thought it would be appropriate at the community level to use some empowerment strategies during the '*Taem blong Storian*'. This would not only help the participants learn about it themselves, but also allow space "for marginalised groups to speak for themselves and define their situation" (Johnson, 199, p.19), as the researcher seeks to "harness the opinions of research

participants and encourages them to see that they have knowledge or beliefs which are of interest and importance to others" (Scheyvens, 1994 p. 91-92). The researcher also did not want the research participants to assume that they "will be there to be 'used' by the researcher at will" (ibid. p. 91).

The researcher in this study did not want to just gather participants together in the community and 'throw' some lectures and questions at them. So the researcher decided that teaching the women and men some cooking during the '*Taem blong Storian*' would be very appropriate. The researcher decided to teach the men and women how to prepare and cook gluten (see Appendix 6 for the recipe). The researcher thought that this would be the best recipe to teach as it involves two major steps. Step one involved extracting the gluten portion from wheat flour and the second step involved cooking the gluten. There was a one-hour waiting period between steps 1 and 2, and the researcher utilized the intervening period to get into informal discussions to collect data.

On the evening the "*Taem blong Storian*" took place, there was a good turn out of twenty women, ten men and five boys. We had mats put outside on the lawn since it was a beautiful afternoon so we had men and women very relaxed under the shades of breadfruit trees. Back in the villages it was proper for prayers to be offered before any meetings could take place. An elder in the villager said a prayer before the researcher introduced the purpose of the '*taem blong storian*'.

The researcher, as mentioned earlier, did not want to dominate the talking or demonstration. So she let the participants do the actual cooking themselves while guided by the researcher. The recipe involving mainly wheat flour, which was easily purchased from the local '*Cooperative Store*' in the village, was shared among the women and men.

It took about ten minutes to complete step one of the cooking then the one-hour waiting period was utilized by the researcher to guide the participants into some informal discussions based on open-ended questions already prepared for this purpose.

Throughout the cooking session, the researcher had the chance to chat with individuals and quickly wrote down relevant information from the informal discussions. The findings from the 'Team blong Storian' will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Overall, the session went really well for two main reasons:

- i) The session had benefited both the researcher and the participants. The researcher was able to collect information from them and the participants were able to learn from the cooking demonstration.
- ii) The atmosphere, being a very relaxed one and the use of mainly '*Tamabo*' (Malo's native language) allowed the participants to interact and to speak freely and openly about the issues raised.

4.4 Reflection: Did the actual fieldwork turn out as planned?

According to Scheyvens (1994), the researcher needed to look back at the research in practice and ask questions such as, How well did the fieldwork plan work in practice? What problems were encountered during fieldwork? These questions need to be addressed, not only to evaluate one's approach to research but to help other researchers as well for future research.

4.4.1 Implementation of the fieldwork plan.

The fieldwork in Vanuatu was undertaken from the 22nd June to the 19th July 2001. This was about four weeks of fieldwork. However, the original plan was for a six weeks fieldwork. The researcher had planned to spend three weeks in the Sanma province, visiting secondary schools, interviewing and carrying out observations, two weeks on Tanna (Tafea province) to visit schools and carry out interviews and observations and one week in Port Vila to interview respondents at the system level. Factors beyond the researcher's control have caused such discrepancies, which, this section sets out to highlight. The rather short time, however, did not prevent the researcher from collecting necessary data.

Although no natural disaster or political unrest had interrupted the researcher's fieldwork in Vanuatu, the timing to carry out research, particularly in the month of July, was not too convenient for many, especially the education sector in Vanuatu. This is mainly due to conferences scheduled for teachers and school principals; government official tours to the schools; activities like the Inter-secondary school sports; and preparation for the country's independence festivities during this month. For example, after arriving in Port Vila from Fiji, the researcher went into the Education Department in Vila to seek approval for an interview with the Director General of Education. The researcher was told he would not be available that day as he was going with Vanuatu's President, Honorable John Bani, on his one-week official tour to the secondary schools in Sanma Province, the province the researcher had booked to fly to the very next day to carry out school visits! The researcher knew that she had to reschedule her school visits so that she did not have clashes with the President's visit. The researcher collected a 'President's official visit program' from the Education Department in Vila, and by studying the President's program of visit closely she then rescheduled her school visits. By following the rescheduled plans the researcher successfully visited seven of nine schools selected for visit in Sanma province.

The Friday the researcher planned to run the '*Taem blong storian*' with people in the community of Avunatari, Malo Island, similar events were taking place. There was a big fundraising for the 'Church session' and that required everyone to contribute to, as it was a church function. However, such situations were not wasted and the researcher found that opportunity very welcoming, as she was able to talk with other people, including a church pastor, during the fundraising. The researcher found it rather impolite to write things down in front of people so she quickly wrote the things she heard from people the moment she got back to where she had stayed that night. The '*taem blong storian*' was postponed to the Monday instead.

The researcher had spent a total of three weeks in the Sanma province, visiting schools and interviewing individuals at the system, institutional and community level. In Santo she chose to stay with relatives. In that way she was able to get information on women's situations from casual conversations with the women and men who came to visit. On the days she did not go to visit the schools, she visited the local market house to chat with the ladies. The researcher was able to gather a lot of data from those casual conversations as well.

The researcher spent the length of time in Santo and Vila as planned, but the plans to visit the secondary schools in Tafea province were cancelled and questionnaires were sent to the schools instead. Events beyond her control prevented the researcher from implementing the plans to visit schools in Tafea province. While carrying out interviews at the system level in Vila, the following news item appeared in the Fiji Times (Fri. 13th July 2001, Issue no. 167). The Headline read, "*Closure Threat over Airport*", and the first sentence read, "*Landowners have threatened to close Nadi International Airport if their demands are not met within seven days*" (p. 1). On hearing that news, the researcher had to make two choices: whether to continue with the school visits to Tafea province or take the next flight back to Fiji before the situation intensified. The researcher had two small

daughters in Suva, Fiji, with their father, while the researcher was on fieldwork in Vanuatu with her eighteen months old son. The researcher took the choice, as a concerned mother would naturally do in this case; she and her baby took the next available flight back to Suva, Fiji.

4.4.2 Resources and Costs

Collecting secondary data posed some inconvenience. Most of the secondary sources that were used for this research were found mainly in the 'Pacific Collection' section in the University of the Pacific (USP) library. Students were only allowed three hours to use materials borrowed from the Pacific Collection section and the materials were not allowed to be removed from the library. While the UNICEF library in Suva has some very invaluable information on gender and education in third world countries, the library staff were often reluctant to allow outsiders borrow books from the library as past experiences showed them that many did not return books once borrowed. I was fortunate, however, to borrow books from their library but was limited to just a one-week loan. Sources on Vanuatu were often incomplete or out-of-date.

Another problem encountered during the fieldwork was finance. While the researcher's sponsor eventually agreed to fund the research (the earlier reluctance to fund the research was due to the sponsor not wanting it to be "a precedent for future research students" (E-mail content)), the researcher did not get direct funds from the sponsors. The funding was on 'reimbursement basis', which simply meant that the researcher had to initially meet all the costs and then get them reimbursed. This, on the part of the researcher, had somewhat limited the scope of her research. For example, there were two secondary schools in Sanma province the researcher had planned to visit, but after finding out travel costs to the school, the researcher decided not to visit as it was too expensive. But the researcher was able to send questionnaire for their response and return.

4.4.3. Evaluation of Techniques used to collect data

Interviewing in general went very well. The semi-structured interview format allowed the researcher to gain a wider perception of people's views and was able to inquire deeper into ideas emerging from the dialogue.

This, however, did not mean that the researcher entirely prevented errors that might have crept into the interviews to affect the data collected. In interviews, people did not often tell an interviewer all the things the interviewer might have wanted to know. Sometimes too what people said they do was not always the same as what they did or what they intended to do. Altrigher, Posch and Somekh (1993) suggested that these may be due to

“selective memory, rationalization, difficulty of the topic, personality and status of the interviewer, the presence of a tape recorder, and the social and environmental framework in which the interview takes place (often very different from normal conversation)” (p. 109).

These were considered well before the interviews. It is here that observations and document analysis helped to get closer to 'reality'.

Casual conversations also took place with mothers whenever chances arose. The researcher had a very good conversation with a mother while travelling from one of the villages to another using one of the 'Island transports' (in a Toyota 4-wheel drive). The mother told the researcher how regretful she was that she had to remove her daughter from school so as to give the son a chance to continue with his education. She told the researcher she did not see any reason why her daughter had to go to school then. Realizing now the importance of education, she wished she had let her daughter complete her schooling. She added looking at the researcher with tears in her eyes, "*You never know, she may be like you now being able to 'go places' and help support me and the father financially*" (Personal interview). It presented an unplanned informal situation for the interview.

The 'Taem blong storian' with the people at the community level was useful, as women spoke up in a more natural way than in the typical face-to-face interview. The researcher was glad to see the women talking freely among themselves and in front of others because in almost all communities in Vanuatu, public speaking is not regarded traditionally as a woman's role. Many women were shy to speak up, especially to make comments or make criticisms in front of men. The issues raised during the 'taem blong storian' also helped them see the importance of education for girls. One participant commented, "*There should be more gathering of this sort. I have a daughter who is not in school because I did not see it important for her to attend school. I have learnt a lot from this session*".

Although the researcher had taken some proactive measures, as discussed earlier, to ensure large returns, there were some drawbacks in the use of mailed questionnaires. Kerlinger (1975) had this to comment on the use of questionnaire in a research:

Although it has been popular in educational research, it has some serious drawbacks unless it is used in conjunction with other techniques. Two of these defects are possible lack of response and the inability to check the response given (p. 414).

The researcher found that the mechanism she used to record data was adequate. She mainly used a notebook to write down notes from interviews. She found that the people interviewed did not mind her taking notes while they were talking. She tried to use the tape recorder to record one of the interviews, but the researcher found that the interviewee was not too comfortable with the tape recorder so she decided not to use the tape recorder with the other interviews.

4.4.4 Personal Reflection: How might others perceive the researcher and how this might affect data collecting process?

One important thing that the researcher tried to keep in mind was how the research participants would perceive her and how this might affect the data collecting process. Therefore how the researcher presented herself in the field was very important.

Driscoll & McFarlane(1989) had warned that, "The gender, class, race, and educational status of the researcher as well as his/her institutional affiliation, may all set up patterns of power and subordination" (p. 186). The researcher in trying not to set up these patterns of power and subordination, especially at the community level, wore casual dresses, had flip-flop on and on some occasions walked barefoot. The researcher used an exercise book instead of a notebook computer, and it was carried around in a pandanus woven basket. The researcher carried out interviews using '*Bislama*', the national language at the system and institutional level and used the dialect with people who spoke the same dialect as the researcher.

Being a female researcher can have both advantages and disadvantages in a research. The researcher in this study found out that being a woman, a mother, and at the same time a student carrying out research with an eighteen-month-old baby inspired many ladies, especially those who could not go on with education because, 'they were married and had children to look after'. One of the female interviewees commented, "*I do not see why women should use motherhood as an excuse not to continue with further education. If you can do it and having to look after a baby while doing a research, why can't others*" (personal interview).

Being a woman interviewer can also be a disadvantage especially if the female interviewer deals with issues that men see as a threat to them. For example, one of the questions during the fieldwork was why there were fewer or no women in the decision-making bodies of schools. This question made many of the male interviewees pause, think for some time, before giving an answer. One male interviewee replied, "*Well, I do not know why, really?*" (Personal interview). Another replied, "*It was good you asked that question. I will make sure there are women representatives in our school council in future*". Others tried to defend themselves, for example, a principal replied, "*We have only one lady in the school council, but she dominates the discussions*" (personal interview).

Respect for older people is a strong cultural value in Vanuatu societies therefore the researcher in this study was very conscious of her age as all the interviewees were older than she was. However, as the interviews took the form of '*storiant*' rather than the typical interviews, the participants became more comfortable as the '*storiant*' progressed. She was, however, careful with words she used as she did not want to use a word that might offend an older person.

The researcher did not find color, race and ethnicity a problem as the researcher was of the same race as the interviewees, but the affinity to either the Anglophone or the Francophone was a bit of an issue. While the francophones and the anglophones were equally open on issues under discussion during interviews, the Anglophones showed some disagreement with the Francophone system of schooling and vice versa. The Francophones, who thought they were being neglected for too long by the system thought it was a good opportunity to pour out their disappointments to the researcher, as she is an anglophone. For instance, one of the interviewee's father was one of the strong supporters of the political movements prior to the country's independence which resulted in many of the French citizens being deported from Vanuatu. He, during the interview, openly discussed some issues and brought up as evidences of what he thought were still

rivalries existing between the Francophone and the Anglophone communities even after the country's independence from the colonial powers.

4.5 Enhancing Validity and Reliability of data collected.

According to anthropologists Perti and Gretel Pelto (1978), Validity refers to, "the degree to which scientific observations actually measure or record what they purport to measure" (p. 33). Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures (Gay & Airasian, 2000).

Unlike quantitative methods where data collected can be easily measured against a standard test, graph or scales, qualitative research is difficult to directly measure to determine the validity and reliability of a research. This is mainly because, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, and Walker (1980) has supported the argument that, "the assumptions underlying qualitative research is that reality is holistic, multidimensional and ever-changing; it is not a single, fixed, objective phenomenon awaiting to be discovered, observed and measured". However, four factors that may lend the researcher support to claim internal validity and reliability of the data collected during the fieldwork are as follows:

1. The researcher, being a ni-Vanuatu, has grown up, and taught in the secondary schools in Vanuatu, she is familiar with factors that may be affecting girls' participation in the education system. This has gave her a better opportunity to analyze and compare the data continuously "to refine, construct, and to ensure the match between scientific category and participant reality" (Goetz & LeCompte 1984) was achieved.
2. Through informant interviews, the researcher in this study gained first-hand knowledge about the factors that may be influencing girls' participation in the education system. During these interviews, the researcher was able to ask the interviewee to clarify any

answers given and the researcher recorded what the respondents said and by doing this it increased the validity of the research. Filstead (1970) stated:

Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to 'get close to the data', thereby developing the analytic, conceptual, and categorical components of explanation from the data itself – rather than that form the preconceived, rigidly structured and highly quantified techniques that pigeonhole the empirical social world into the operational definitions that the researcher has constructed (p. 6).

3. This research was carried out in natural settings of participants or where the participants usually spend most of their time doing their daily chores. For example, the interviews carried out in the kitchen or under the breadfruit trees with interviewees at the community level. This reflected the life experiences of participants more accurately than artificial settings. The participants being in their natural setting allowed them to act or behave naturally and to be comfortable with their roles compared to artificial settings. Therefore observations made were more realistic than in artificial settings.

This research, incorporating a self-monitoring process that exposed all phases of the research activity to continual questioning and reevaluation, had the chance to correct and evaluate the data 'on the spot' and therefore less errors were likely to occur in the end product.

4. According to Gay and Airasian (2000), there are two main threats to the validity of qualitative research: Observer bias and observer effect. Observer bias occurs when the perceptive or beliefs of the researcher influences what he or she sees or hears during data collection. Observer effect, on the other hand, occurs when the presence of the researcher leads participants to behave in an atypical manner. To reduce bias and enhance validity, triangulation of methods, that is, using at least three different methods with different participants to explore a particular phenomenon was used. For example, interviews carried out at the system, institutional and community level; *Taem blong Storian*

at the community level and observations in selected schools. This approach provided a more balanced view on factors influencing girls' participation in the secondary education system in Vanuatu.

4.6. Summary

Chapter four discussed the main choice of research approach, how the methodology was implemented through the techniques used to collect data during fieldwork in Vanuatu, and lastly the chapter discussed the researcher's evaluation of 'research in practice'.

Since reality is ever changing, the researcher has chosen the inductive-deductive approach. The 'back and forth movement' nature of this approach, that is going back and forth from the conceptual world to the empirical world and vice versa, allowed the researcher to continually compare, analyze and refine data so as to produce a rich end-product.

The techniques employed to implement the methodology, particularly semi-structured interviews, observations and '*Taem blong storian*' were chosen particularly to help the researcher gain an insight into participants' views on factors influencing gender imbalance in the education system. The researcher chose techniques that allowed flexibility. This flexibility not only allowed the participants to be more relaxed, but also encouraged a free association of ideas.

Throughout the data collecting process, the researcher also made sure that the strategies used and incorporated the aspects of conscientization and empowerment, for instance, the cooking session during the '*Taem blong Storian*'. This has not only empowered the

participants, but also helped people to see how valuable girls' and women's knowledge and ideas could be to the community in which they live.

The methodology used in this study has now been outlined. The next chapter, chapter five, analyses the data and discusses the factors influencing girls' participation in Vanuatu's secondary education system.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

Vanuatu gained its independence in 1980. Since then, education was seen to be the fundamental tool for developing the country. Following a development model similar to model 1 depicted in chapter two, Vanuatu's national planning during the post- independent period was more oriented towards achieving economic gains (UN and Republic of Vanuatu, 1996). With much emphasis on economic goals came the tendency to focus solely on the physical or material aspects of development (for example, the building of more schools). It, however, failed to promote attitudes of self-esteem and dignity among groups of people, and more importantly it failed to assess the educational needs of different groups such as those of girls.

Despite the enormous effort put into developing the country, the Joint Report of the United Nations and Republic of Vanuatu (1996) argued that, "... economic growth has not been achieved" and "the neglect of social development is seen in the continuing low literacy rates" (p. 1), especially among women. The report went on to say that, "Compelling evidence that the benefits of development are not evenly spread is seen in women's poor access to resources and entitlements compared to males" (p. 2).

The precarious situation of girls and women in the South Pacific and elsewhere in other developing countries have been on a number of global, regional and national development agendas. For instance, in the South Pacific, within the broad context of Human Development, the Pacific Island countries, together with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 1994) have carried out projects and training programs in attempts to resolve problems of inequality in the South Pacific. The 1994 Pacific Human

Development report (UNDP, 1994) asserted that developments should be “focussed on people, their needs and aspirations” (p. 5), and specific groups of the population must be targeted and “served with different programs and opportunities because of their different needs” (UNICEF 1998, p. 1). Women and girls are clearly one of these categories. In Vanuatu, the Comprehensive Reform Program (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997a) pointed out that most ni-Vanuatu have minimal control over their own lives and that a narrow range of choices was opened to them. Empowerment of individuals, families and communities is an important part of the vision and that the only sure means of empowerment is ‘education’. A radical improvement in education and training of all its young people is, therefore, needed if long-term improvement in living standards and quality of life is to be made possible (ibid.).

These moves by countries to reform education with regards to girls’ education indicated that country’s leaders have realized that education for girls was very important to a country. Unfortunately efforts that were put in place by many developing countries like Vanuatu to make this vision a reality was often hampered by a ‘web’ of factors.

In the last chapter, namely chapter four, we have discussed how the investigations were carried out to examine the factors that influence gender imbalance in the secondary education system in Vanuatu. The techniques used during the fieldwork to collect data provided qualitative information about the system, institutional and community attitudes and knowledge about the factors that affect girl’s participation in the secondary education system, which this chapter aims to discuss. In this thesis, the researcher does not only describe the factors that affect girls’ participation in the education system, but also critically analyze how and why these factors affect girls’ participation in Vanuatu’s secondary education system.

Although the main focus of this study was on how the educational structures contribute to the gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system, education structures do not operate in isolation. Because several factors contribute to this imbalance and are inter-related, factors outside of the school, for instance, the economic condition of families and parental attitudes and commitment towards girls' schooling are also discussed in this chapter. To make analysis easier for the researcher and the readers to follow them, the factors were divided into two main categories. The first category consisted of factors that were related to the system and institutional level. The researcher calls this category '*System and Institutional-related Factors*'. The second category consisted of factors related to the community level. The researcher refers to this the '*Community-related factors*'. The system and Institutional-related factors include: geographical location of the secondary schools, the cost of education, the rapid population growth, female role models in schools, school policies, school and classroom environments, resources in schools, curriculum and instruction, assessments and reporting system and political/administrative factors. Community-related factors include: economic conditions of the family, parental attitudes and their commitment towards girls' schooling. These are discussed below.

5.2 System and Institutional-related Factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system.

5.2.1. Geographical location of the schools

Vanuatu communities live in small islands and most of these islands are remote and sparsely populated. According to the Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office (1999), some of these islands have as little as seventy people altogether on an island. Because of insufficient resources and a very small population to warrant the establishment of a secondary school in these small communities, secondary schools are built at central locations serving a group of islands.

In the year 2000, the government operated a total of 30 secondary schools (22 Anglophone and 8 francophone schools). The government gave subsidies to support 16 of the church-run secondary schools either through direct funds to the schools or by providing government teachers to teach in the church schools. There were 12 secondary schools that are privately owned and run.

The distribution pattern of the government and government-assisted secondary schools is shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Distribution of Secondary schools by region, administration and media of instruction.

<i>Province</i>	Torba	Sanma	Malampa	Penama	Shefa	Tafea	Total
Gov.(Eng)	2	4	4	4	5	3	22
Gov.(Fre)	0	2	2	0	2	2	8
Catholic (Fre)	0	0	2	2	1	2	7
Protestant (Fre)	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
SDA(Eng)	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Anglican (Eng)	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
AOG (Eng)	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
COC(Eng)	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Presbyter-ian (English)	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Private(Eng)	0	4	0	1	5	0	10
Private (Fre)	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
TOTAL (English)	2	9	4	7	11	5	38
TOTAL (French)	0	4	5	2	5	4	20

(Source: Vanuatu Ministry of Education, 2000, p. 6)

The churches and private organizations establish secondary schools wherever they wished. This may explain why there are more secondary schools on an island and none on other islands.

Private schools are mainly found in the two towns, Port Vila in Shefa province and Luganville in Sanma province. The secondary schools in urban areas were both boarding and non-boarding whereas secondary schools in the rural areas were mainly boarding schools.

Students (some as young as eleven years of age), therefore, need to leave their homes to board at the secondary schools. The duration of their stay away from their parents vary from a term (thirteen weeks) to three terms (about forty weeks), depending on how far the school is situated from their usual place of residence. For example, students from TAFEA province attending Arep Junior Secondary School in Torba province are likely to remain at the school until the end of the year before reuniting with their parents. This has, according to interviews and *storian* with respondents during the fieldwork, affected girls' participation in the education system in a number of ways. While finance is one of the major constraining factors (which will be discussed later in the chapter), a majority of parents, especially mothers, are reluctant to send their daughters to boarding schools away from home in fear of the following:

- 1 Girls getting pregnant while pursuing studies at school. When this occurs, many parents are not only displeased, but is also a waste of money spent on school fees when the girl is expelled from school. Many parents during the *'taem blong storian'* expressed the view that they would rather have their daughters in schools closer to home so as to give them the moral support young people need.
- 2 In a family where there is only one daughter or the daughter being the only child, mothers from rural areas in particular expressed the fear of the daughters meeting and marrying a person from another island and therefore diminishes security for the parents in their old age. During a *storian* with a mother at the Luganville market in Santo, she commented, *"I have only one daughter and if she goes to another island for study, she might find a boyfriend from another island. If she marries to someone in another island, who will look after me when I am old?"* (Personal interview). Even fathers who attended the *'taem blong storian'* showed similar concerns. A father,

during the *taem blong storian* added, " *These days, girls like to marry boys from other islands. This is not too good for us parents because our daughters are the likely ones to look after us when we are old. Our sons? It really depends on our daughters-in-law. If the daughter-in-law is a good one, we are lucky, but if she is not a good one, we will likely find ourselves sleeping under our copra dryers*" (Personal interview). According to the respondents, sending a daughter to a boarding school away from home increases her chance of meeting and marrying to another islander in future and to some extent this fear discouraged parents from sending girls to schools away from home.

- 3 *Black Magic*. Some parents are reluctant to send their daughters to secondary schools where 'Black Magic' (sorcerers, witchcraft) is thought to be widely practiced in the area. Although Vanuatu claims to be a Christian country, people still practice 'Black magic' in nearly all the islands. According to accounts from one of the schools visited, a girl was taken away from her dormitory at night to a nearby paddock. She woke up in the middle of the night to find all her clothes removed. The dormitory door was locked and there was no visible sign of any break in to the dormitory. Personnel in the school believed the doors were opened by 'Black Magic'. The parents withdrew the girl from school fearing her safety in that particular school. Another school reported similar incidents where girls wake up in the morning to find their clothes removed and neatly placed beside them. Again there was no visible sign of any break in into the dormitory.

These and other similar incidents may have influenced parents' decisions to withdraw the girls from school or not send them to such schools thereby affecting girls' participation in the education system.

4. Loss of family income.

According to a *storian* with parents at the community level, besides gardening, girls do other jobs such as caring for the younger siblings and older people; gathering firewood; fetching water from nearby streams or wells, doing the laundry, feeding family pets and preparing the family meals. Studies done by Brock and Cammish (1997) on 'Factors affecting girls participation education in Vanuatu' also confirmed the importance of girls' contribution to the family income in Vanuatu. Therefore to be sent to a boarding school may mean a loss to the family income as well as other family obligations. This consideration by families may contribute to the reluctance to send girls to school.

5. Limited contribution to children's learning.

Many parents during the '*taem blong storian*' also expressed concern about the limited contribution towards their children's learning when their children attend a boarding school away from home. The principals interviewed also commented that the locations of the schools do limit contribution by parents to their children's learning. They acknowledged the importance of having parental involvement in their children's education, but this, according to the principals interviewed, cannot be easily done due to financial costs and the transport problems faced by parents and communication problems faced by many of the secondary schools. Parents therefore are rarely informed about the school affairs. The only thing a parent gets from the school is the child's end-of-term reports. Parents therefore feel that they have very little say in their children's education, especially their daughters' education progress in school. Parental involvement in their daughters' education will give their daughters more confidence and a higher self-esteem and aspirations. This will help girls progress to higher levels of education.

5.2.2. A competitive secondary education system and the high cost of education

5.2.2.1 A competitive secondary education system

Girls' access to schooling in Vanuatu is steeply pyramidal partly due to the competitive nature of the country's education system and the high cost of education.

In the year 2000, a total number of 35,083 students attended primary school in 398 primary schools throughout the country. Out of these 35,083 students enrolled in the primary education, there were only 7,255 places available at the only 58 junior secondary schools, and only 1,203 places available at the senior secondary education level (only 14 out of the 58 schools provide for the senior cycle) (Vanuatu Ministry of Education, 2000). Progression through the education system is by examination passes. Students sit the National examinations at the end of years six (end of primary education) and ten (end of junior secondary education) to determine their places in the higher levels of the education system. The very limited number of places in the secondary schools meant that the national examinations are very competitive and a large number of students are denied places at the secondary level. In this highly competitive situation, girls are left out and even kept behind by the factors already referred to.

According to education attainment records, just over a fifth of the population (20.7 %) aged fifteen and over had attended secondary school (VNPSO, 1999). The overall percentage of girls attending school has increased. In 1991 there were only 1,642 girls enrolled at secondary schools compared to 4,100 in 2000 (ibid.). Then only a handful will make it through to tertiary level of education due to the 'filtering' nature of the education system.

5.2.2.2 A high unit cost of education

The limited number of places in Vanuatu's secondary education system is mainly due to the high unit cost of education at the secondary education level. According to a recent Asian Development Bank study, secondary school education is about four times more expensive per pupil than primary schooling. It has been shown that while VT 30,000 would be spent per pupil per year for a primary school child, VT 90,000 would be spent per child per year for a secondary school student (ADB 1997, p. 223). Cost considerations matter when families show preferences for boys to be educated at the expense of girls.

With a fast growing population in Vanuatu, secondary school enrolments increased and that would require a greater portion of the country's GDP to be spent on education (UNICEF, 1998). It was estimated that if access to grade 10 is to increase to 100 percent by the year 2014, the total budget for education would need to increase four a half times, from \$US 6.2 million in 1989 to \$US 27.7 (Gannicott 1993, In ADB 1997, p. 224).

The government therefore has to find ways to spread the financial burden. One of the ways in which the government can spread the financial burden is to prescribe a minimal level of school fees that is within the ability of every family to pay. Because of inadequate tax bases in Vanuatu it is impossible to eliminate school fees altogether. When school fees are levied, families would prefer to invest on boys' education. As a result education of girls receive less priority.

The Vanua'aku Party government (under the Leadership of Walter Lini) that ran the country after the independence from 1980 to 1991, imposed a head tax of 1,000Vatu (AUD\$12.00) per person over the age of 18 per annum. Although the tax was only a small amount, the then government had involved people in the development of the country. However, the change in government in 1991 saw the francophone dominated coalition government abolishing the head tax. This was greeted with acclaim by majority of the rural people. This has, however, indirectly encouraged people to sit back and wait for the government to do everything for them even to provide free secondary education. Where will the money come from? Boulekone (1995) argued that abolishing the head tax was a

“very paternalistic approach and should not exist in a developing country” (Cited in Van Trease 1995, p. 208).

5.2.2.2.1 Tuition Fees

The cost of education is, therefore, one very strong factor that has affected girls' participation in the education system in Vanuatu. While the Ministry of Education pays for most of the trained teachers' salaries and government schools get annual grants from the government, most of the schools cannot function without parents paying tuition fees. From the interviews with the principals in the secondary schools and the returned questionnaires from selected schools in Malampa, Tafea and Penama provinces, it was found that a typical student is expected to pay the school tuition and registration fees. It also shows that school fees are charged at differing rates across the different school systems in Vanuatu. The fees range from 11,000Vt/year per student in Government schools to 70,000Vt/year per student in church boarding schools. Some of the rates are tabulated in Table 9 on the next page.

Table 9: School fees a typical student is expected to pay for tuition and registration by different school administrations in Vanuatu.

School	Location	Administration	Boarding or Day school	Amount/year (in Vanuatu Vatu, VT)
A	Urban	Private (Ang)	Day	33,000 (Yr. 9-10) 30,000 (Yr. 7-8)
B	Semi-urban	Gov. (Ang)	Boarding	45,000
C	Urban	Church (Ang)	Day	36,000
D	Urban	Gov-assist (Fr.)	Both	15,000
E	Urban	Gov. (Ang)	Boarding	27,000
F	Rural	Church (Ang)	Boarding	70,000
G	Urban	Gov. (Ang)	Boarding	11,000
H	Urban	Gov. (Fr.)	Boarding	24,900

The fact that students are selected by the Examination Selection Board meant that parents do not have much say in which schools to place their children in (discussed later in the chapter). They, therefore, have not much choice but to meet tuition costs should they wish their children to gain formal education.

5.2.2.2.2 Non-tuition Costs of Education

According to interviews at the system and institutional level and *storian* with parents, in addition to the tuition fees that parents have to pay, parents also have to meet transportation costs from the students' homes to the boarding schools. They also have to buy bedding and other personal effects such as toiletries, bush-knives, brooms, buckets, student uniforms, clothing, etc. This is a tremendous burden on parents to meet the extra

expenses involved. For example, a parent from Tafea province in the Southern part of Vanuatu whose child is selected to attend a government secondary school in Sanma province in the northern part of the country has to meet the following expenses detailed in Table 10 below.

Table 10: What a typical child from Tafea province pays to enter Year 7 at a government secondary school in Sanma province in Vanuatu.

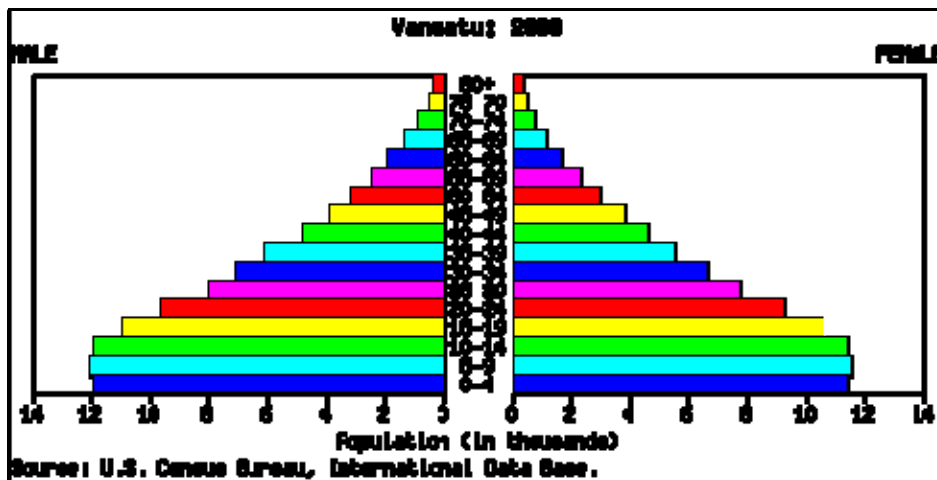
Expenses	Estimated Cost (in Vanuatu Vatu, VT)/year
School Fees	45,000 (School B in Table 9)
Transportation costs (plane fares, land transport fares)	30,000
Personal Effects (soap, clothes, toothbrush, bush knives plus pocket money.)	30,000
3 sets of uniforms at Vt1,500 per set	4,500
Total Cost	109,500VT (about \$FD 1,805) / year

The costs involved have had a tremendous effect on the schooling for girls. The fees for some schools are so high that only the prosperous or the rich can send their girls to secondary schools. The most likely ones from big families to attend school would be the boys. Many parents, especially rural parents still think that boys are more important than girls and therefore boys are given the priority chance to be educated. The education gained from school is regarded as needed for the boys' future responsibilities as 'head of the family'. The high cost of education keep talented individuals, particularly girls out of secondary school and thus a lost opportunity to develop available human resources.

5.2.3. Narrow revenue base to support a fast growing population

According to the Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office Reports, the population is growing at a very fast rate with a larger number of people in the younger age group as shown in Figure 11 below. In Port Vila alone, the total primary school-age population in 1999 was 4,106 compared to 2,342 in 1989. The 1999 census report also revealed an average annual growth rate of 5.6% for Port Vila urban and with this averaged growth rate, the school age population was projected to reach 7,887 in 2010. Of course, part of this increase in Port Vila urban may result from rural – urban drift.

Figure 11: Population distribution by Age and Gender.



(Source: Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office website, 2004).

This meant an increase in the demand for educational services at the primary level of education. More schools have to be built and more resources have to be devoted to the primary education level to cater for this group. According to document analysis, in 1995, 20% of the total budget of Vt. 5,939 billion was spent on education. Primary education consumed a larger portion of the total education budget (77%) compared with a low (18%) for secondary and tertiary levels (UNICEF, 1996).

Table 11 below shows government spending on both the primary sector and the secondary sector of education.

Table 11: Distribution of Education Budget by section, 1995.

Education Section	Sum provided to each section (Vt)	% of Total Education Budget
Cabinet	11,285,000	0.96
Central Administration Education	24,731,000	2.1
Primary Education	903,240,000	76.6
Secondary and Tertiary Education	215,745,000	18.3
Finance and Administration	21,601,000	1.8
Teaching Service Commission	2,128,000	0.20
Total	1,178,730,000	100

(Source: UNICEF 1996, p. 47)

With the decline in the economy as discussed earlier and a narrow revenue base, and with much of the resources (material and human resources) being diverted to primary education, according to interviewees at the system and institutional level, many secondary schools are facing financial constraints and are often under-resourced. Also resulting from this expansion of the primary education is an increased need for expansion at the secondary level. This exacerbates the already difficult financial situation of the secondary school system. Under an education system so stretched for resources, girls are more likely to be adversely affected in terms of enrolment and retention in the education system.

It is also important to note that there is also the danger for the government to press for more schools to be built to cater for the rapidly growing population neglecting the quality of education provided. One of the educational reforms the current Comprehensive and Reform Program (CRP) wishes to implement is the 'cost sharing between government and private schools' (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997a, p. 43). At the moment there are 12 private secondary schools (10 anglophones and 2 francophones). 11 of these schools are in the two towns, Port Vila and Luganville (Vanuatu Ministry of Education, 2000). However, from observations made in private schools visited and from interviewees, the following conditions are found common in many of the private secondary schools, which leaves one to question the quality of instruction received by students.

Many of these private secondary schools are under-resourced. The cash constraints in many of the private schools make it hard to supply books, teaching aids and housing. Most of these schools also have inadequate facilities and because of the lack of laboratories and other equipment many of these schools are unable to offer science subjects. This affects science learning for girls attending the private schools who have to compete for places.

5.2.4 Resources and Boarding facilities in the schools

5.2.4.1 Resources in the schools

There is evidence of inequitable distribution of resources among the schools. According to interviewees and a study undertaken by the ADB (1997) and Republic of Vanuatu (1997b), the government has been concentrating its allocation of resources to mainly two islands, Efate in the Shefa province and Santo in Sanma province (where the two towns are located). Moreover, schools in the urban areas have better resources than the rural secondary schools. Some examples of the findings from questionnaires from rural secondary schools are outlined in Table 12 on the next page.

Table 12: Resources in some rural secondary schools.

School	Science Laboratory	Library	Reliable water supply	No. of classrooms	Tot. No. of students	Female teachers	Teacher :student ratio
1	0	0	No	4	163	4	1:20
2	1	1	Uses rain water	4	170	2	1:21
3	0	1	Yes	5	100	2	1:10
4	1	1	No	4	107	2	1:15
5	1	0	No	2	117	4	1:15
6	0	0	No	4	126	4	1:18
7	1	0	Yes	4	98	2	1:14

Many of these schools do not have a reliable water supply and schools, which rely mainly on rainwater (for example, School 2), face problems during very dry seasons. According to interviewees, water problems in schools can affect girls in a number of small and big ways:

- Firstly, this is very inconvenient for girls during their menstruation periods. Girls have used incidents such as these as excuses not to attend classes.
- Interruption of classes has affected girl's academic performances in boarding schools, who, had to return to their homes and return when situation improved.
- Temporary closure of the schools when these schools face water problems may mean an extra financial burden on the girls' families to pay for plane or boat fares to and from school.

5.2.4.1.1 Science and Technical Education

The very small number of ni-Vanuatu women in Science and Technology can be partly explained by the insufficient exposure to science education at the secondary school level due to lack of science facilities in many of the schools. As shown in Table 12 on page 129, some of the schools do not have science laboratories and many more do not have adequate science equipment. While this affects both boys and girls, inadequate exposure to science activities limits, to a great extent, the interests and involvement of girls in the science and technology subjects. According to interviewees and the documentary evidence from Republic of Vanuatu (1997b) and ADB (1997), girls generally tend to pursue Arts subjects rather than Science subjects.

5.2.4.1.2 Teacher supply

Teachers are also very important resources in a school. According to interviews at the system and institutional levels, qualified teachers in schools are a good indication of quality education. However, this study has revealed an inequitable distribution of teachers to the rural secondary schools. For example, the figures in Table 12 (see page 176) above reveal that some of the secondary schools have more teachers than that is needed. For example, at School 3, there are 10 teachers for 100 students and School 7 has 7 teachers among 98 students. While there may be frequent complaints about the shortage of teachers for the secondary education level, the government has failed to continually assess how resources are used in many of these rural secondary schools.

Furthermore, according to the Ministry of Education Data, 90% of trained teachers teach in the secondary level of education (Republic of Vanuatu 1997a). There are, however, not enough qualified teachers to teach at the senior levels especially in the science fields which saw a lot of these places being taken up by expatriates in the senior cycle (Years 11 to 13). While 90% of the secondary school teachers are trained, there are about 289 teachers in the primary schools with inadequate teaching qualifications (Vanuatu MOE,

2000). The lack of qualified teachers at the primary education level has also affected preparedness of students, especially girls, for entry into the secondary education system. Having more qualified teachers, particularly female teachers at the primary level of education would help encourage girls to participate in higher levels of education.

5.2.4.2 Boarding facilities for girls in the schools

According to this survey, most of the secondary schools have an equal number of dormitories for the girls and the boys except for three secondary schools (a government school and 2 church schools). While the government school had no specific explanation as to why there are fewer girl's dormitories, the two church schools explained that initially the schools were boys' schools therefore they continue to have boarding facilities for more boys.

According to observations made during the fieldwork, most of the secondary schools in Vanuatu have permanently constructed buildings, but the girls' living conditions in many of the secondary schools is appalling. Most of the dormitories in schools that the researcher visited have been crowded with bunk beds and having insufficient ventilation and lack of sunlight into the dorms. Students have little space to store their belongings and very little space to move around inside the dormitories. Girls queue to have showers or even brush their teeth. It was reported during the interview that, living under very poor sanitary conditions in many of the secondary schools have often resulted in high incidence of illness in the schools which has affected class attendance and performances in class of girls.

Boys have separate toilet facilities from the girls. While most of the secondary schools have flush toilets, the toilets are in adjacent buildings from the dormitories, which make them unsafe for female students to use at night.

Nearly all schools have screened windows to keep mosquitoes out at night and mosquito nets are provided by some schools. However, most of the girls' dormitories are not well secured having only louver windows, which can easily be broken or removed by intruders. Such insecurity keeps girls from boarding schools.

Many of the secondary schools have boarding masters. This limits the girls' willingness to openly discuss sensitive matters concerning girls with the boarding masters. Having boarding mistresses in schools would be more beneficial for the girls. For example, in catholic schools visited the nuns look after the girls while the priests look after the boys.

Obtaining and disposal of the sanitary pads is one thing that is evidently overlooked in many of the male dominated secondary schools, especially in the rural areas. According to *storian* with some female students, in schools where sanitary pads are sold in the shops run by all males, female students are often shy to go to the shops to purchase sanitary pads. Some girls, therefore, resorted to missing classes during their menstruation claiming to be 'sick'.

Disposal of the used sanitary pads in schools is also another problem. While some of the schools have some kind of incinerators for girls to burn used sanitary pads or a bush toilet to dispose of the used pads, some schools do not provide for these, which, becomes an inconvenience for girls in the school. This insensitiveness of school authorities to the particular needs of female students by the school management discourages them to fully participate in the school process.

5.2.5 Vanuatu School Curriculum and Assessment and reporting system

5.2.5.1 School curricula

During the *storian* with people at the community level, in Vanuatu, traditionally, women's place is regarded as 'in the home'. They mainly look after the children, cook the family food, make gardens, and look after the husband and his relatives. On Malo Island in

Sanma province, for example, apart from the jobs expected of women, women also had to raise as many pigs as they could for the husbands' pig-killing ceremonies to become a '*moli*' (chief). A lot of time is also spent by women in the gardens planting yams for the pig-killing ceremonies. In the past, it was considered that the more pigs a man kills, the more he is respected and more importantly, the higher the chances of securing a place in '*Warimatavosai*' (heaven) by the god '*Tohotaitai*' when he dies.

During colonial times this separation of and sex-stereotyped roles by gender was replicated in the institutions set up by the church and the colonial administrations. The males were trained for leadership jobs in the administration and cash cropping while women received training in home-making jobs such as sewing, hygiene and vegetable gardening (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997a).

This sex-role differentiation is further amplified in the primary and then secondary school curricula. It was found that the schools continue to offer sex-differentiated courses, particularly with regard to practical activities. Girls are placed in home economics courses while boys in industrial arts courses. According to interviews at the system and institutional levels, it was pointed out that in the future, the schools would be offering 'Technology courses' which will be a combined subject for both boys and girls to replace the present separate subjects of home economics and industrial arts.

These observed practices corroborate with official documents. For example, according to the Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP), the current Vanuatu curriculum:

..does not promote gender sensitivity, provide positive role models for girls, or encourage girls to consider a wide range of career options and become productive contributors to the Vanuatu economy and that the current Teacher training colleges do not address issues of gender in their curricula. (Republic of Vanuatu 1997a, p.68).

While it is acknowledged that the government has realized the gender inequality in the system, a policy calling for a curriculum catering for gender equity is still not in the making. One of the excuses is that curriculum revisions can be very expensive for the government due to the limited resources in schools and absence of funds from the government required for necessary changes. Some reasons provided are:

- textbooks must be reproduced to ensure that the content provide adequate role models for girls as well as boys and money must be spent on writers and the production of textbooks
- new knowledge of the actual content of the curriculum and the understanding of how to implement these into daily work has to be acquired by the teachers first.

The amplified separation of roles by gender and stereotype views in the school curriculum have also resulted from the lack of input into the formation of the school curriculum by teachers. The curriculum used in Vanuatu resembles a center-periphery model of curriculum. That is, the curriculum is designed by people 'at the top' with the help of some expatriate 'experts' who are in luxurious offices in the main town, Port Vila, and then handed down to teachers to implement in schools where teachers and students face various hardships. Unfortunately, teachers, who have a clearer idea of the culture, styles of learning and teaching, and the needs of the students, play minor roles in the development of the curriculum. Particularly the contribution of female teachers is minimal.

5.2.5.2 Assessment and Report System

Assessment and Reporting systems have also failed to deliver a more comprehensive and useful meaning to the parents, prospective employers and institutions. According to document analysis and interviews at the institutional level, comparative methods of assessing students are widely used in Vanuatu. These include the following:

- i) students are assessed and then graded in relation to performances of others within the same years or with others doing the same course;
- ii) performance of an individual is matched with pre-determined standard and then a grade (for example, 85%– 100% is an A, 75% -84% is a B etc.)

These assessment practices naturally favour the boys to the detriment of girls who have to compete with boys who have the initial advantages.

Fehring and Wilson (1995, p. 5) offered some reasons as to why these norm-referenced assessments may not be adequate. These are listed below.

- i) They tell us nothing about what has been learnt, nor indeed if there has been any learning at all.
- ii) There may be too much emphasis placed on the scores and not the intellectual values.
- iii) They do not tell us whether students have the capacity to use wisely what knowledge they have.
- iv) Assessments were mainly used for elimination and selection purposes by the government.
- v) The tasks in the tests are de-contextualized from the everyday classroom curricula.

This kind of assessment of learning primarily favour the boys.

The schools issue reports at the end of each term using ranking procedures, percentages or grades. Some of these reports that students take home to their parents are so poorly worded or containing only percentages that parents, especially those in rural areas who are illiterate, do not know what the reports mean. The external examinations' results are displayed on a certificate containing a grade statement on a scale 1- 15, with grade 15

being equal to the top 10% of the group, 14 being equal to the next 10% and so on. These reports are drawn mainly from summative assessments and therefore give the parents very little idea of the ways students have used the opportunities offered to them by the schools and what they have learnt in schools.

Parents need to know how their children are performing in school. In so doing they take are motivated to take more active role in encouraging and helping with their children's learning. Their involvement in their children's education, particularly their daughters' learning will enhance the positive climate of a classroom and their children's learning attitude.

5.2.6 Academic performances of students.

According to the returned questionnaires from selected secondary schools and interviewees at the institutional level, generally girls perform better than boys in the junior cycle of secondary education, but progressively fall behind at the senior secondary cycle of education. This has affected enrollment at higher levels of education. The ADB (1997) study also confirmed that female enrollment progressively lags behind that of the males' at higher levels of levels of education. While data collected from selected rural secondary schools show that within a schools alone, over 50 percent of girls have passed the external exams held in 2000 (see Table 13), it has also been noted, however, that girls in rural government schools perform lower than girls in urban government schools. Data showing the national examination held in 2000 (Year 10 Examination) performance of girls from selected rural secondary schools are tabulated in Table 13 on the next page.

Table 13: Examination performances of girls in selected schools in the junior cycle of secondary education in Vanuatu.

School Location	Total No. of students who took a national exam in 2000.	Total No. of girls who took the national exam.	Total No. of students who pass the national exam.	Total No. of girls who pass exam in 2000	% of girls who pass exam in 2000	% of Total No. of students who pass National Examination
Malampa (Rural -Gov/Ang.)	18	10	12	6	33	67
Malampa Rural (Gov./Ang)	36	18	31	12	33	86
Penama rural (Gov./Fr.)	18	8	8	4	22	44
Tafea Rural (Gov./Fr.)	21		5	5	24	24
Penama Rural (Gov./Ang)	37	17	35	16	43	94
Penama Rural (Gov/Ang)	30	19	18	11	36	60
Penama Rural (Gov-assisted/ Ang.)	34	17	26	10	29	76
Penama rural (Gov/Ang.)	38	16	15	6	15	39

Many of the girls who passed the external examination were only able to secure places in rural senior secondary schools and in INTV (a government supported vocational school) while girls in the urban secondary schools were able to retain their places in the senior cycle of secondary education level. Even in these urban schools the number of girls represents only about 20% of the total girls' enrollment in the country. Therefore, the

chances of the 80% of the girls in these rural secondary schools ever going on for tertiary education are slim which may mean that there will be fewer role models for girls in the future and is also a waste of human resources.

5.2.7. School Policies

From this survey, it was found that school policies also affect girls' participation in the education system. Two of the common ones are discussed below.

5.2.7.1 School Fees

In many of the secondary schools in the country, according to interviewees at the institutional level, there was the practice by which students, including girls, are put off school for some time when school fees are not paid up. Most of these students were sent home while others were prevented from sitting external exams until their fees were paid up. In some schools, it was observed that names of non-payment students were posted up on notice boards for everyone to read. In interviews, it was evident that other schools have used even the national radio, 'Radio Vanuatu' to warn parents in advance of the consequences of not paying fees by a due date. This practice by the schools has grown to such an extent where students feel humiliated and to some extent this drives students away from school to avoid humiliation. It was mentioned that generally girls were the ones whose parents did not pay the fees. Girls were relatively more sensitive to these situations and stop attending school. Further parents would be more inclined to take the girls away from the school rather than the boys if the family cannot afford the school fees and other payments.

5.2.7.2 Admission

In some schools, students were not allowed back in school if they were away for some time or if their attendance was not regular. One principal commented that allowing them back would be a burden on the teacher and other students. In cases where students have been absent due to illness, the school allows the student to repeat the same class the following year. This practice has an adverse effect on the students. Coming back to school in the following year to repeat the same class might make the students feel 'older' than the others in the class. This was found to discourage female students from returning to school. Moreover, the national policy of automatic promotion and prescribed entry age (a child is expected to enter class 1 at the age of 6 and leave primary school at about the age of 12 (MOE 1999, p.5)) introduced in 1986 may mean that if a primary school girl is allowed to repeat a class after an illness, she will be considered 'over-aged' to go on to secondary school and that may affect her participation in the secondary education system.

5.2.8. Women's participation in Decision-making bodies of the schools.

In the thirteen- (13) government and government assisted secondary schools surveyed, all the schools have a school council or a school committee. The representation of females in these committees are as follows:

- i) only one school has three women out of the 11 committee members in the school committee,
- ii) two schools have two women representatives out of 11 and 12 committee members in the committee,
- iii) 6 schools have 1 woman representative out of the 10 committee members in the school committee while
- iv) 4 schools have no women representatives at all.

Thus one sees under representation or absence of representation of women in these decision-making bodies of the schools, which make school-level policies. Even the few women on these bodies do not assert their position and express their views. As a result, the scope for voicing the problems faced by girls is very much reduced.

There is also an under representation of females as school principals. Only 12% of the principals are females. These female principals look after small junior secondary schools in the rural areas. Hence the male school leaders are not able to sufficiently understand and appreciate feelings of girls and cater to the needs of female students.

The results of the study revealed that women are underrepresented in the decision-making in the schools and school leadership. As in Vanuatu, the World Bank's (2001) report stated the exclusion of women in the decision making process of the schools in a number of countries showed the disregard of the concerns and needs of female teachers and students. Moreover, the lack of women's 'voice' in decision-making bodies of the school limits their ability to influence decisions concerning resource allocations for and welfare of female students in schools. The report went on to suggest that, in order for education to be sensitive and responsive to needs and aspirations of women, women must be represented in the leadership positions in schools and school systems. This is equally important for educational planning with regards to girls' education in Vanuatu also.

5.2.9 Female Role models in schools

One of the social barriers that girls face in many of the secondary schools in Vanuatu is the lack of positive role models in the classroom and in schools. According to interviewees at the system and institutional levels and from observations in schools, there were more male teachers and even greater number of administrators in all the schools visited. It was reported in some secondary schools that there were no female teachers. The survey of schools by the Vanuatu MOE, in the year 2000 confirmed that 36 percent of the teachers were females compared to 64 percent of male teachers. Moreover there were less than

five female principals in the schools. Table 14 below shows the statistics of teachers in each of the secondary schools in the provinces in Vanuatu.

Table 14: Secondary school teachers in Vanuatu.

Province	Secondary		Total
	Male	Female	
TORBA	9	3	12
SANMA	102	45	147
MALAMP A	40	16	56
PENAMA	55	30	85
SHEFA	110	83	193
TAFEA	31	21	52
	347	198	545

(Source: Vanuatu Ministry of Education, 2000, p. 3).

According to interviews at the system and institutional levels, several factors contribute to this imbalance. These are:

- i) There are fewer numbers of women qualified to teach in the secondary schools. Because of the requirement of having to complete year thirteen before one can be eligible to take up education courses at the Teacher training college to become a secondary school teacher, many girls do not meet these requirements.
- ii) Constraints on female mobility. Sanma province and Shefa province have the most number of female teachers. This is mainly because most of the government and administrative offices are concentrated in the center in Port Vila in the Shefa

province and Luganville in Sanma province. For many of these female teachers, the husbands were working in the two towns and therefore the female teachers have to be with their husbands in town and teach in these town schools. This means there are insufficient female teachers in rural areas and isolated areas.

- iii) For single female teachers, the living conditions in the urban schools are more inviting and is considered by parents to be more secured.
- iv) In, especially church-run schools, where there are strict policies concerning single female teachers developing personal relationships with males, these have prevented many single female teachers from accepting offers to teach in the schools. For instance, according to a church administered secondary school principal, a few female teachers were disciplined and even put out by the school for bringing their boyfriends into the school compounds.

According to interviewees and documentary evidence (UNICEF, 1992) the following important implications of having female role models in a school were mentioned. The female role models:

- i) influence choices and performances of girls positively.
- ii) help reduce parents' concerns about their daughters' morality and security with the presence of female teachers in a school.
- iii) enhances girls' enrolment and retention.

5.2.10 Bullying and violence in Schools

5.2.10.1 Between teachers and students

Although the Vanuatu Ministry of Education has banned the use of corporal punishment, parents have reported that the use of corporal punishment in many of the primary schools

and secondary schools in mainly rural areas, still exists to discipline students in schools. All schools have school rules for students to abide by and disciplinary boards to deal with problematic students. However, on many occasions teachers (mainly male teachers), resorted to corporal punishment, verbally abusing or humiliation of students. These can be regarded as an abuse of children. During the interview it was mentioned that, when such forms of disciplinary actions are undertaken by male teachers in relation to girls, these are not accepted for cultural reasons. As a result girls drop out or they do not enroll in such schools.

On analyzing students' violation of the rules and the punishment inflicted on them, the main violations mentioned were:

- i) Recurrent absence from school
- ii) Swearing at colleagues and teachers
- iii) Disturbing other students in class
- iv) Vandalism and
- v) Hitting other students.

Girls are adversely affected by one or more of these violations.

5.2.10.2 Violence among students

Girls in particular are often teased, and on occasions punched, or had sticks and stones thrown at them by boys. According to some female students and teachers, the following kinds of unacceptable behavior exist in nearly all the secondary schools in Vanuatu.

- i) *Teasing.* Boys tease girls in relation to:

- i) their body sizes or hairstyles. One of the girls mentioned that she was often called '*stik burao*' (the twigs of a cotton plant) because she was so skinny. Another one mentioned she was called 'fat fat grease' (grease, fat) because she was fat.
- ii) their class performance. Boys often tease girls who score low in tests. One of the girls described how she would tear the mark off her marked test paper when the teacher returns her paper so that others would not see her test scores.

3 *Physical Assault.* This is reported to be mainly among the junior boys, particularly common among years eight and nine boys. Boys hit girls with sticks, punch with fists and throw sticks or stones at girls in retaliation for the following reasons:

- i) Refusing to do what the boys asked them to do,
- ii) Humiliating boys in front of other students, especially in front of girls
- iii) Reporting boys' misbehavior to the teachers.

There have been also reports of violence between girls in the secondary schools. The form of violence mainly involved quarreling with each other over:

- i) theft involved in the dormitories,
- ii) girls not doing their duties,
- iii) boyfriends, even though secondary schools have strict rules regarding boy-girl relationships in schools.

5.2.10.3 Corporal punishment

According to interviewees at the system and institutional level, this practice is still used in Vanuatu despite the ban on the use of corporal punishment. This is because:

- i) Many parents, especially in rural areas in Vanuatu, hold too much respect for the teachers and therefore think that this form of disciplining the students may be the only effective way of dealing with problematic children.
- ii) Few parents directly complain about it as they think it is correct for teachers to impose corporal punishment on students.
- iii) Some parents fear that if they complain about the punishment imposed on their child, it might make things harder for their children. For example, the child may be marked down or may not be offered the same help as other children in the class.
- iv) Children do not complain about the punishment imposed on them in the first place, as they are frightened of the teachers on the one hand and their parents on the other.
- v) Girls are afraid to report such incidents to the teachers, as they are afraid the boys may hit them again if they report the incident to the teachers.

These acts of violence in the secondary schools have resulted in the children developing fear and low esteem, which in turn lead to poor school attendance as well as achievement in school. Principals have reported that weaker students, especially girls, either change schools or drop out of school.

5.2.11 Political/Administrative factors

From interviews with the Francophone respondents at the institutional level, the francophones felt that francophone children, particularly girls, have been discriminated against or ignored since Vanuatu's independence in 1980. They felt that educational planning and development were more in favor of the anglophone communities, in particular, during the regime of the anglophone dominated governments (from 1980 – 1991). Van Trease (1995) has also observed this trend. This period saw a number of French medium schools close down, the use of the French language decline, the drop in enrollment of francophone students and the introduction of school fees into the francophone system. According to the francophone respondents, these moves were an attempt to undermine the position of francophones in Vanuatu. The Anglophone respondents, on the other hand, did not see it as such. A closer examination of these claims may throw light on the real factors that have contributed to disadvantage the francophone students, especially girls, in Vanuatu suffered.

According to document analysis, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the French government poured huge amounts of money into the development of a network of French-medium primary school and has supported the Catholic mission's educational programs by giving an annual subsidy (Van Trease, 1995). French teachers, mainly expatriate teachers, were well looked after and were paid huge salaries (as much as two and a half times greater (Skinner 1968)) compared to the English teachers. The French used impressive, high quality permanent building materials to build school buildings and provided free education. A number of expatriate teachers were employed to support a teacher training program. Many New Hebrideans then (now ni-Vanuatu) were encouraged by these developments and the enrollments in French schools increased steadily. Both the Catholics and Protestant families sent their children to French schools. By 1980 the number of children attending French schools had reached 50% of the national total. (Van Trease, 1985 p. 56).

Interviewees at the institutional and community levels expressed the view that, as a result there was improvement in enrollment of girls as well.

According to document analysis, after 1980 the scenario changed. While Britain still maintained its funding to the country after the independence, there was a decline in funding by the French government. Enrollments in the French medium schools declined and by 1990 the enrollments stood at 38.4% of the national total (Van Trease 1995). Parents who have sent their children to the French medium schools withdrew their children from the French medium schools when fees were introduced and put them into English schools. In 1983, the French Government rejected a plan, which had the then Vanuatu Government backing, to provide financial support to establish academic programs for francophones through the USP Extension Center in Port Vila (ibid.).

Why was there a drastic drop?

Firstly, after independence, the Lini government was faced with the problem of having to run two separate education systems, which was very costly. To reduce the cost as well as to establish a national system of education, the government aimed at creating a viable unified national education system (ADB, 1997). The French medium schools were particularly expensive (taking into account the huge salaries of teachers and too many schools for 12% of the population) to run. Therefore, the government closed a number of schools, amalgamated those schools with low enrollments and prescribed a common school fee (Van Trease 1995). Those two policy initiatives adversely affected the girls.

Secondly, as supported by many of the respondents at the system and institutional levels during fieldwork, education level was low by French standards. As a result, very few francophone students have made it through to the university level and few have acquired

the educational qualifications needed to hold senior positions in Government. In the education sector, there were insufficient qualified French teachers. This can be traced back to the colonial times where, according to Van Trease (1995),

French training did not envisage the emergence of a class of ni-Vanuatu administrators who would eventually take over the running of the country, rather a group of low level administrative officers, typists and mechanics who have been educated with 'military type discipline' to continue to take courses from colonial officials (p. 18).

The French education system also provided few opportunities for young francophones to progress to university level studies (ibid.). When the French expatriate teachers left the country after Vanuatu's independence there were insufficient number of ni-Vanuatu qualified counterparts to fill in their positions.

Another possible explanation for the low standard of education was that the effort put into education by the French during the years 1960s and 1970s were in direct competition with the British and to stop Vanuatu from gaining its independence. This view was supported by the writings of Van Trease (1995) and a few Anglophone interviewees at the system and institutional levels who also supported this explanation. According to Van Trease (1995), the movement that started by the then New Hebrideans to gain independence saw the French trying to,

...entice ni-Vanuatu to the French side by creating a level of consumption which would exceed what an independent country could afford and thereby develop a degree of dependence on France which would make the idea of Independence unthinkable to local people (p. 19)

The very words of Mouradian, the French Resident Commissioner in the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) also confirmed this view. In one of his monthly reports to Secretary of State for Overseas Department and Territories in Paris he wrote,

All this means, not only that we are here to stay but also that we now matter enough in the eyes of the people for them to want us to stay. (Cited in Van Trease 1995, p. 19).

Thirdly, the British had established systems for training anglophones at tertiary level as early as 1960s compared to the late coming of the L'Universite Francaise du Pacific Sud in 1988 which had its campuses in Noumea and Tahiti (Van Trease, 1995). The British established system for training included extensive program of in-service training opportunities for people already in the workforce, sending students to the newly established University of the South Pacific in 1968. It also assisted ni-Vanuatu anglophone students to attend the University of Papua New Guinea that was also established in the 1960s. The equivalent tertiary institutions for francophones did not exist and efforts to get French Government support, as noted above, were difficult after independence (*ibid.*).

In the midst of these competing forces between the Francophone and Anglophone communities of the country, the education of children was affected. According to the interviewees, in particularly the francophone interviewees at the institutional level and parents at the community level, many girls have lost their places in schools when amalgamation of schools took place in the 1980s. The introduction of fees to the French system also saw some parents withdraw especially their daughters from school to allow their sons to continue with their education according to the interviewees. The low standards in the French education system and the lack of established systems for training teachers by the French government also affected girls in that they were not able to compete with their same-age peers in the anglophone schools. This is reflected in fewer

francophone female role models in the education sector and elsewhere in other sectors compared to the anglophone females.

5.3 Community-related Factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system

5.3.1 Economical condition of families

To simply state that families in Vanuatu and elsewhere in other Pacific Island countries are poor and therefore, children do not attend school is too simplistic a view. This view fails to recognize the richness of nature and cultures in many of the South Pacific countries. Often developing countries like Vanuatu are labeled as poor only because the country's per capita income is lower than those of the developed countries. According to the joint Report of the UNDP and the Republic of Vanuatu on Sustainable Human Development (1996), "Vanuatu has a strong resource base for achieving sustainable human development, including reasonably intact land, sea and forest resources, effective small holder subsistence systems and active and vital community and social systems" (p. 1). The majority of households in Vanuatu own land (92.7%) be it on the island they live, or on another island or a combination of the two (Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office, 1999). Yet so many children, including girls, are not being sent to school. The economic factor takes several forms, which are analyzed below.

5.3.1.1 Cash earning opportunities of families in the rural areas.

The majority of Vanuatu's population (78.5%) lives in rural areas (Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office, 1999). Many of the islands are relatively small and isolated, for example, places like the Torress and Banks islands (Torba province), in the northern part of Vanuatu. Ships, the main mode of transport, call only four to five times a year (Togase and Welegtabit, In Van Trease, 1995). The very small size and isolation of these

islands mean that many of the people in these islands have very limited cash earning opportunities. While copra provides the main income of many of the islands in Vanuatu, this commodity can not be dependent on for regular income due to wide fluctuations in copra prices, transport difficulties and natural disasters such as the tropical cyclones that hit the islands almost every year.

It became evident during the interview and documentary analysis that many people have tried to set up businesses in the rural areas, but these business developments have been hampered by rudimentary infrastructure and high costs involved in maintenance, lack of capital and poorly developed business skills. One of the very important reforms that the Vanuatu Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP) tried to implement was to bring more indigenous ni-Vanuatu successfully into the world of business, which meant promoting small and rural business development (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997a). This vision, however, was blurred with the closure of the local Development Bank of Vanuatu (DBV). The Development Bank of Vanuatu (DBV) was set up to lend for development purposes, outside the usual scope of the commercial banks – especially for small scale, long-term projects in the rural areas. The closure came about as it has “lost money because a high proportion of borrowers have not met their loan repayment obligations” and that, “many loans have been made as political favors, with little expectation of repayment” (ibid. p. 36). The National Bank of Vanuatu (NBV) was set up to serve a similar purpose as the DBV, but has suffered the same fate as the DBV. This has adversely affected the income generation of families in these rural and remote areas and in turn has affected girls’ participation in the education system.

The only means of transport between most of the islands is by ship or boat. However shipping in Vanuatu is also becoming costly due to the “intense competition on the well-trafficked routes, to the extent that revenues are shared among too many vessels and profits do not permit proper maintenance and vessel replacement” (Republic of Vanuatu

1997a, p. 38). This may mean that the decrease in the number of ships mean a limited service to most of the islands will further diminish the opportunities of a good cash flow for many of the islands.

When families have limited opportunities to earn money so as to send their children, especially their daughters to school, girls' participation in the education system is affected.

5.3.1.2 Management of time, money and resources at the Community level.

There are areas where the cash earning opportunities exist, but the question on how eager the people are to earn cash and how people manage time, money and resources at the community level become issues in themselves. According to casual conversations and *the taem blong storian*, most people at the community level think that in areas where there are better cash earning opportunities, 'lack of finance' should not be used by parents as an excuse not to send their children, especially girls, to school. As one elderly lady puts it, *"During our time money was hard to find, yet we managed to send our children to school. These days people eat too much rice and tinned fish, drink too much kava and they spend too much time to 'storian' instead of working in the gardens or making copra"* (personal storian).

These issues are discussed below.

5.3.1.2.1 Management of time

The findings of a 'Rural Time Use Survey' (carried out by FSPI- Island Consulting) outlined in Figures 12 and 13 on the next page have indicated that people in the rural areas spend very little time in commercial and entrepreneurial activities, and education or training. There is, however, a great deal of time spent by both men and women on 'Personal Time'

activities. 'Personal Time' activities included 'doing nothing, sleeping, eating meals and relaxation' (FSPI-Island Consulting, 2001, p. 10). The survey also showed that men consistently spend 4 hours or more per week on personal time activities than women and about 5 hours more on social time per week than women (ibid.).

Figure 12: Gender desegregated average weekly time viewed by month of survey: for men.

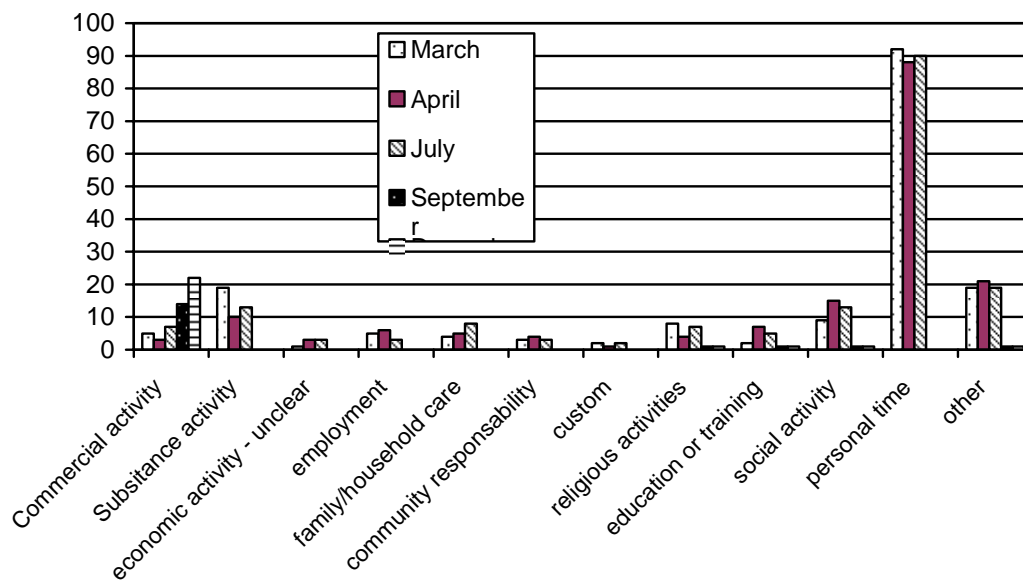
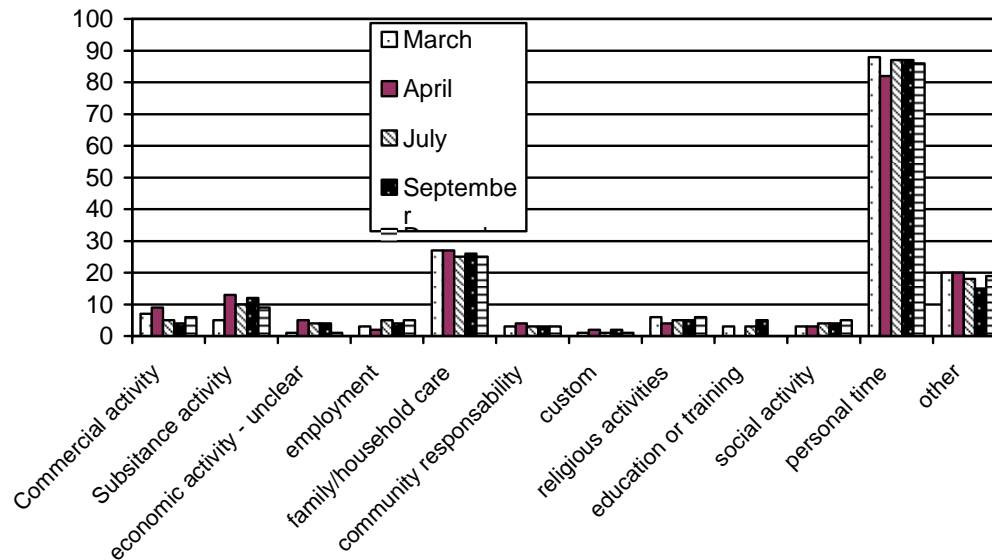


Figure 13: Gender desegregated average weekly time viewed by month of survey: for women.



If more time is devoted to commercial and entrepreneurial activities at the community level there will be more cash flow into the rural sector and therefore may improve financial status of families. In turn it is likely that families have sufficient income to send girls also to school.

5.3.1.2.2 Financial Management.

Participants at the 'Taem blong storian' have also argued that money is being spent on Kava Nakamals (Kava Bars), tobacco and beer instead of being invested on education. A study done by the UNICEF on the 'Situational Analysis of Children and Women in Vanuatu' in 1998 also noted the link between usage of kava to inappropriate financial management (UNICEF 1998). Kava or 'piper methysticum' is used as a social or ceremonial drink in many islands in Vanuatu during weddings, pig-killing ceremonies and peace-ceremonies. This drink has, however, been drunk excessively in both the rural and urban areas in Vanuatu and now not limited to ceremonial occasions.

According to respondents during the fieldwork, men would spend most of the night drinking kava with friends in the kava *nakamals* (hut built mainly from traditional building materials and commonly uses hurricane lamps as the only source of light at night) and returning home as late as 1 o'clock in the morning. The next day many of these men would spend the day sleeping to recover from the hangover. In many cases the mothers would be the ones doing all the domestic chores, subsistence farming and economic activities in order to support the family. One mother related her story of how she had worked so hard planting peanuts to sell at the markets to keep her daughter in school. Each time she returned from the market with the money earned, the husband would demand to give him the money to spend at the nakamal for kava. Refusal to give him the money would result in a fight. She finally withdrew her daughter from school. This and other similar incidents have prevented girls from successfully completing secondary education and progressing to tertiary level of education.

5.3.1.2.3 Personpower in the rural areas.

From observations made and according to *storian* with people at the community level, in areas visited, the ones left behind in the rural communities are mainly old men, women, girls and children. The young people, mainly boys, who are 'pushed' out of the education system end up in the two towns, Port Vila and Luganville, in the hope of finding a job. The Vanuatu National Planning and Statistics Office (1999) data also confirmed this rural-urban drift by the rapid increase in size of the two towns compared to the 1989 census report. Brock and Cammish (1997) have also confirmed this in their study mentioned earlier in the chapter. With this rapid urban drift, there is drain of personpower from the rural areas. For many big families, education for some children, especially older girls in the family were sacrificed for the sake of others. The older children, especially girls were withdrawn from school to help the family work in the farm to help pay for the younger children's school fees. This diminished the opportunities for girls to go for secondary education.

5.3.1.2.4 Families in squatter settlements in the urban areas.

According to document analysis, children living in the urban areas show better school attendance, which may be due to the fact that many parents in urban areas have better cash earning opportunities compared to those in the rural areas. However, a study done by the UNICEF in 1996 on the living conditions of many children from low-income families living in low-cost squatter settlements in town showed that many of these children are even more disadvantaged than children from rural areas. They will continue to be more disadvantaged than children from rural areas in future if nothing is done to improve the economic and living standards of the families (UNICEF, 1996). According to the Vanuatu National Statistics and Planning Office (1989 & 1999), the number of people in squatter settlements like Blacksands and Freshwind in Port Vila and Pepsi in Luganville is increasing. From observation and according to UNICEF (1998), houses are less than 10 square meters and are without adequate land for supplementary gardening. The average income for males of urban squatter ranges from Vt. 20,000 to Vt. 24,000 per annum. For females the range is half that of the male average income (ibid.).

Children from low-income parents living in these squatter settlements suffer from deteriorating economic, social and environmental situations and the household income is insufficient to pay for the children's school fees (ibid.). Therefore, the urban poor families in squatter settlements are also not able to send children to school. Among the children, it is the girls who are disadvantaged by non-attendance according to interviewees.

5.3.2 Parental attitudes and commitment to girls' schooling

According to *storian* with people at the system, institutional and community levels, this factor depends mainly on the attitudes and commitment of parents to education of their

daughters. From the findings, parents in Vanuatu can be classified into two general groups.

5.3.2.1 Parents who value formal education

There are some parents who value formal education and have high aspirations for their children. In the rural areas, parents who work very hard on either coconut or cocoa plantations to earn a living wanted a better future for their children. A better future for their children meant, among other things, clean and well-paid jobs that can only be earned through formal education. These parents have invested all the money earned into their children's education, including their daughters. One of the parents interviewed, in all his adult life, had worked in a coconut plantation owned by a businessman on Aore Island in Sanma province. He left his home island, Malekula, in Malampa province to work in this particular coconut plantation. He has three children (two boys and a girl) at two secondary schools (one in a government school and two in a church administered school). Although he was earning as little as 300Vatu per day, he commented, *"I want my children to hold better jobs than me so they do not spend their entire life in a plantation to work for so little money. I did not have that privilege, so I am investing all the money earned into education to help my children enjoy that privilege"* (Personal interview).

According to interviews at the system level, institutional levels and the study done by Brock and Cammish (1997), educated parents, mainly in urban areas, perceive economic benefit of educating their children to obtain employment in the modern sector. These parents would encourage their children to do well in school and to go on with further education. Girls from these families are more likely to attend secondary and tertiary education compared to girls of parents who place less value on the benefits of education.

5.3.2.2 *Parents who do not value formal education*

On the other hand, some parents do not value formal education and have low aspiration for girls' schooling. Geographical location and cultural values and practices seem to have some influence on the priority given to children's education, particularly girls.

5.3.2.2.1 *Geography.*

According to document analysis, parents on the remotest parts of Vanuatu (for example, in the interiors of Tanna and Santo, some communities of Southern Pentecost and Malekula) where communication is difficult are not aware of the benefits from services offered by government like education, which in turn adversely affect access to girls (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997a; Brock & Cammish, 1997; UNICEF, 1998). These parents do not perceive education as relevant for their children's future social and economic needs and therefore are not willing to pay the high cost of education relative to their income. The remoteness of these areas also result in limited school resources and poor school management, which affect initial primary enrolment of girls in these areas and subsequently the retention of girls in the secondary education system.

5.3.2.2.2 *Strong cultural values and practices.*

According to *storian* with people at the community level, parents who live according to traditional ways and customary religions do not see the importance of girls' formal education. They think that girls only need to know how to look after their household, bring their children up well and obey their husbands without question. One of the main reasons mentioned for these views is that sending a girl to further or secondary education may 'turn her head'.

These effects are compounded in areas where there is a wide practice of paying the 'Bride-Price.' In many parts of Vanuatu, bride price (in the form of money, pigs, mats, kava and yams) is paid to the girl's parents before a girl is taken to the boy's family in marriage. According to an elderly chief, he viewed that bride price has a tremendous effect on girls' schooling, which in turn lowers women's status in the community. Especially in rural areas, the girls' parents feel obliged to prepare their daughters well before they are married. These preparations may involve retaining their daughters back in the villages to teach them how to weave mats, care for the younger children, teach them how to behave towards the elders in the community, teach them how to raise pigs, plant gardens and even how to look after the husband and his family. According to the study by Brock and Cammish (1997), educated girls "will not necessarily attract a higher bride-price" (p. 85). Also the system of girls 'marrying off' or moving away from the family once they are married was viewed by many families, especially in rural areas as a poor investment for the family. This in turn affect the girl's participation in the education system.

According to the study by Brock and Cammish (1997); UNICEF (1998) and *storian* with people at the community level, in some *kastom* villages in Vanuatu, girls are separated from the rest of the community during menstruation. There is this fear that preparing food during her menstruation could make men sick. In many of these areas, huts are built for girls to temporarily live in until they cease menstruation. Girls from these areas are discouraged by their parents to attend schools and particularly boarding schools. These practices prevent girls from attending schools for a substantial period, thus adversely affecting their education and school performance. Therefore these traditional beliefs and practices affect the continued participation and achievement of girls in secondary school.

5.4 Summary

This chapter has outlined many of the factors that hinder or do not facilitate girls' participation in Vanuatu's secondary education system. All government secondary schools are boarding schools. Therefore, parents are generally reluctant to send their daughters to these boarding schools for fear of their daughters becoming pregnant while pursuing studies, suffering sexual harassment, Black Magic, or fearing for their daughters' security and morality. Some of these boarding schools have fewer boarding facilities for the girls. Moreover, sending girls to boarding schools may mean a loss to the family income, as girls are valued for the assistance provided in the homes such as caring for the younger siblings, or helping the mothers with cooking than for their earning potential and better general standard of living.

Where a family has insufficient resources to send all the children to school, boys are given preference to attend school over the girls. Education for boys is regarded as a better investment than education for the girls as girls will 'marry off' into another family.

The limited number of places in the secondary schools is a well-known concern. Coupled with a high unit cost of education in Vanuatu and a fast population growth rate and a declining economy, this remains a big challenge for educational planning. While it may be worthwhile to encourage the private organizations establish schools to help meet the needs of this growing population, there is the danger of a decline in the quality of instruction in the schools unless the government contributes and support their development.

The under-representation of women in both the decision-making bodies and school leadership also limits their ability to influence decisions concerning resource allocations for and welfare of female students in the schools.

In addition, lack of resources in the schools and poor learning environments in the schools have contributed to girls' poor achievement in school, which further lead to many of the girls dropping out of school. Inadequate and inappropriate boarding facilities, transport difficulties and insensitive school management practices besides school curricula and disciplinary matters adversely affect girls' enrolment and retention in schools.

Moreover, more resources are diverted to primary education to cater for the larger number of people in the younger age group. As a result, allocation of resources for the secondary level of education is limited. This, also unfortunately, adversely affects girls' enrolment also at the secondary level. It is admitted that primary education is of great importance to the nation as a whole and individuals. Therefore, adequate resources need to be allocated for primary education. But what needs careful consideration is the planning and management of primary education as well as equitable approach to secondary education.

Bullying and violence in schools also deter girls from progressing into higher level of education where it is experienced to a greater degree. Physical assault and harassment by boys in schools still exist in many of the rural secondary schools and some urban schools. These have resulted in girls fearing for their safety and comfort and in turn resulting in poor school achievement.

Parental attitudes and commitment towards girls' schooling also affect girls' participation in the education system. Parents, who value education and have high aspirations for their daughters are more likely to receive better education. On the other hand, parents who place no or little value in formal education and have a low aspiration for girls' schooling are unlikely to send their daughters to school.

Overall, factors at every level of the education system and the society seem to contribute to the gender imbalance. At the classroom and school level, matters like appropriate teaching materials, teaching methods, available facilities, adequacy of school discipline and supervision seem to contribute to the difficulties experienced by girls. At the family and community level, the low priority accorded to girls' education, the values placed by parents on their daughters' education and the customs and cultures seem to also contribute. At the societal level, the sex role in society attributed to the two genders, the inadequacy of available resources, and inappropriate planning and management of education to play their part.

The factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system has been outlined. The next chapter will look at ways in which these factors can be addressed.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary review of previous chapters.

One of the primary aims of this study was to investigate factors that influence girls' participation in Vanuatu's education system. The study also aimed at investigating government and school policies to see how they affect education and how they impact girl's participation and their ability to profit from education. The introductory chapter, chapter one, has detailed the significance of this study to planning and policy development of education with regard to girls' education in Vanuatu. That chapter also outlined the importance and benefits of educating girls. It also discussed the government efforts in education and the under-representation of girls in the education system of Vanuatu despite government and non-government efforts. The factors affecting girls' participation in the education system in Vanuatu warrants investigation, which, this study aimed at doing.

Chapter two developed the conceptual framework based on a review of literature. Many post-colonial countries see education as the fundamental tool of development. With great emphasis placed on developing the countries economically, substantial funds were spent on formal education for human capital investment. The neglect of social development was seen in the continuing low literacy rates, especially among women. Therefore, the chapter focused mainly on two interrelated processes, education and development, to see how the two have operated to influence girls' participation in the secondary education system.

Chapter three focused specifically on the contextual background of the research. The impact of the geography, society and culture, the government, the demography, economic activity, and the structure of the education system on access to and participation of girls in secondary education was discussed. These have, in a way, provided a platform on which

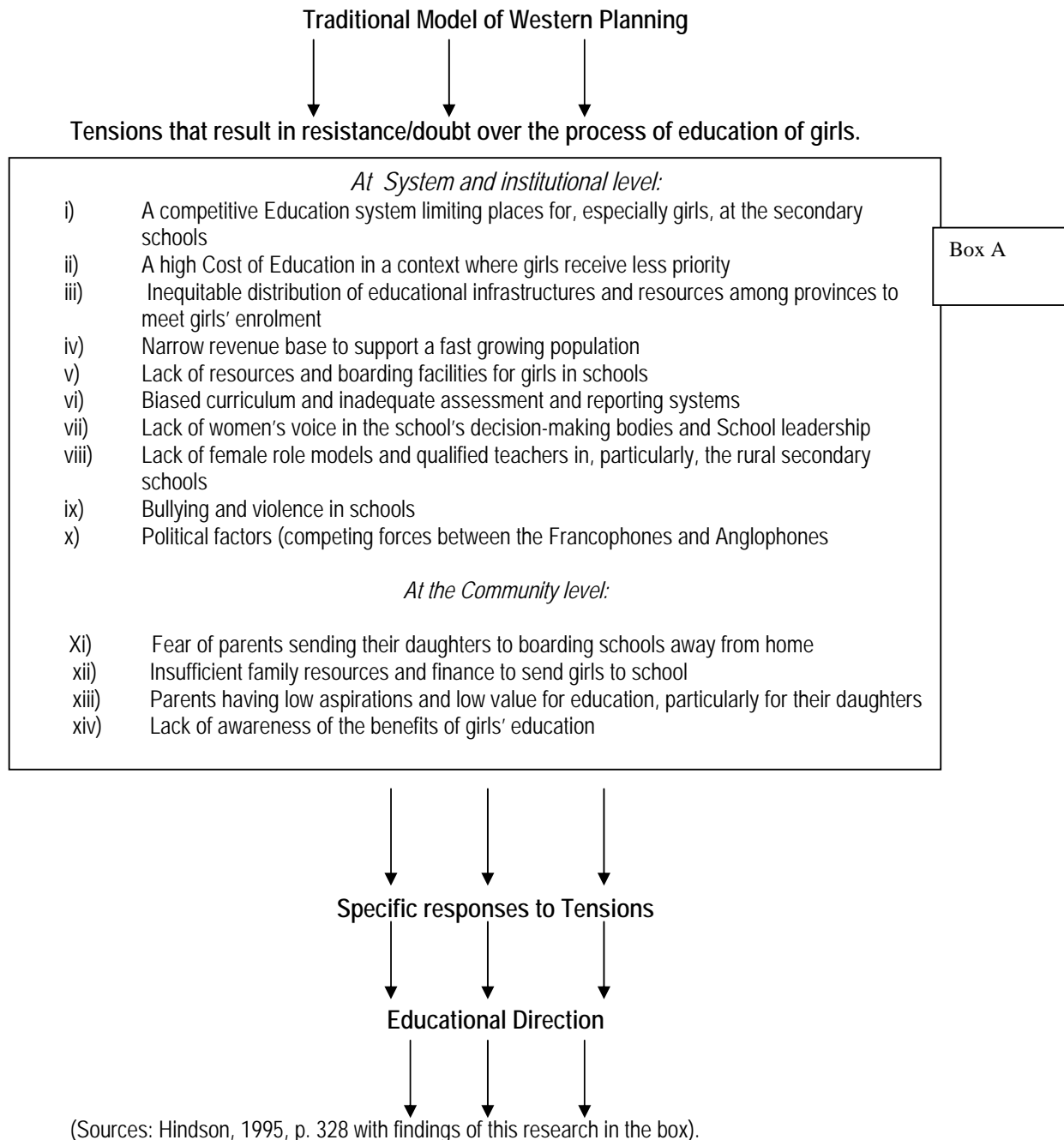
one could see how these aspects of such a small nation as Vanuatu could act as factors that hinder girls' participation in the secondary education system.

Chapter four focused on the methods used in this research study. In the chapter careful consideration was given to the choice of research methodologies and the techniques employed to collect data. As the researcher wanted to gain some in-depth information on factors influencing gender imbalance in the education system, qualitative research methodologies were chosen and the 'inductive-deductive approach' was used. To reduce any possible bias and enhance the validity of the research, triangulation of methods was also considered. In this study, at least three different methods were used with different participants to investigate the factors influencing gender imbalance in the secondary education system. The main techniques chosen for data collection were semi-structured interviews or *storian*, observations, questionnaires and *Taem blong storian*. *Storian* or semi-structured interviews of a conversational type with participants at the institutional level were very useful. They made the participants talk freely on issues like 'the importance of having women representatives in the school committee' and 'the importance of female role models in the schools and in the classrooms'. It was noted that some respondents became aware of these needs during the interviews. *Taem blong Storian* was also very useful because it helped the researcher to listen to a greater degree of free association of ideas by the participants since it provided a very relaxing and natural setting.

In chapter four, the researcher also evaluated the techniques used to collect data and also reflected on how she carried out the research and with what degree of success. This is particularly important as through reflection one could identify any possible shortcomings and pitfalls in the research and will help to avoid these in future research. Some of these are indicated in chapter four.

Chapter Five analyzed the data collected from the field study in Vanuatu and document analysis. Recalling Hindson's (1995) adapted view of Educational Planning in Vanuatu and other South Pacific Island countries outlined in Figure 2 in chapter 1, this research investigated the factors that contribute to gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system. It is expected that the findings from this research would help in the development of educational plans and policies for overcoming gender imbalance in Vanuatu's education system. The tensions that affect educational planning and implementation processes with regard to gender equity in education are outlined in Figure 14(a) on page 166. The findings of this study showing the factors that contribute to the impediments of girls' education are depicted in the box. These factors appear to act as intervening variables between the planning process on the one hand and institutional, community and family responses on the other. Specific responses to the factors depicted in Box (a) in Figure 14(a) on page 166 are shown in Box (b) in Figure 14(b) on page 181.

Figure 14(a): Hindson's (1995) adapted view of Educational planning in Vanuatu with regard to gender equity in education: Tension that result in resistance to/doubt over the process of education for girls.



Now that we have at least some understanding of the factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education system, this chapter will suggest some strategies and recommendations that might be considered for implementation in order to narrow the gender gap in Vanuatu's secondary education system.

6.2. Recommendations for improvements at the System level.

6.2.1 A need for a more decentralized management of the education system.

The concentration of educational infrastructures and resources in the two main provinces (Sanma and Shefa provinces) discussed in section 5.2.4 and Figure 14a (iii) and (iv) indicated an urgent need for a more decentralized system of government. There is also a need for the devolving of management of the education systems to the provincial levels. This will improve service delivery and to improve the allocation and spending of funds more effectively spread out. There is a greater likelihood, then, for schools to be made available closer to their homes. With an increase of women in decision-making bodies such as the School Management Committees, provision of education that is appropriate for girls would be possible.

6.2.2 Provide Incentives for Female teachers.

Findings in section 5.2.9 and figure 14a(viii) showed that there are fewer role models for girls in secondary schools. To attract more female teachers into the profession, lowering the requirements to enroll at the Teacher Training College for girls can help improve secondary school student teachers intake for girls at the Teacher's training college.

It was also found that more qualified female teachers are concentrated in Sanma and Shefa provinces. The Ministry of Education has taken initiatives in posting the newly graduated secondary school teachers to their own provinces, which will hopefully help improve the gender imbalance in other provinces. However, in order to attract more qualified teachers, particularly female teachers to the isolated and remote regions and to retain their services there, the government has to look into ways of improving the living conditions of female teachers in these school communities. In this way girls in other provinces will have more female role models and more qualified teachers in the schools to teach them.

6.2.3. More funds to be directed into the teacher training and teacher development programs in schools.

Sections 5.2.4, 5.2.9 and figures 14a(vii) and (viii) indicated the problems of having insufficient female role models and qualified teachers in the rural secondary schools resulted in the quality of instruction available to girls in many of these schools declined. The government of Vanuatu therefore needs to invest more funds and resources into the only Teacher training college (the Vanuatu Institute of Education) in order to upgrade the teacher training program with provision for more females to be trained. While the Australian government has helped the current Vanuatu- Australian Teacher Education Project (VASTEP) in upgrading the teacher training program, the government of Vanuatu should also take proactive measures to ensure a successful implementation of the project and that it is continuously upgraded when the project is due to finish at the end of 2003. An integral part of the teacher education program should be sensitizing the student teachers to gender differences and encouraging them to understand the particular problems faced by girls in pursuing their secondary education.

6.2.4. Non-Formal education to be fully recognized by the government.

The limited places in the secondary schools for girls discussed in section 5.2.2 and Figure 14a(i) calls for Non-Formal Education to be fully recognized by the government to give the girls 'a second chance' to learn skills and particularly skills in modern technologies. Republic of Vanuatu (1996) reported that about fifteen Rural Training Centers (RTC) run by church groups, local communities, individuals and Non Government Organizations (NGOs) were in operation. However, the majority of these training centers cater for boys only. Therefore the vital role of non-formal education for girls has to be recognized by the government. More support and funds should also be directed to non-formal education in order to help girls to improve their skills, especially those required in the rural areas, to enhance their active participation in industries and economic activities. The establishment of more of these non-formal educational institutions in rural areas specifically dedicated for female school leavers may provide a 'second chance', especially for girls, who are pushed-out from formal schooling.

6.2.5. Schemes like the scholarships and fundraising should be encouraged as incentives for enrolments and retention of girls in the education system.

Financial constrains faced by many of the families in financing girls' education discussed in sections, 5.3.1 and Figure 14a (xii) calls for the government to look into alternative approaches to financing girls' education. Approaches like waiving school fees for girls, fund-raising, sponsorship and providing scholarships for girls (especially girls from large families, remote rural areas and the urban squatter settlements) should be encouraged. These approaches will serve as incentives for improved enrollment of girls and retention of girls in the secondary education system.

6.2.6. Continuous assessment of the use of resources in the schools

The findings in sections 5.2.4 and Figures 14a(iii) and (v) showed that even among the rural secondary schools, there are more resources (e.g. teachers) in a school than needed and vice-versa. Therefore, proactive approaches have to be taken by the government to help improve the education system and to set realistic guidelines and policies to assess the effective use of educational resources in the secondary schools. For example, survey should be undertaken in schools to:

- i) find out the number of female teachers who are working in each of the schools
- ii) find out the class sizes so as to provide sufficient teachers
- iii) assess the physical infrastructure of the schools (student dormitories, staff houses, school buildings and equipment).

In so doing, resources will be used more effectively and equitably in schools and more importantly resources could be reallocated to schools that need to improve girls' enrolment in the school.

6.2.7. Building of secondary schools for girls.

Section 5.2.1 and Figure 14a (ix) showed that many parents are reluctant to send their daughters to boarding schools mainly for the fear of their daughters being sexually harassed by boys, getting pregnant while at school or that they may not be well supervised, especially in a male dominated school. This calls for the government to step in and build secondary schools specifically for girls. It could also subsidize or contribute to schools organized for girls only by church groups.

6.3 Recommendation for improvements at the institutional level in Vanuatu.

6.3.1. Teachers to incorporate their normal subject teaching with career guidance so as to help boost girls' self-esteem and job aspirations.

According to section 5.2.5 and Figure 14a (vi) the concentration of girls doing Arts subjects rather than science in secondary schools and at higher levels suggested that students, especially girls, get only very little in terms of careers guidance in the schools. One of the reasons that was cited was that many of the schools in Vanuatu couldn't afford to recruit specialist career counselors. Therefore, teacher development programs in schools and the Teacher training college should aim at offering to teachers specialized training in Careers guidance, Educational guidance and Personal and Social Guidance (Center for Educational Research and Innovation, 1996) and teachers should be encouraged to combine these with their normal subject teaching.

According to the Center for Educational research and Innovation (CERI) (1996), *Educational Guidance* is concerned with the intellectual development of an individual, helping him or her to acquire good study habits for example, to choose suitable subjects or pathways, to decide on what kinds of school to go to or to tackle learning difficulties effectively.

Careers Guidance deals with occupational aspirations. It helps in the choosing of an appropriate work role that may include job placement and generally eases the transition from education or training to working life.

Personal and social guidance deals with issues that may be emotional or psychological in nature.

(CERI, 1996, p. 16).

These three elements of guidance may of course be interwoven (ibid.). For example, dealing “effectively with personal problems may improve a student’s capacity for learning and ability to plan his or her own future with confidence, while educational decisions made at an early stage in an individual’s career may influence or even dictate his or her choice of occupation” (p. 16).

In addition, Watts et al (1994) have outlined nine activities teachers could use to help them with the career development programs that may be implemented in the schools. These activities are outlined in Table 15 below.

Table 15: Nine activities to be used in a career development program

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information: Providing objective and factual data for example, about available subject options, education courses, training programs, or job vacancies) • Assessment: Making a diagnostic judgement about an individual's suitability for certain options, using formal or informal techniques (tests, examinations, interviews) • Advice: Making suggestions based on the guidance worker's own knowledge or experience • Counseling: Helping individuals to explore their own thoughts and feelings about their situation, about the options open to them, and about the likely consequences of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placement: Helping clients to achieve entry to a particular job or course of education or training; setting up work shadowing or work experience in different occupational settings. • Advocacy: Negotiating directly with institutions on behalf of particular individuals – especially those who risk being excluded or who experience barriers in their attempts to get access to training or jobs. • Feedback: Informing educational institutions and other training providers as to what kind of courses and training programs are needed by employers or individuals, but are not currently available.
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<p>making different choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers education: providing a program of planned experiences (which may include discussions, workshops on issues such as writing resumes, quizzes, role play, practice interviews, visits from outsiders or to local companies, work experience or work shadowing) which are designed to develop the skills, concepts and knowledge that will enable individuals to make appropriate career choices and successful transitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up: Contacting former clients to see what has happened to them and if they need further help.
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(Cited in CERI, 1996, pp. 25 – 26)

These activities will particularly be helpful in boosting girls' self-esteem and job aspirations, as well as guide them into appropriate further education, training and career.

6.3.2. More effective assessment and reporting system needed to be applied.

Sections 5.2.5 and Figure 14a (vi) also indicated the need of more effective assessment strategies that have to be applied to benefit particularly the girls in rural secondary schools, who, from this research findings (see section 5.2.6) seem to have very low academic achievement in school. One of these assessment strategies is *self-assessment*. According to Murphy and Torrance (1988) and Withers (1991) it will benefit both the students and teachers in the following ways:

- i) Assessment practices involving student participation help boost student self-esteem; motivation and commitment to learning and can reveal information that teachers may not be able to access themselves. For example, teachers

may never find out what students really feel about their ideas and work if they only use strategies that rely on observation and test scores

- ii) Pupil comments can reveal problems, and the sources of problems, which are invisible to the teachers. They can also provide valuable feedback about the appropriateness and popularity of certain teaching methods, topics and the pace of teaching.
- iii) Positive effects experienced by pupils can be greater involvement in lessons and increased confidence when their assessment is taken notice of and when they are encouraged to be less negatively critical of themselves.

(Murphy & Torrance 1988, p. 59 and Withers, 1991, p. 9).

If given enough time and resources profiling scheme will be the best reporting strategy to apply. According to Murphy and Torrance (1988, p. 36), profiles have been claimed to provide one or more of the following:

- i) An holistic and individual assessment of a student which takes into account of all aspects of the students' unique educational experiences covering cognitive, practical and affective elements
- ii) Formative use of assessment information to ,outvote and guide all students in their learning
- iii) The opportunity to involve the student in self-assessment and in the discussion of their assessment with teachers, and likewise to increase student motivation to learn and to achieve
- iv) A detailed record of achievement in terms of the student's abilities, skills, experiences and qualities as a leaving certificate documenting what students have done.

Although these progressive approaches to assessments and reporting systems would support teaching and learning of all students, they may particularly assist female students who usually encounter more difficulties and impediments in succeeding at schools as discussed earlier in the thesis.

6.3.3. A need for teachers to improve pedagogy and subject knowledge to provide a learning environment free of stereotype views.

The biased curriculum discussed in section 5.2.5 and Figure 14a (vi) calls for teachers in the secondary schools to be more critical and reflective of their work so as to provide for a learning environment free of stereotype views. Also in so doing, they will be able to improve their pedagogy and subject knowledge to cope with the advancing information technology. This will help improve academic performances of the weak students in class. This may particularly help the girls.

It is very useful for teachers to reflect on and critically look at their own teaching and associated duties to see how their own work may inadvertently and imperceptibly negatively impact on girls' education and may even disadvantage them. For example, teachers directing their questions to boys more often, teachers paying more attention to boy's answers in class, using sexist language etc. could have negative impact on female students. This has in a way reinforced stereotype views in schools. Tripp (1993) suggested that teachers should build a 'file of critical incidents' on which teachers could reflect upon and improve their practices in relation to teaching girls. These files of critical reflection are more likely to challenge existing theories and practices (Dobbins et al, 1998). More importantly, a teacher who thinks deeply about his or her professional conduct and

the practices in a school is more likely to take initiatives to investigate textbooks and other schools materials for gender bias. He or she will also more likely to develop appropriate teaching materials and learning environments free of stereotype views.

6. 3.4 A need to minimize bullying and violence in schools

As shown in section 5.2.10 and Figure 14a (ix), bullying and violence in schools have led to students developing low self-esteem and negative attitudes towards schooling. This has affected, especially, girls' participation and hence academic performances in secondary education system. While all secondary schools have school rules for students to abide by, the following measures could be taken by teachers and administrators in schools:

- i) Teachers in schools need to promote harmonious relationships with the students. This requires teachers to create a caring culture in the classrooms and outside the classroom and should make efforts to remove occasions for bullying and violence.
- ii) Have educational counselors in schools.
- iii) Relationship between schools and the community should be strengthened in order to create a closer relationship with the parents.

By doing these, teachers will understand better the students' behavior, and respond to the students' needs and problems, particularly to those of the female students.

6.3.5. Gender awareness at the institutional level.

Schools should raise gender awareness and gender issues in schools through:

- i) Role-plays on gender issues.
- ii) Visiting Playgroups such as the '*Wan Smol Bag Theatre*' (a ni-Vanuatu theatre group – *One Small Bag Theatre*) with a specific theme on gender awareness and gender issues.
- iii) A visiting speaker on gender issues.
- iv) A gender awareness week where everyone should be made aware of how gender issues affect individuals, especially girls, and ways in which to address the issues.

These activities at the institutional level can help raise gender awareness amongst pupils at school, which also might help improve attitudes toward girls' education.

6.3.6. Encourage participation of women in decision-making bodies of the school.

Section 5.2.8 and Figure 14a (vii) shows that there is an under-representation or absence of women in the decision-making bodies of all the schools surveyed. This calls for the need to encourage more females to be involved in the decision-making bodies of the school. An initial step could be the provision of special training for women in areas of planning, leadership and management of the school. This will help boost women's confidence in involving themselves in the decision-making bodies of schools and girls will look upon them as successful role models.

6.4. Recommendation for improvements at the Community Level in Vanuatu

6.4.1. Gender awareness at the community level.

It was evident in section 5.3.2 and Figure 14a (xiii) and (xiv) that many people at the community level were just not aware of the importance of educating girls to the girls themselves, their families and their society. The Vanuatu National Council of Women (VNCW), has played an important role in organizing discussions and workshops at all levels of the society to develop women's awareness and knowledge of their legal rights and it also helped in many of the women's development in rural areas (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997a). It could also be used to raise the level of male awareness at the community level of the benefits from increased participation of girls and women in education and in income generating activities. In so doing, attitudes to girls' education at the community level may be improved.

6.4.2. Improve economic condition of families in the rural areas

The findings in Section 5.3.1 and figure 14a (xii) on the economical condition of families indicate an urgent need for the following activities to be carried out at the community level:

- i) Workshops to be conducted at the community level to teach people the importance of using and managing their time and personal finances more usefully.
- ii) Training should be provided to equip women at the community level with entrepreneurial skills. This training needs not necessarily be delivered by some 'expatriate experts' or 'people at the top'. Older women in the villages, for example, should be encouraged to transfer their weaving and sewing skills to the younger women and girls as part of the schools' vocational educational program.

With these skills and available time, women can contribute to the family income and this may help improve the economic status of the family. More importantly, from the family's improved economic status, girls are more likely to be enrolled in schools.

6.5. Conclusion

To conclude, this section is divided into two parts. The first part reflects on the formulated hypothesis: Have the hypotheses been proved? The second part looks at the summary of this chapter.

6.5.1 Reflection on stated Hypothesis

In preparation for this study, the researcher has formulated two hypotheses (see section 1.4) that formed the basis for the research. The two hypotheses were tested and the findings were as follows:

A. Hypothesis One:

- i) In terms of funding, the primary education consumed 77% of the total education budget compared to 18% for secondary and tertiary levels of education in 1995(see Section 5.2.3). According to interviews at the system level, the primary education level continues to receive a larger portion of education budget in order to cater for the fast growing population. The government, therefore, has prescribed a minimal fee to be paid by parents to support the running of the schools (see section 5.2.2). This has been a burden on parents and has limited girls' access to secondary education.
- ii) Resources in the secondary level of education are not only limited, but are also inequitably distributed. It was evident in section 5.2.9 that educational resources have been concentrated in two main provinces, Sanma and Shefa provinces, where the two towns are located. The two provinces therefore have more girls enrolled at the junior and senior secondary level of education compared to the other four provinces (see Table 4). The findings from the study has confirmed that some schools have fewer dormitories for girls compared to boys, female teachers comprise of only 36% compared to 64% of male teachers (see section 5.2.9).

From these findings, hypothesis one has been proven that concentration of resources at the primary level of education has influenced gender imbalance in the secondary education system along with other factors discussed in chapter 5 and outlined in Figure 14(a).

B. Hypothesis Two:

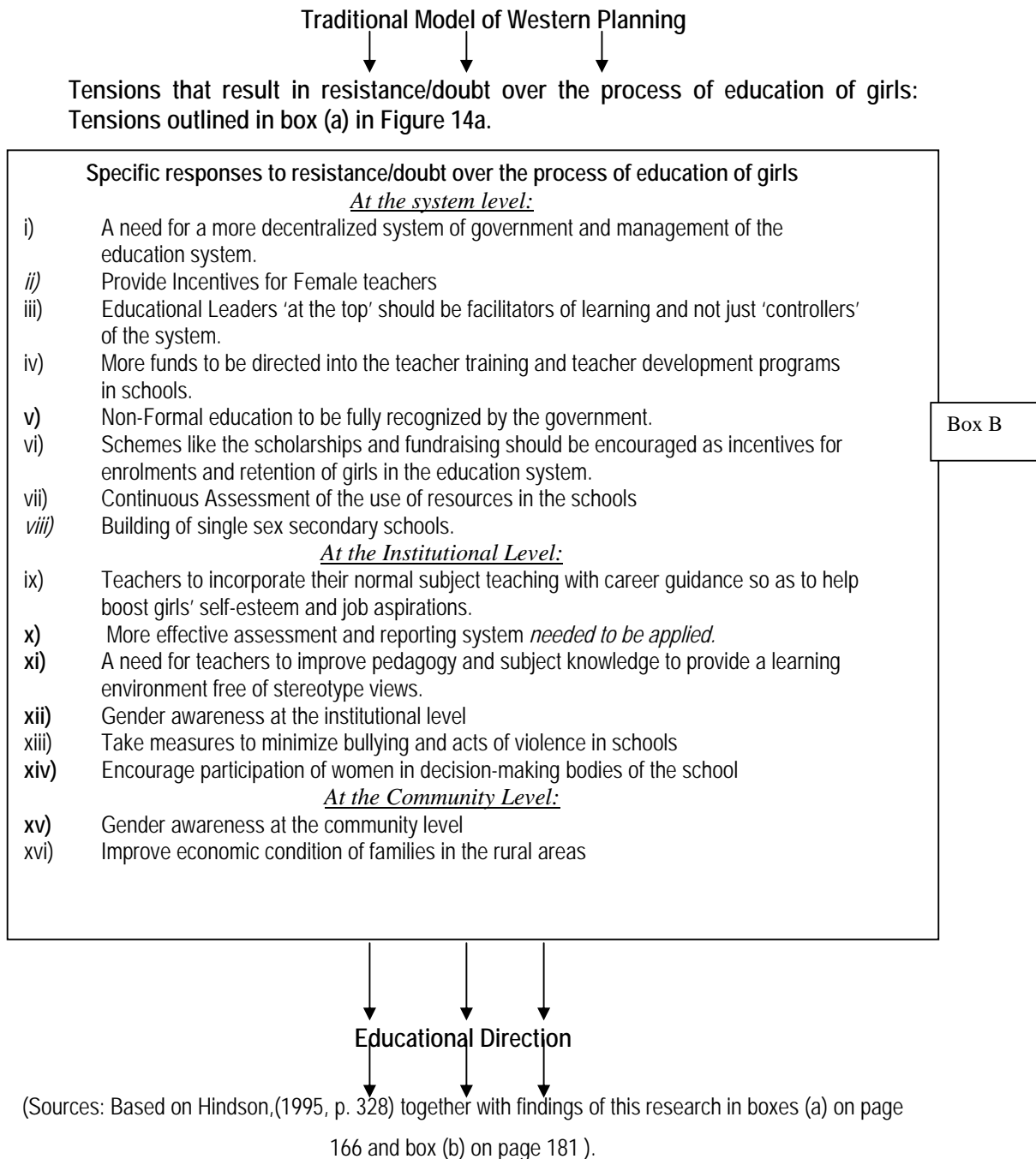
According to interviewees, the francophone interviewees strongly believed that the prevailing government policies do determine the access of girls to education. The anglophone interviewees, on the other hand, think that educational planning and policies were mainly in line with the development trends and therefore the use of English is needed by individuals to cope with the modern technologies. The following findings, however, partially prove hypothesis two: It was evident in section 5.2.11 that the educational planning and development were more in favor of the Anglophone community during the anglophone-dominated governments from 1980 – 1991. Many of the French schools during that period were closed therefore there was a drop in enrollment of francophone students and the use of the French language declined.

While this was mainly done to develop an integrated national system of education, and to cut down on the high cost of having to run two separate education systems after Vanuatu gained its independence in 1980, this has affected girls' access to and participation in education in Francophone schools.

6.5.2 Summary of chapter Six

This chapter has suggested some strategies that can be applied by the educational system, institutional and community levels to redress gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education level. This is briefly summarized using Hindson's (1995) adapted view of Educational Planning in Vanuatu with regard to gender equity in education in Figure 14(b) on the next page.

Figure 14(b): Hindson's (1995) adapted view of educational planning in Vanuatu with regard to gender equity in education: Specific responses to factors influencing girl's participation in Vanuatu's secondary education system.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Highest qualification by Urban/Rural and Gender

	Urban	Rural	Total
Never been to school	F 678 (52.7%)	F 9,784 (56.6%)	F 10,462 (56.5%)
	M 608	M 7,455	M 8,063
Been to school, but have no qualification	F 1,978 (51.7%)	F 12,555 (49.4%)	F 14,533 (49.5%)
	M 1,850	M 12,956	M 14,806
Primary Leaving Certificate	F 4,424 (50.5%)	F 13,471 (48.6%)	F 17,895 (49%)
	M 4,404	M 14,223	M 18,627
Yr 9 Certificate	F 664 (46.3%)	F 707 (42.6%)	F 1371 (44.3%)
	M 771	M 954	M 1725
Yr 10 Leaving certificate	F 1,946 (44.6%)	F 1,901 (43.1%)	F 3,847(44.1%)
	M 2, 421	M 2,507	M 4,928
PSSC, GCE,IGCSE	F 471(43.1%)	F 219 (40.9%)	F 690 (42.4%)
	M 621	M 317	M 938
Yr 13 Francophone	F 122 (45.9%)	F 42 (33.9%)	F 164 (42%)
	M 144	M 82	M 226
Vocational Certificate	F 253 (46.6%)	F 321 (33.3%)	F 574 (38.1%)
	M 290	M 640	M 930
Post secondary certificate	F 306 (43.7%)	F 249 (35%)	F 555 (39.3%)
	M 395	M 463	M 858
University Entrance	F 58 (36.9%)	F 18 (39.1%)	F 76 (37.4%)
	M 99	M 28	M 127

University certificate	F 100 (41.2%) M 143	F 40 (36.7%) M 70	F 140 (39.7%) M 213
University Diploma	F 116 (39.3%) M 180	F 30 (34.1%) M 58	F 146 (38%) M 238
University degree	F 132 (36.2%) M 233	F 24 (33.9%) M 47	F 156 (35.6%) M 280
Post graduate certificate	F 22 (32.6%) M 46	F 7 (35%) M 13	F 29 (33%) M 59
Post graduate diploma	F 20 (32.3%) M 42	F 6 (33.3%) M 12	F 26 (32.5%) M 54
Masters	F 21 (26.3%) M 59	F 6 (46.2%) M 7	F 27 (29%) M 66
PhD	F 8 (23.5%) M 26	F 1 (12.5%) M 7	F 9 (21.4%) M 33
Not Stated	F 165 (44.2%) M 208	F 263 (42%) M 363	F 428 (42.9%) M 571

(Source: National Statistics Office, 2000, cited in Strachan 2002)

Appendix 2: Copy of letter sent to key persons at the system level for interviews.

Vomaranda Joy Botleng

C/- USP student Mail

USP, Suva, Fiji Islands.

22nd May 2001

To _____

Dear Sir/ Madam

I am writing to seek your cooperation with a research study I am currently undertaking towards the award of a Masters of Arts at the University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji

My current research study entitled '**Critical analysis, from a planning point of view, of factors influencing gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary Education System**' aims to gather views and investigate structural and cultural barriers that cause gender imbalance in Vanuatu's secondary education. These issues are crucial to the health and stability of future Vanuatu societies.

The successful completion of this research study depends on the accessibility and availability of relevant data in Vanuatu both at the System level, the institutional level and the community level. I will be mainly using Interviews, Observations and Questionnaires to collect this data.

I would therefore be grateful if you could agree to be interviewed sometime *between the 16th July and the 8th August 2001* in Port Vila. If you feel that you can grant me an interview, please let *Dr. Tony Austin* (VASTEP, P.O Box 327, Port Vila. Tel: 26850) know of a suitable time and date within the period indicated above convenient to you. Any other questions regarding the research study may be directed to the Researcher, Vomaranda Joy Botleng, or the supervisor, Dr. Thillanayakam Velayutham, School of Humanities, USP, Suva, Fiji.

I thank you in advance for participating in this study.

Yours truly,

Vomaranda Joy Botleng (Mrs).

1. Educational Goals and Objectives (the government interviewees at the system level).

The long-term educational goal of Vanuatu (indicated in the National Development Plans) was for the provision of ten years of high quality education for the majority of eligible students.

- i) What do you think high quality education means?
- ii) Do you think that every child, regardless of what school he or she attends or what language he/she speaks (Francophone or Anglophone) receives quality education?

One of the main objectives of the education sector of Vanuatu, in the first National Development Plan (DP1) covering the year 1982 to 1986, was to ensure that *all* children over six years of age attend primary school.

- iii) Has this objective being achieved?
- iv) If the objective has not been achieved, what might some of the reasons be for not achieving this objective?

V 'All' children would also include the 'disabled' children and among these are disabled girls. In Vanuatu, you hardly see a disabled child in a 'common' classroom. Why is that so?

2. Relationship between education and development (All)

Many of the educational documents had this phrase, "education as the key to development" or "education as a fundamental tool for development". For example, during the Strategies Planning seminars held in 1997, many of the key persons in government used that phrase to stress the importance for education. Even in the CRP it stressed, "It (education) is the single most important tool for building an equitable society..." (Republic of Vanuatu, 1997:43).

- i) When you talk of development, what do you mean by the term development? Do you mean just "economic development" or are there other forms of development?
- ii) Do you think equity in access, participation and success of boys and girls in education has been achieved? If not, what do you think are the reasons?

3. *Educational providers (Only Government)*

As Year 2000 figures showed, the government operates 71 % of the primary schools, the private bodies operate 4% while the churches operate 25% of primary schools. At the secondary level of education, the government runs 52% of the secondary schools, the private runs 21% of the schools while the church runs 27% of the secondary schools.

Let's say that some of these privately run, and church run schools cannot afford or for some other reason had to close down their schools, which means that among those likely to miss out on education are girls, what will the government do in this case? Will it end up providing for this extra secondary school population? If nothing is done to help these students, don't you think the 'God-given talents' (CRP) may not be fully developed through education?

4 *Educational Planning, Policy and Decision-making (All)*

In nearly all countries, national policies are made in the bureaucratic or system level.

- i) In your experience, how much say or influence do people, especially women, at the community have in the kind of education the Vanuatu government has developed for Vanuatu?
- ii) In the Educational Planning and policy-making body of the organization, how many personnel are women?

5 *Francophone and Anglophone schools (All) (Hypothesis 2)*

From the Year 2000 statistics, there are 246 English Primary schools and 152 Francophone primary schools. At the secondary level of education, there are 38 Anglophone schools while there are only 20 Francophone schools. The government runs the highest number of schools with yet more English than French medium schools.

- i) Why do you think there are more Anglophone schools than Francophone schools?
- ii) In your own opinion, would you think politics also play a part, resulting in the differences in the number of Anglophone schools compared with the Francophone schools, for example with the Anglophone-dominated government from 1980 till early 1990s', showed a significant growth in the number of Anglophone schools? If so, what role do politics play?

6. *Educational resources (only government interviewee at system level) (Hypothesis 1)*

- Teachers

Teachers play an important role in implementing education plans and achieving educational goals.

- i) Where is teacher education in terms of Government priorities? (E.g. is the overall budget for teacher education increasing or decreasing?)
- ii) How many scholarships are offered for teacher education per year compared to the other professions?
- iii) By the scholarships offered to teachers, how do you see that as achieving equity between male and female teachers?
- iv) Do you think there is an equal number of female teachers to male teachers in the country?
- v) If less number of female teachers, what do you think is the reason for this imbalance?

- *Observations done in the schools (all): (working from assumptions that may be modified on more evidence).*

- i) There are more boys' dormitories than girls'.
- ii) Girls' dormitories are more crowded than the boys'.
- iii) There are more toilets for the boys than the girls.
- iv) There are more male teachers than female teachers.
- v) Most of the principals of the schools are males.
- vi) The decision-making body of the schools is mainly male dominated.
- vii) Sex-differentiation in schools in terms of offering separate male and female subjects, for example, Home Science for girls and Industrial Arts for boys.

- viii) If there is student involvement in school management (e.g. Prefects, Monitors), how are the student leadership distributed and their proportion.

From these observations,

- i) Why are there more facilities (e.g. dormitories, toilets) built for boys than for girls? Do you realize this is denying girls' access to secondary education and thus violating girls' rights to education?
- ii) Why is there less number of female teachers to male teachers? What criteria do you use to select your teachers? Do you select a certain teacher because he/she is in the same religion or because of his/her qualification (no matter what religion he/she in)?

1. Discipline in the schools (only institutional level)

- i) How do you discipline students when they break the rules?
- ii) Are girls disciplined the same way as boys?
- iii) How many students were suspended from school since the beginning of this academic year?
- iv) Of these students who were suspended, how many were girls?
- v) How many students were expelled?
- vi) Of these students who were expelled, how many were girls?
- vii) For what reasons girls were expelled/suspended?

2. Examination Performance (only institutional level).

- i) How many students took a national examination last year?
- ii) Of these students who took the national examination, how many were girls?
- iii) How many students passed the examination?
- iv) Of these students who passed the examination, how many were girls?

3. *Concluding Question (all).*

In Vanuatu, there seems to be a significant difference in the number of girls making the transition from primary to secondary level of education in comparison with boys therefore this research intends to investigate factors influencing girls' participation in the education system. However, we should address the reverse of this trend as well. That is, If more and more women enter the secondary education level and are employed in the workforce, what implications does this have on the subjects and training we offer in the schools so that boys would be more prepared to take up family responsibilities?

Appendix 4: School Questionnaire

Part A: Accessibility

1. How many kilometers is the school from the center of the community?

(Tick appropriate box).

Less than 5 kilometers	
5 kilometers	
More than 5 kilometers	

2. How do the students travel to school? (By boat, plane, foot?)
3. Have these travel arrangements prevented students from attending school (considering expenses on boat/plane and the distance traveled on foot)?
4. To what extent, accessibility and travel arrangements prevent girls from attending school

Part B: Personnel Characteristics.

5. How many teachers are currently teaching including any part-time or temporary teachers?
6. If these teachers are currently teaching at the school, how many are female teachers?
7. How many students are there in the school?
8. How many of these students are girls?

Part C: Physical structure of the School

9. How many classrooms does the school have?
10. How many boys' dormitories are there in the school?
10. How many girls' dormitories are there in the school?
11. Does the school have a reliable water supply system?

12. Does the school have a library?
13. Does the school have a science laboratory?
14. What is the ratio of Teacher to Student in a class?

Part D: Examination Performance

15. How many students took a national examination last year?
16. Of these students who took the national examination, how many were girls?
17. How many students passed the examination?
18. Of these students who passed the examination, how many were girls?

Part E: School Fees and Finance

18. For one academic year, how much is a typical student expected to pay to the school for tuition and registration fees?

Part F: Decision-making body of the school

19. Does the school have a school council/school committee?
20. How many people make up the school council or school committee?
21. Of these people in the school council or school committee, how many are women?

Appendix 5: Recording of Observations made during the fieldwork

Observation recording.

Questions	Summaries
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How many dormitories for:<ol style="list-style-type: none">i) the boysii) the girls2. Are the dormitories well secured to keep intruders out?3. How far are the toilets from the dormitories?4. How do girls dispose of sanitary pads? Are there any kinds of incinerators to burn or holes to dispose of sanitary pads?5. How many beds are there in each dormitory?6. Are there teachers' houses close to the girls' dormitories? If so, are they male or female teachers? Are the teachers married or single?7. Is the person responsible for looking after the girls a male or female?	

Appendix 6: Recipe used during the Taem blong Storian: Making Gluten Steaks.

Note: Gluten is the protein portion of Wheat flour. Gluten flour can be bought from the shops. This recipe, however, uses normal wheat flour and is cheaper.

Step 1: Extracting gluten from Wheat flour

Ingredients: plain wheat flour

some water

Procedure:

1. Put flour in a large bowl.
2. Add enough water to the flour to make dough.
3. Leave dough in the bowl and cover with water.
4. Let the dough rest for 3 hours.

** The three-hour waiting period was used for informal group discussions.*

Step 2: Preparing and Cooking Gluten

1. After the three-hour waiting period, the dough is rinsed in water. Keep on rinsing the dough until the water becomes clear (the gluten portion of wheat flour should at this stage feel like elastic).
2. Turn mixture onto a cutting board and shape into long roll about 5 – 8cm thick. Cut into 1cm strips and then drop into boiling broth.

Broth:

Ingredients:

6-8 cups water 1 garlic, crushed

1 onion crushed 1 tbs oil

Soya sauce

Seasoning (at the Taem blong storian, we used chicken flavoring from the Maggie Noodles bought from the local shop)

Procedures:

1. Fry onion and garlic in oil, in a large saucepan. Add water, Soya sauce, seasonings and boil.
2. When gluten pieces have been added to the broth, bring to boil again, cover and simmer for 40 minutes.

Some uses for Gluten after being cooked:

- Cut into fine pieces and use in soups and stews.
- Dip in egg and breadcrumbs and fry for main dish.
- Gluten pieces can also be simmered in gravy and vegetables then serve with rice or cassava (manioc) or dalo (taro).