



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF
GRADUATE STUDIES**

Girls' Career Choices and Aspirations:
The case of Two High Schools in Addis
Ababa Arada Sub City

By Liyu Makonnen

2007



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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
ART IN GENDER STUDIES

BY
Liyu Makonnen

June 2007
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Approved by Board of Examination

_____	_____	_____
Chair Persons, Department Graduate Committee	Date	Signature

_____	_____	_____
Advisor	Date	Signature

_____	_____	_____
Internal Examiner	Date	Signature

_____	_____	_____
External Examiner	Date	Signature

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and all the sources of information used for the study have been duly acknowledged.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Abstract

Most of the studies conducted about girls education focus more on access and general problems that they face than their decision making process. This study attempts to assess the factors that affect girls' career choice and aspiration. In order to do this in-depth interview is conducted with 21 girls and two focus group discussions with 14 boys and girls in each school. This study is conducted in tow high schools of Holy Trinity School and Menilik Secondary School which are found in Arada Sub-City.

The study finds that several reasons affect the choice of subjects and career aspirations. Some of the reasons are information that they are exposed to; the style of teaching; parents' education and income; siblings' inclination and performances in school; school and family environments. Girls' aspiration is life in general is by and large affected by the support that they get from their parents and siblings. In light of these findings it is imperative that a great deal of career counselling and dissemination of information is required in order to give girls the chance to explore their desired and inclinations.

Acknowledgement

Most of all I would like to thank God for giving me the wisdom and liberty to pass through Gender Studies and to work on this study. My next thanks go to the Institute of Gender Studies for allowing me to gain such an experience in the area of Gender Studies, particularly the Ethiopian context. I would not want to go without thanking my family especially my Husband and my Mother for giving me support and encouragement all the way through out my education and career.

I would like to acknowledge my Dad, who has passed away, for the lessons that he has taught me in being *Honest and Dedicated* in whatever work that I am engaged.

Finally my biggest thanks go to the two schools of Holy Trinity School and Menilik Secondary School and the students who participated in this study for willing to share their experiences in education and their lives

Acronyms

AAU: Addis Ababa University

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

Li: Liyu Makonnen

NGO: Non Governmental Organizations

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

Operational Definitions

- **Area of Studies:** are the two broad categories of subjects Art and Science
- **Career Path:** is the career that girls want to take after they finish school.
- **Fields of Studies:** are the different studies that universities have such as sociology, Economics and engineering
- **Girls' Aspirations:** are what girls aim or dream to have in their future lives including marriage and family life.
- **School Tradition:** includes some practices that go on in school that are considered normal specific to that school environment
- **Subject Choices:** are the choices that students make between art and science after they pass 10th grade national exam.
- **Teacher's Attitude:** is the attention and preferential treatment that teachers give to male and female students
- **Teachers' Support:** is degree and type of support that teachers give to their students to help students perform better in class.

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Chapter one

1.1 Introduction

“Wow, what a beautiful girl you are and you should become a model or participate in beauty contests,” Says A Teacher to one of his students

Sub Saharan Africa is one of the regions with the lowest girls’ enrolment in school (Rao and Smith, 2005). Ethiopia as one of the Sub Saharan countries shares this problem. This is as a result of several social and economic factors that prevail in this region. Even those few who have access to education drop out or fail to continue their education due to similar problems such as house work, poverty, lack of encouragement from parents and lack of exposure to the outside world. In a study conducted in Addis Ababa six high schools, there were more girl repeaters than boy repeaters (Emebet, 2000). It is not deniable however that there are some changes in the number of girls who are enrolled in school and who stay in school.

The new education system in Ethiopia makes students choose areas of study between science and art in 10th grade after they take the national examination. The choice is based on the grades that they have on subjects in science and art. Once they choose and start studying science which includes physics, chemistry, biology and drawing or art which includes history, economics, geography and business, they cannot go back and change the area. Therefore 10th grade is a stage where they make a decision that determines what they would become in the future. As a result students need information on what they could study in the future within the two areas of art and science.

When they join universities or colleges, after they finish second year preparatory classes students are also faced with making choices of fields of study and what to study for life is related to the career they want to pursue. Even though they have made the critical choice between art and

science, this is also the stage where they have to choose what they want to do for the rest of their lives. As in the choice that they made at the end of 10th grade they also need information about what each field of study is about and what they can do with it.

The aim of this research is to identify the factors that influence girls' career choice and their source of information. In studying this subject, what should primarily be addressed is the actual availability of options for young girls to make choices about what they aspire to be in the future or the career path they want to take. It may not be common for girls to think of carriers at a younger age. Yet there are girls in school who think about their future career and what they want to contribute to their country. Throughout this process girls use their ability to reason while at the same time being influenced and affected by different factors. Understanding this process will be advantageous for parents and other bodies such as schools and youth organizations in providing information and advice, which girls need to make these decisions. It is the hope of the researcher that the study results will provide additional information to the existing body of knowledge about young girls' career choices.

1.2 The Research Problem

Access to education is one of the main factors that determine the options one has regarding one's career. It is also determined by success in education. When we come to girls' access to education, it is clear that girls are at a disadvantage as compared to boys (UNICEF, 2005). Social and economic reasons are the highest-ranking factors among the determinants of access to education. Social and economic factors are often used as excuses for not letting girls attend school (World Bank, 2005). Although statistics show that there has been a general improvement in girls' access to education in the past few years throughout many countries, there has only been a slight improvement in Ethiopia (Ibid).

The fact that girls are enrolled in school does not guarantee that they will succeed and continue their education as per their aspiration. It has been seen in Ethiopia, that many girls repeat grades and drop out of school (UNDP, 2002). Girls in rural areas discontinue going to school earlier than those in urban areas as a result of traditional practices such as child marriage including continuous child bearing. Some in urban areas do manage to complete high school and may search for employment with whatever skills they have acquired in school. Most seek further training, in private colleges and other institutions mainly due to the fact that they are not able to enter universities. This is happening even under the condition that the government has taken affirmative action for girls to enter the university with lower grades than male students.

Urban girls who have either had or have not had the chance to go to college ultimately make career choices at one level or another. Among the several factors that influence these choices that educated girls make is access to information. Girls have to have adequate information about different careers and professions in order to make an informed choice and there are different sources of information. These include parents, siblings, schools, peers and other members of the community. In discussing how girls make decisions about which field of study or career to pursue, we need to examine how much access these girls have to the above-mentioned sources of information and support. The way girls are socialized in the family environment determines their courage to seek out information from parents and siblings. The educational, economic and marital status of parents makes a difference in the access to information and support that girls can get from both parents. The way teachers view female students also determines how much and what type of information they are provided with.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How do girls make career choices?
2. What are the factors that affect girl's career choices?

3. How do those factors affect girls' career choices, and
4. How much information do girls have while making career choice?
5. How are girls' aspirations affected?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General objective: - To assess the factors that affect girls' career choices and aspirations.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives:

- To assess the process of how girls make career choices
- To find out what factors affect girls' career choices
- To find out the factors that influence girls' aspiration.
- To find out how these factors affect girls while they make a career choice
- To find out how much access girls have to information that they need for decision making

1.5 Significance of the Study

Studying a specific group of people or the society in general contributes to development efforts made by both the government and other stakeholders. When specifically addressing women, their presence or their experiences in different studies is minimal due to lack of awareness of gender differences. Even if women are subjects of studies, it is common to only focus on adult women, leaving out young women. This study aims to bring out the experiences of young girls in terms of career choice, touching on the different dimensions of the process of making career

choices. This study also presents an opportunity to understand what girls experience as well as what potential they have that could be further developed.

The result of the study could be used especially by organizations working with young girls by incorporating the findings into their programs. It would also be informative for schools to deal with career development as a serious matter by relating education to career rather than simply providing education. In light of the limited role of parents, organizations working with both girls and schools can involve parents in the programs they have for girls. In general, this study will be an addition to existing and ongoing women studies in the country and will initiate further studies by schools, civil societies and individuals interested in gender studies.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

As a result of its qualitative nature and its focus on a specific group of girls the results of the study may not be generalized to the situation of all girls in Addis Ababa. Initial studies related to this topic done in Addis Ababa or in Ethiopia in general are minimal, thus limits the literature review, consequently the study depends mainly on studies conducted out of Ethiopia.

Chapter two

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Sources of information for Career Choice

Making choices is part of the human life and happens at many points. It includes choosing school, a spouse, where to live and career path. Information to make a decision on issues like career is found from several sources. In childhood information is obtained from the family and from contact with the outside world (Bender, 1994). Girls in general tend to favor non - hard science subjects than boys and as a result they score low in hard science subjects (Leka and Dessie, 1994). The choices that they make on subjects at early stages of school determine what they can study in the university.

Young girls in particular who have to make choices several times in their lives access information from their parents, siblings, friends and school (Bender, 1994). Parents provide information to their children both intentionally and unintentionally depending on their educational background, cultural believes and their awareness of the importance of information (Levine,1982). The first way of providing information for children is socialization in which parents make sure that children grow up knowing their roles and responsibilities as children, as boys and girls and as members of the community (Bender, 1994). In discussing “gender polarization” Sandra Lipsitz argues that society defines the different gender roles to men and women and make sure that they are followed using the mechanism of labeling those who don’t follow their roles as deviants (Lipstiz, 1993). Through the socialization girls and boys get information about what they can become and what they cannot become in the future (Levine,1982). This informs girls of their expected

roles and consequently affects what they aspire to be or which career path to take (Hensley, 2003).

There are cases where parents provide information to their children purposely to enable their children make informed decision in fields of study (Bender, 1994). In countries like Ethiopia parents go to the extent of choosing husbands for their daughters rather than giving advices to their daughters on how they can choose a husband. This shows the extent to which parents influence their daughters in decision-making.

Compared to boys, girls depend more on peer information to make decision in their lives (Miz-Hazab, 2002). However it is not always that they make choices based on information that they get from their peer (Bender, 1994). Young girls also acquire information from school and it includes teachers and the education itself (Ibid). Mostly it is during the time that students have to make a choice of field of study that schools think of providing information for students on different careers or fields of study (Parks, May 1976). On the other hand schools intentionally make an effort to inform students about their roles and responsibilities through different initiatives such as by including career education in the curriculum. (Kerka, 2000).

2.1.2 Parents

The extent to which parents' attitudes affects girls' education is something that is generally recognized and has been emphasized in Sub Saharan African Studies (Kwesiga, 2002). Parents are the ones who have the first contact with their daughters since the very beginning of their lives and socialize them (Anderson, 1997). It is in the family that girls learn about their position, roles and expected behavior in society (Ibid). Studies also show

that children rely more on their parents to get information about future life and career than other sources such as friends because parents have already experienced life (Kandel, 1981). Parents in Ethiopia send their daughters to school so they can get a better life and eventually get married to an educated man (Leka and Dessie, 1994). Yet parents also believe that girls' education is expensive because they get married early and go to another family without finishing their education (Ibid).

In the process of being socialized when children reach adolescence they begin to search for and develop identity through the roles socially and culturally assigned to them (Parente, et al, 2003). It is at this stage that girls begin to think of their future as to what they aspire to be and the career that would help them to attain their aspiration (Hensley, 2003). Girls in Ethiopia are expected to do a lot of household chores and take responsibility at home; while boys are not expected do so (Emebet, 2000). This is reflected in the socialization of girls and boys beginning in their childhood in their families, which they also grow up with. (Levine, 1982). However there is a great desire from both boys and girls to become independent of their parents reflected in their interest to have a secured job accompanied by success in work (Birhane, 2000).

Level of parent's education has its own contribution in how they socialize their children and how successful their girls could be in their education (Emebet, 2000). Leka and Dessie stress the importance of women's education in the education and career of young girls (Leka and Dessie, 1994). According to the same study many of the school dropouts in urban areas have mothers with low education level (Ibid). In a study conducted in Addis Ababa it was indicated that family income has its own influence on future aspiration of youth (Birhane, 2000). In low socio-economic families parents generally

encourage their children to do well in school and get a job that will improve their socio-economic status (Ibid). In addition the low economic condition itself encourages the children to perform well in school (Kandel, 1981). In general more girls want greater equality at home between men and women than boys. (Birhane, 2000)

In the case of Ethiopia where most of the people live under the poverty line parents may have to choose which children to send to school and they prefer to send male children to school (World Bank, 2005). Even if they send their daughters to school they may not have the money to buy school materials for the girls therefore it forces the girls to be engaged in income generating activities, which takes up their study time (Emebet, 2000). Due to distance from school, girls are also less encouraged to continue school (World, 2005), which could mean less career options or change of career choice in cases where they cannot join universities (Bender, 1994). Leka and Dessie confirm that many of the dropout and repeater girls in both rural and urban areas come from poor and illiterate or less educated families (Leka and Dessie, 1994). Many families in Addis Ababa also depend on the labor and income generated by their daughters (Erulkar and Getahun, 2003). Since parents depend on their children's labor due to poverty, it is more likely that they will keep their girls from school (UNICEF, 2005). Lack of time to study and lack of parents' support are some of the problems that girls mention in relation to their low performance in school.

The role of mothers is significant in informing their children, as they are more responsible to raise them than fathers (Rowbotham, 1973). In Ethiopia the adult literacy rate especially that of women is low (World Bank, 2005). About 33% girls from six high schools in Addis Ababa indicated that the highest education attainment of their mothers is elementary school (Emebet, 2000). Women including young girls are expected to do

household chores in both urban and rural areas of Ethiopia (Leka and Dessie, 1994). When compared to rural girls urban girls do less household work and therefore perform better in their education (Ibid). It is revealed in a study conducted in Addis Ababa that students with better academic achievement have higher educational and career aspiration (Birhane, 2000). Depending on the strong character that the mother has and the role that the mother plays, girls also identify with the mother's strength and roles which affects what they aspire to be and their career choice (Levine, 1982). In most cases children realize that fathers are more powerful in the house than mothers (Ibid).

2.1.3 Social Factors

Girls grow up believing that they have to get married soon and have kids especially in countries where tradition and culture are valued (Empey, 1958) such as Ethiopia. Career for these girls comes next to forming a family and they prefer to take roles that are needed in their families than their career (Bender, 1994).

Stereotyping of career as the women's career and men's career generally has a cultural base enforced by society through different means (Levine, 1982). Parents reflect their interest on what they want their daughters to be and the common professions reflected by parents are nursing or airhostess (Emebet, 2000). Boys and girls grow up seeing how their parents behave in the house and the social positions that their parents have related to their career, which is also how children are informed of the career paths that they are expected to take as male and female (Levine, 1982). "Traditional division of labor seems to be the rule in the homes of many respondents" (Emebet, 2000). In addition girls are engaged in household chores more than boys, which affects their aspiration for professional work (Birhane, 2000). Girls are expected to do well in school and at the same time

expected to take responsibility at home and this shows dual expectation from the society (Efosi, 2004). In addition they are not allowed to go and study with their friends or go to the library (Emebet, 2000). As opposed to girls, boys were allowed to study with their friends or go to the library (Ibid).

Due to these traditionally set professions girls have the tendency to choose their mothers' professions while boys tend to choose the traditionally male professions (Parks, 1976). On the other hand due to social status given to the profession many young people, both girls and boys, aspire to be electrical engineers (Birhane, 2000).

2.1.4 Siblings and Peer Groups as a Source of Information

Older siblings and peer groups have their own share of influence though peer influence is not seen as a significant factor in career choice (Bender, 1994). Friends influence each other in general and studies indicate that girls are more influenced by their peer than boys especially at early ages. (B. Kandel, 1981)

Girls are more vulnerable to the types of comments given by older siblings on their abilities and the career path they can take as girls (Bender, 1994). Older siblings in Ethiopia are mostly not able to complete high school and join university or higher education (UNDP, 2002). Older sibling's success in education has an impact on girls because they believe that they can also make it through their education and eventually their career (Bender, 1994).

Though the number of female students who enter the higher education has increased in Ethiopia the female students account for only 22.2% in 2002 (UNDP, 2002). In Addis Ababa only 38% of girls attend secondary school (DHS, 2005).

2.1.5 Schools' Role in Girls' Career Choice

Depending on the efforts made by schools to inform their students on career girls and boys begin to think of which career they are going to join to achieve their aspiration (Parks, 1976). Due to lack of information in an early age students tend to choose similar careers in schools (Ibid). Students who choose subjects in traditional way think of career less than those who attach career in the subjects that they choose while they are in school (Hensley, 2003).

In cases where students have low information about career they have a very limited understanding of how school and career are related (Kerka, 2000). It is not a new thing for schools to neglect the fact that they have to provide information to the students regarding career and related issues. Teachers have their own share in influencing students to choose career and one should not neglect the fact that teachers have their own biases about male and female students. "60% of teachers believe that girls are weaker in subjects like math and science" (Leka and Dessie, 1994). Many female students do not know how the teachers will treat them if they ask for help (Emebet, 2000). Majority of the teachers believe that girls have more academic problems than boys, need teachers support and are less competitive than boys (Leka and Dessie). However girls have the impression that their teachers don't think that they are good students and don't give them recognition (Emebet, 2000). Though teachers believe that girls need more support in their education they mistreat the girls when the girls don't respond well in class or perform less in their exams (Ibid).

41.8% of girls in 6 high schools of Addis Ababa feel very bad and worthless when ridiculed by their teachers (Emebet, 2000).

One way that teachers can influence students is by making subjects more interesting (Bender, 1994). Schools in Ethiopia accommodate a large number of students per class and the teacher student relation is very minimal due to the high number of students per teacher (World Bank, 2005). Therefore teachers might find it difficult to identify the talent and interest of each student and provide support. Lack of facilities including learning materials and poor teaching in schools is one of the problems indicated by girls themselves (Leka and Dessie, 1994).

A study in USA on best practices in middle school career education indicates that different measures were taken to help students build a connection between what they study in school and career life after school (Kerka, 2000). Some of the initiatives taken by these schools were mentoring students by closely assigning someone to mentor the student on what he or she can do to develop his or her career while in school (Ibid).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study uses two theories, which are cognitive theory and social learning theory with different and at the same time interrelated characters. Their definitions and how they are related to girls' choice of career are discussed below.

2.2.1 Cognitive Theory: “Cognitive development is the construction of thought processes, including remembering, problem solving, and decision-making, from childhood through **adolescence** to adulthood” (Encyclopedia of Children’s Health, 2006). Cognitive theory argues that people use their cognitive power or people use their reasoning capacity, while learning (Anderson, 1997). According to the theory the difference in the way adults and kids behave is not in that adults are smart and kids are “stupid” but it is attributed to the difference in quality of understanding and thinking (Huitt and Hummel, 2003). Jean Piaget says: “Behavior is controlled through brain organizations called schemes that the individual uses to represent the world and designate action” and this is how human beings are different from animals” (Huitt and Hummel, 2003).

2.2.2 Social Learning Theory: "Social learning theory approaches the explanation of human behavior in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental determinants" (Albert Bandura, 1977). The person, the environment and the behavior are at the center of social learning theory, mainly emphasizing how they influence each other in the learning process (Ormond, 1999). The theory claims that personality cannot be seen as “internal to the individual” only and that behavior as “an automatic response to an objective set by environmental stimuli” (Rotter, 1984). Social learning theory in general says that people can learn through observation (Bandura, 1977) of others’ behaviors and the outcome of the behaviors (Ormond, 1999). This argument is supported by Bandura’s criticism on learning through trial and error that cannot always happen, as it is time and energy consuming. Even though what we learn through trial and error tends to stay with us more than things we have learnt through other ways it is still not practical in terms of time and energy (Bandura, 1977). Observation according to this

theory begins from home by observing parents, siblings and peers and goes out to the outside environment including the media. (Ormond , 1999)

2.2.3 Cognitive Theory and Social Learning Theory Related to Career Choice and Aspiration

As stated above cognitive theory recognizes the cognitive abilities of people that differentiate them from animals and as human beings girls use their cognitive ability to make decision at different stages of their lives (Anderson, 1997). Children develop their cognitive ability through different stages and Piaget sees “assimilation and accommodation” in this process (Ibid). According to him assimilation is the process by which children use or transform the environment to fit into already existing “cognitive structures” (Huitt and Hummel, 2003). Girls do the same by cognitively processing the information that they gain as they grow up from the different sources. Accommodation means “changing cognitive structure to take something from the environment” (Huitt and Hummel, 2003). This is more related to learning to adopt new behaviors as things change in the environment and as children grow up. The degree of assimilation and accommodation is affected by how much the child interacts with the environment and the freedom they have to assimilate and accommodate (Anderson, 1997). In girls it is affected by the gender roles and behaviors that they are expected to have by the society. Due to the expectation for girls to stay at home most of the time, girls have less exposure to the outside environment, which limits the degree of assimilation and accommodation.

In the social learning theory observing models is taken as one of the major ways of learning behavior and as stated above it includes family, friends teachers and other members of the society. By directly observing how parents behave girls grow up learning certain behaviors using different levels of cognition. The frequency of observation of the specific behavior in relation to

remembering the behavior and the extent to which girls identify with it however influence the extent to which girls will practice that behavior (Bandura, 1977). Ormond's human learning theory argues that attention given to the behavior also matters in determining whether the girls follow the behavior or not (Ormond, 1999). In addition related to observing models, girls also observe others reaction to any behavior in which they see punishment or approval attached to the behavior. This affects girls' choice of career based on how people react to certain careers that they choose.

Cognitive theory argues that beyond what their parents tell them children have their own reasoning in understanding and aspiring to practice certain behaviors or careers (Anderson, 1997). Social learning theory agrees with this idea that children attach expectations as to the outcome of the different behaviors weighing the benefits attached to them (Ormond, 1999). Related to this girls' choice of career is affected by the benefits they attach to the different careers, which could be economic or social that motivate them to choose those careers (Bandura, 1977). Some Social learning theorists relate this to what children see in the media and indicate that even if kids and young persons are inspired by what they see in the media they think of the respect or rewards that they are going to get before they practice it.

Related to benefits social learning theory also says that ability to practice a certain behavior affects a person's decision of whether to practice the behavior or not (Ormond, 1999). Though girls aspire for some careers their educational level or other social and economic factors may hinder them to attain what they aspire.

Chapter Three

Research Design

3.1 Research Methodology

Among the main aims of gender related research is to bring out women's experience to be included in knowledge. This research focuses on the experiences of young girls and contributes to the existing knowledge about young girls in Ethiopia. Gender related research is also based on personal experiences of women and this research is also inspired by my personal experience when I was younger, trying to understand what I need to achieve my life goals.

It is a qualitative research using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, with the main objective of finding out what factors influence girls' choice of career. In addition it aims to find out what careers girls choose, how they make those choices and what sources of information they use while making those choices. It is more of an ethnographic study and aims to find out experiences of young girls through close and frequent contact. Interaction with the girls and establishing some degree of closeness or friendship with them will be helpful to get as much information as possible about the process of making choices of careers. Besides, the setting would be where the girls are and where they interact with other girls i.e. the two schools, even if observation will not be a data collection method to be used in this research.

3.2 Sampling Technique

The research used purposive sampling with the main purpose of finding those girls who are in the process of choosing subjects or areas of studies and who are about to make choices of fields of study before they enter the university. For the girls who are in the process of choosing careers two schools are identified. One is a private church owned high school and the other is a public school that accommodates a large number of students. The private school is owned by Holy Trinity Cathedral and most of the students are from middle and lower income class families. It is part of the church administration therefore there are church teachings up to grade 8. The public school has students from all classes but mostly from lower income class families. As a result of the large number of students in the school one class accommodates up to 80 students.

A total of 21 girls from the two high schools, 14 from Holy Trinity High School and 7 from Menilik School, are selected to participate in an in-depth interview. The reason for selecting 21 girls for the in-depth interview is to get as much information as possible and at the same time to have close and frequent interaction with the girls.

About 8 boys and girls were selected from each school to participate in focus group discussions with both boys and girls mixed. Two focus group discussions were conducted in the two high schools. The reason for selecting 8 girls and boys is to allow a deeper discussion for both verifying information gathered from the interview and also to allow sharing of experiences. In addition it was a good venue to see how girls and boys interact and discuss.

3.3 Method of Entry

This section discusses how the research participants are approached and ethical issues involved in this process.

As a result of my previous work I had the chance to work with Arada Sub City Youth Association that supports high school girls. First I contacted the youth association to establish contacts with the schools. A formal letter was written to the schools so as to get permission to choose and talk to the girls. Girls from both 10th grade and second year preparatory are selected from the school rosters. This is done in order to include girls from art and science areas; and girls with different class performance level. Then the next step would be contacting the girls chosen by going to their class with the help of a teacher or a school staff that they trust.

I have talked with the girls, explaining the purpose of the interview and what their contribution is for the study. After I studied their interest to be interviewed informed them what the interview includes and asked them for consent to be interviewed. After they gave me their consent they were asked to sign the paper of agreement to show that they have agreed to be interviewed. In addition I have explained that the information that they give will be presented in a way that no one recognizes their names and no one will find out what they said.

3.4 Procedure of data Collection

Two methods of data collection were used in this research. These are in-depth interview and focus group discussions. The first was in-depth interview to be followed by focus group discussion. The reason to use both methods is that the information gathered from the in-depth interview was strengthened through the focus group discussions. It doesn't however mean that I started the interview right away because girls had to be prepared and feel comfortable to talk to me

about the issue. Time was spent with the girls to establish the relationship that allows more informal conversation and more at ease discussion in the interview and focus group discussions. Male students who participated in the focus group discussions were prepared to participate in the research as the girls so that they can feel comfortable.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

As stated above two methods of data collection were used, which are in-depth interview and focus group discussion.

3.5.1 In-depth Interview

In-depth interview is one of the major methods of data collection used in this study with the main purpose of gaining as much in-depth information as possible from the girls. I was engaged in in-depth interview with 21 girls. Two types of interviews were conducted with them. They are unstructured conversation type of interview and the other is semi-structured interview. The unstructured interview was conducted with the intention of knowing the girls more and preparing for the main semi-structured interview. The conversation was generally about their life and things that they are engaged in currently. It also included things about past life and family life in order to see how much comfortable they are to talk about family life and their past. In addition it was to see their interest to participate in the research and get their consent. Here they were informed that there will be anonymity and confidentiality through out the time. Once they agree to participate in the interview they were asked to sign an agreement of consent. This interview was off record as it is done for preparation but it informed the semi-structured interview.

The main semi-structured interview was conducted using an interview guide, which includes discussion points. It begun by opening conversations about current issues related to the

topic of discussion such as talking about how school is going on with the new academic year. Then gradually the interview continued with simple questions about the interviewee such as how their childhood was like or what they like to do as a hobby. Then the discussion followed the guiding questions and continued also as a conversation based on new ideas raised by the interviewee during the interview.

It took about 35-45 minutes but not more than 55 minutes and at times when things go out of the topic I steadily geared the conversation back to the topic without hurting the feeling of the interviewee. The questions were presented in a clear and understandable manner to make the conversation freer. I continuously checked if what I say is understandable and clear. To avoid discouraging the interviewee to talk more about the issue and freely I tried as much as possible act neutral to things that may seem unbelievable or contradicting. The informality may be expressed in this interview where as a young person we had a lot to talk about life and I sometimes shared my experience when necessary and appropriate. I kept on remembering that I am in the process of interviewing someone and even if it is not a very formal discussion keeping in mind that I also have limited time, therefore I tried to be careful and controlled time.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion

The reason for using focus group discussion is primarily to verify data gathered through the different interviews. It is also believed that the focus group discussions provide more information about how girls see their career and related problems as a group. It was also a forum to exchange ideas and inspirations related to career. In addition it brought the insight of male students and additional information on how male and female students interact.

To make the discussion freer girls and boys who know each other were selected to participate in the discussion. The selection was systematic to include girls and boys who are not

afraid to talk with each other and yet not all close friends who reflect the same experience and also dominate the discussion. As it is common for discussion to be dominated by some people, those who speak less were given more chance and encouraged to talk by informing them that their opinion is important and there is no wrong or right answer.

The focus group discussion was guided by discussion points, which were enriched as the discussion went on. The amount of time allocated was two hours as it is a discussion and also involves a number of people. The discussion was recorded with a tape recorder.

3.6 Research Setting

The two schools of Holy Trinity High School and Menilik Secondary School are the research settings. Holy Trinity School is a church owned public school while Menilik Secondary School is a government-funded school, both located in Addis Ababa Arada Sub City. Arada Sub City is part of the city with a large number of population and visible poverty and poor housing.

The reason for me to select these schools is because I had once the chance to work with Arada Sub City Youth Association. The work involved high schools from the sub city for girls' life skills contest. I had the chance to see girls' talents and meet with some of the girls on the contest. After the contest I had the chance to meet with some of the girls from the two high schools regularly for some time and in these times we talked about their school life, their interest in life skills contests and what they want to be in the future. This gave me the chance to get some idea about how much girls have access to information and support from their surroundings when they choose career. Here is a discussion I had with one of the girls that inspired me to further study the issue.

Li: What do you want to be in the future?

Gi1: I want to be a model

Li: Do you know what is involved in the modeling work and how you can be a model?

Gi1: Yes I know. First I have to contact modeling agencies and try to be employed as a model, which is going to be a little difficult because of the system. After I join the modeling and work for some time I will get in a beauty contest and that would be the end of my modeling career. Then I will join the academic sphere and will do something professional.

This girl made me think of what made her think like that and how she reached this decision of what she wants to be. The other girls' inspiration to do different things in the future, was also very interesting and all of these made me think of what I went through to choose the area of study and the kind of work that I wanted to be involved in. It is this experience that made me want to continue my study around this issue.

3.6.1 Holy Trinity School

Holy Trinity School is owned by the Holy Trinity Cathedral, under the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. It is located in the church compound as a continuation of the elementary school that was found long before the high school. The high school was officially opened in 1996 E.C. (in 2002) and the first school leavers are going to finish second year of preparatory by the end of 1999 E.C (mid 2007). It is directly controlled by the church administration, which is involved in most of the decision that takes place in the school. The language of instruction is English.

There are 28 male teachers and 6 female teachers. I witnessed the less number of female teachers while I was observing the school on my first day. Most of the students who attend this school are from middle class families. There are 706 girls and 540 boys from grade 7 up to 12th

grade. One can observe that there are more of girls than boys in the school in general. There are up to 53 students in one class and there are up to 6 sections for one grade. The second batch of 10 graders took the national exam in the previous year and so far the school has been successful in having majority of the examinees pass to continue in the academic stream. By the end of the current Ethiopian year the first batch of high school students will take their school leaving exams. The school provides tutorial classes for 10th grade and preparatory 2nd year students as they are going to take national exams.

The school compound is very small but has a new building that constitutes 25 rooms. There is a very small playground, which forces the students to spend their break time on the corridors of the building near their classes or in their classes. The students are expected to wear uniform and boys wear long pants with a vest while girls are allowed to wear only skirts with a sweater or a vest. Boys and girls have separate toilets built in a way that keeps the privacy of students. There is a big library separate from the building. There is a place in the building where students can buy soft drinks, tea and some pastry, but it does not have any space for students to sit. In addition it is located very near the teachers' room. The students line up in front of the building before they get in class in the morning, where they do the Morning Prayer and sing the national anthem. It is also at this time the school announces anything different matters such as change of rules in the school.

When students go out of the class during breaks one can see that the girls are with the girls and the boys are with the boys. Gradually during the break time some of them mix and talk or just chat and separate. They don't seem to mix at all when they eat during the first break. Some of them eat in class with out any tolerance to get out side. Most of the girls however eat outside sitting in a shade or quiet place. In the early afternoon break most of them gather and talk or buy soft drinks and pastry. This is the time when guys and girls relatively mix and laugh.

Though the medium of instruction is English it is not common to hear students speaking in English. Even on English day when students are all the time supposed to speak in English it was difficult to find one student speaking in English. On this day I was in the school and I observed that all the teachers were trying to speak in English while most of the students couldn't respond to them in English. Even some of the teachers couldn't express themselves in English very well or as much as they are expected to.

Table 1 Holy Trinity Secondary School

	Name of Student	Who they live with	Siblings	Grade	Number of years student stayed in the school	Favorite subject
1	Alm	With mother only, father passed away	One brother and cousins	12	Four	Chemistry
2	Ami	With her brother and his wife,	Brother and nephew	10th	Four	Biology
3	Eza	With two parents	A sister	12th	Six	Economics
4	Bez	With father and step mother	Two brothers and one half sister	10th	Two	Biology
5	Eni	With mother and father passed away	One sister	12th	Three	Civics
6	Lem	With parents	One sister and one brother	12th	Five	Geography
7	Lom	With parents	One brother	12th	Twelve	Math
8	Casi	With mother and uncle, father separated with mother	One brother	12th	Three	Physics
9	Mon	With mother and father passed away	One brother and one sister	12th	Six	History and Chemistry
10	Mess	With grand mother and cousins, mother and father separated, mother lives abroad	None	10th	Ten	Civics and biology
11	Sal	With both parents	A sister and two brothers	12th	Three	English
12	Rati	With mother and father and mother separated	One sister and two brothers	12th	One	Biology
13	Reda	With mother and father separated with mother	One sister	10th	Two	Biology
14	Wag	With mother and father separated with mother	None	10th	Ten	History

3.6.2 Minilik Secondary School

Minilik Secondary School is one of the oldest high schools in Addis Ababa. It was found at the time of Emperor Minilik. It is one of the government-sponsored schools that accommodate 4,170 students both boys and girls and about 65% of the students are females. There are a lot of classrooms in two buildings facing each other including teachers' rooms and toilets. However toilets for the students are located in a far place in the compound and they are not clean. There is a large space between the two buildings that is used as a gathering place for the students. There are also basketball and volleyball fields that are used by the students during sport period and break time. There is also a small football field in front of the big computer laboratory. There are two libraries that are big but not enough for all the students.

This school teaches students in two shifts in the morning and afternoon. While the morning shift students take class afternoon students can study in the library and the other way round in the afternoon. The classes in this high school are given by plasma TV assisted by a teacher that knows the subject. The lectures are directly transmitted from South Africa and the teacher in charge operates it. If a teacher misses that class students operate the TV by themselves and take the class. There are more male teachers and most of the female teachers are older women, who have been teaching at the school for many years. Students have to have their ID to get into the compound and a student in the morning shift is not allowed to sit in an afternoon class.

Students are not allowed to go out of the class during class hours. There are assigned teachers for controlling the students. This arrangement was made to prevent students from missing classes without being noticed. One tradition that the school was known for was having a lot of students missing their classes. There is a 15 minutes break for the morning shift students and most of the students use this time to gather and chat while some play football, basketball and volleyball. Some gather and watch the games. Though most of the students come out of class in same sex

groups they mix around the games or in the field in front of their classes. Even if most of the players of the games are male there are a few known females that play football. There is a place where students can buy soft drinks and some pastry and in front of it is found a big old water container in the ground. There is also an HIV information cabin that transmits HIV related messages and also distributes brochures and leaflets, supported by a local NGO.

The school also accommodates blind students in special classes with their own teaching aid. Therefore one can notice a number of blind students gathering and talking about different things. They seem to be confident and always together, which shows that they help each other as they share the same problem. They also interact with the non-blind students though it is limited.

As in Holy Trinity School the medium of instruction is English but students don not use English outside the class. Most of the students who come to this school are from low income families and a few from middle and upper class families. They all wear blue uniform and girls are supposed to wear skirts with vests and white shirts while boys are expected to wear long pants. However there are girls who wear long pants and one can witness that only a few students wear their uniform properly.

Table 2 Minilik Secondary School

	Name of Student	Who they live with	Siblings	Grade	Number of years student stayed in the school	Favorite subject
1	Mini	With mother and grand mother	Two sisters and one brother	12th	Four	Biology
2	Aji	With both Parents	Three sisters and two brothers	12th	Four	Chemistry
3	Net	With mother and father passed away	A brother and a sister	10th	Two	Math
4	Bel	With mother	A brother	10th	Two	Biology and Physics

5	Mati	With both parents	A twin brother	12th	Four	English, Amharic and History
6	Fask	Alone (Orphan)	None	12th	Four	Biology
7	Jap	With grand parents, mother living abroad	None	12th	Two	Economics

3.7 Method of Recording, Managing and Analyzing of Data

3.7.1 Data Recording

For the in-depth interview a tape recorder will be used to record each interview and in addition a note will be taken to complement the information if need be after the interview. After each interview the tape was listened in order to get additional points to consider and improve the process of interview for the following ones. In the focus group discussions a tape recorder was used to record the discussion.

3.7.2 Data Management

After each interview is completed the cassettes were labeled with the number given to the interviewees. Then after all the interviews are completed and I am sure that I don't need another interview with them the cassettes were transcribed. If there are additional notes on the particular interviewee it was attached with the inscribed interview. For the focus group discussions the tapes were transcribed related to the notes taken during the discussions. The transcribed data was put separately given numbers as per each focus group discussion.

3.7.3 Data Analysis

The initial stage would be reading each transcribed interview and focus group discussion deeply with the purpose of identifying categories from the data. This reading was done with out any direction but was guided by the literature review and theories in mind. After repeated reading categories were identified and were used to develop a coding guide. Literature review and theories were employed here in the process of developing the guide. Then using the guide the data was coded and put under each category of the guide based on their relation with the categories. Then the data was interpreted by assessing relations of data within the categories and between categories. There was a continued use of the theories and the literature review.

Chapter Four

Empirical Findings on Career Choices

This chapter of the study presents the findings from interviews and focus groups discussions with participants of the research on girls' career choices. Several factors have different degree of influence on girls' choices of subjects and areas of study. Though high school is a very early age girls also think of career paths that they want to take after they finish school. Girls give various reasons for career choices that they make and the reasons include information that they get about different fields of studies, support that they get from family and friends, job opportunities and income. Sources of information about different careers vary for the girls depending on their interest to inquire about careers and family support that they get. Friends also play a considerable role in accessing information about different fields of studies and related careers.

Depending on the family income and attitude, girls are given several household responsibilities and chores such as cooking, cleaning and managing some expenses. Though the degree varies household responsibilities affects girls' study time, which in turn affects how much they perform in class. Ability to perform well in one subject is one of the influencing factors for subject choices.

Schools have their own contribution in choices of girls on subjects. Even though extreme demarcation of careers and fields of studies as for girls and boys is not reflected in the schools, the way teachers perceive and treat girls have their own contribution on what girls want to study. Teachers attempt to make students understand and score good in subjects that they are teaching with their capacity and definition. The definition of good quality of teaching may appeal to

students depending on their definition of good teachers. Teachers make a significant difference in how much students like the subjects and want to continue learning them.

4.1 Subject choices

Girls get the chance to learn the different art and science subjects beginning from 7th grade. After they finish 10th grade national exam they are expected to choose between art and science subjects in line of their interest and career paths they want to take. However their choices are influenced by several factors in girl's lives. One factor is the interest that girls develop as they learn the different art and science subjects. Teachers contribute to the interest that girls develop or lose through out their educational experience particularly beginning in 7th grade. Girls sometimes link career interest that they have with subjects when they choose between art and science. Girls sometimes decide to choose subjects based on discussions and experience that they share with their friends. In the long run the subject choices that they make between art and science determine what they can study in the university and career path they can take after they finish school.

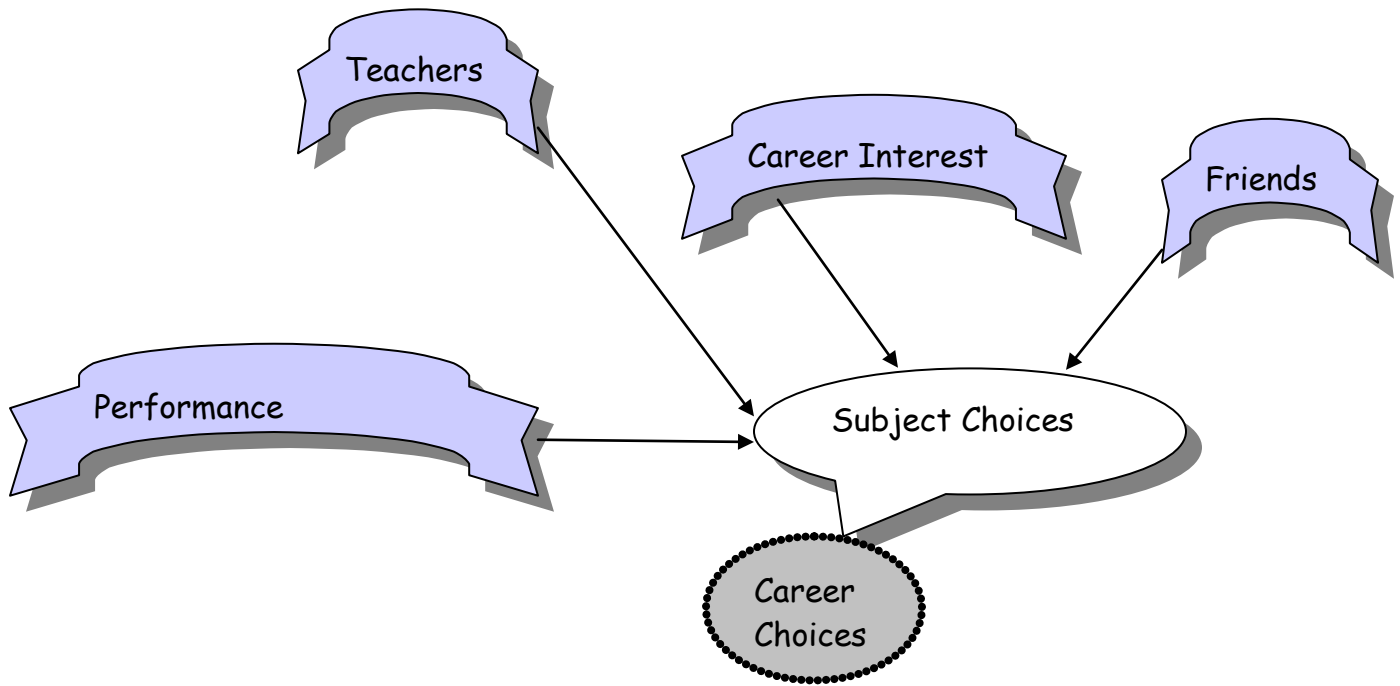


Figure 1: Model for the Relationship between Subject Choices and Career Choices

BY: Liyu Makonnen

4.1.1 Interest and Performance

One of the factors that influence girls' choice of subjects and areas of study is their interest and ability to perform well in that particular subject. In Social Learning Theory ability to practice a certain behavior is stated as one of the factors that affect a person's decision to practice the behavior or not. (Ormand, 1999)

Alm's favorite subject is chemistry and she is studying science. However her main reason to study science is because she does not like art subjects.

Li: Why did you decide to study science?

Alm: Because I don't like art subjects. I don't have the patience to sit and read things. I don't like history because I don't like sitting and reading and I always forget what I read.

Li: What is it that you like about science subjects?

Alm: I like calculation and I like chemistry and math but I don't like physics.

Ami has a similar reason for wanting to study art though her favorite subject is biology

Ami: I like biology because I like knowing about flowers and their bodies.

Li: Do you want to study art or science?

Ami: I want to study Art

Li: Why

Ami: Because I don't like math and I also like reading.

Li: So are you willing to give up biology for math and calculation subjects.

Ami: Yes

The biases that students have on subjects and their interests affect their choices of subjects.

There are students who are interested in reading combined with some calculation and there are those who prefer calculation than any kind of reading. Ormand's human learning theory argues that attention given to a certain behavior matters in the decision girls make to follow the behavior or not (Ormand, 1999). It is based on their interest on the subject that girls give attention to the subject or not and this in turn affects their performance on the subject.

The reason that girls give for liking combination of reading and calculation is that pure reading is boring. Eza is an art student but she likes the combination of reading and calculation

Li: what made you interested in economics?

Eza: Me ... I am a social science student and I don't like the other subjects like Geography and History. I like economics because it is a combination of math and reading so it is not boring.

On the other hand Eni likes reading a lot and she likes most art subjects as they involve a lot of reading.

Li: Why did you get into art?

Eni: It is very interesting and I like the subjects like civics and economics

Li: Why are they interesting?

Eni: I like reading a lot so since all art subjects are related to reading I like them all.

Girls use information that they have on the different subjects and areas of study to decide which one to follow. Girls have the experience and information on different subjects and fields of studies from their earlier classes. They use their cognitive abilities to make this decision. This is supported by the definition of cognitive development, which involves the construction of thought processes (Anderson, 1997). Given that girls have the experience in learning the different art and science subjects they are able to reason out and decide which area of studies best suit them.

Lom is one of the science students who hate reading though she is not very good in some of the science subjects. Students start being exposed to different science and art subjects since 7th grade and they grow up understanding what differentiate the two areas of study. Lom has passed through this process as high school student and she used her experience and developed thought to decide which area of study to choose when she finished 10th grade. She knows that if she studies art she is expected to read a lot as a result she chose to study science. Social learning theory argues that people attach expectations to certain behaviors and as a result decide which behavior to follow (Albert Bandura, 1977).

Li: Why did you decide to study science?

Lom: Because I don't like Art subjects. I particularly don't like history, it is just sitting and reading. It also involves a lot of memorizing and I get tired of this kind of things. I also think why bother about what is past what is past is past why do I care?

Li: Do you like the science subjects?

Lom: Yes I like them and I understand them except chemistry and physics. I find them a little difficult. The problem with chemistry is the last year teacher I had. But physics I work very hard and yet I don't get a good grade I don't understand what. I get the theory but I have a problem with the calculation in the exam.

Mini from Minilik School has a similar experience with Lom in physics though she wants to study science.

Li: Do you want to join art or science area?

Mini: I would like to study science. But I don't think I can join the science area because I don't understand physics. It is very difficult for me.

Some of the girls have a problem of deciding because they like some subjects from science or art and at the same time they are not good at some other subject in the area that they are interested in. When they face difficulty to decide it sometimes looks like they are not using their cognitive powers in the decision making process. However it is when they put a lot of information in the process and also have specific choices that do not fit in the school system. This means that the school provided limited options for areas of study to choose. Bel is one of the victims of this kind of experience from Minilik School

Li: Do you want to study science or art?

Bel: I prefer art because I don't like math

Li: But you said that you like biology and physics and you also understand them why do you choose art?

Bel: The mathematics given for science students is very difficult because it involves logarithm. The other problem that I have is history I don't like it and I don't understand it so it is difficult for me to decide right now.

Li: But if you have to choose which one do you think you will choose?

Bel: I would probably choose science

4.1.2 Teachers

Many of the girls expressed their interest in the subject because of the teacher who is teaching it or who first taught them. One of the ways teachers can influence girls to choose subjects, is by making it interesting (Bender, 1994). For instance Fask from Minilik School said that she likes biology and it started in 7th grade because of her biology teacher.

Fask: I like biology

Li: Why?

Fask: because I had really good teachers since we began learning it in the 7th grade and this helped me to understand it very well. When I read it I don't think of it as a subject that I have to study but as something that I read for fun.

Lem from Holy Trinity School shares the same experience with Fask. Not only did she like the subject because of the teacher but it also made her decide to study art instead of science.

Li: What is the subject that you like most?

Lem: Geography

Li: Is it because of geography that you decided to study art?

Lem: Yes and I also hate math and calculation related subjects

Li: Do you like the subjects in art?

Lem: Yes when I was in 10th grade I used to like our geography teacher. She is the one who made me like geography and history.

Bez likes biology and she understands it very well because of her teacher, however she is willing to give it up and study art because she likes art subjects such as history more.

Li: What is it that you like about biology?

Bez: The teacher is really good and it is really good when the teacher is good

Li: Do you want to study art or science?

Bez: Art because art is interesting

Aji expresses how her chemistry teacher made her like the subject since 7th grade and how she continued to like it. She even has decided to study pharmacy because she likes chemistry.

Li: What is the subject that you like most?

Aji: I like chemistry

Li: What do you like about it?

Aji: I have the base from 7th grade and my teacher made me like it. She was a very good teacher and she also taught us biology and I like both subjects as she helped me build the base from the beginning.

Li: What do you want to be in the future?

Aji: I want to study pharmacy and be a pharmacist because I like chemistry and biology

Casi likes physics because of her teacher as a result she has decided to study science. Casi used to like biology before but disliked it because of the teacher.

Li: Why do you like physics?

Casi: It is because of our teacher. I had a very good physics teacher in 8th grade but before that I used to like biology but our teacher in 8th grade was not good so after that I shifted to physics.

There are also girls who hated a subject because of the teacher and decided not to take anymore. Wag shares her experience with her chemistry teacher, who was the reason for her to change her interest in chemistry.

Li: Do you want to study art or science?

Wag: Art

Li: Why?

Wag: Because I don't like chemistry. It is because of the teacher I hate it. I was good in chemistry when I was in the 7th grade but now our chemistry teacher does not know how to explain things.

Li: What is the problem with that teacher?

Wag: Well he does not have a welcoming face. He does not have a good way of teaching and no one understands what he says. The problem is not only with me but most of us.

Mini's experience with her physics teacher has made her struggle to choose between science and art. The bias that was created in her mind about physics was not just because of the teacher's method of teaching but also lack of understanding from the teacher to forgive her simple mistake. Her interest is to study science and she likes biology but because she does not like physics and she is faced with changing her mind on studying science.

Mini: I like Biology because I understand it very well and because it talks about plants. I am more interested in plants and I would wonder about how they grow and develop. I spend time looking at plants around me

Li: Do you want to study art or science?

Mini: I would like to study science but I don't think I can join the science area because I don't understand physics. It is very difficult for me.

Li: Why is it difficult for you?

Mini: It is because of my 9th grade teacher. Before that I was good in physics when I was in 7th and 8th grade but since 9th grade I hated it. I repeated 9th grade, not because my grade was low but because I forgot to write my name on my physics exam and the teacher refused to fill my grade on my report card. At first the teacher made me think that he was going to fill it on my report card and I did not follow it up on time, then after sometime it was too late to ask him to fill it for me. The school refused to let me pass because of that. Even before that I did not understand what the teacher was teaching. All these things added I hated the subject and I still have not liked it. It is because of this that I don't think that I will study science.

4.1.3 Career Interest

At times girls decide on the area of study that they want to continue studying and subjects that they like based on what they want to be in the future.

Eza shares her experience in deciding to study economics like this:

Li: What is the subject that you like most

Eza: I like Economics

Li: Why?

Eza: Because I want to be an economist

Lem has a similar interest in geography because of what she wants to be in the future

Li: What is the subject that you like most?

Lem: Geography

Li: Why

Lem: Because I like archeology and study of the earth. I also like it a lot because it is challenging

Mati want to study literature and she has decided to study art. She also likes subjects that are related to literature.

Mati: I like most art subjects including English, History and Amharic.

Li: What do you like about these subjects?

Mati: English is an international language and also because I know it better so that is why I like it.

I like Amharic because I have the interest literature. I also like stories so that is why I like history.

Li: Why did you choose to study art?

Mati: Because I like literature

Similarly Fask decided to study science because she wants to study medicine when she joins the university.

Li: Why did you want to study science?

Fask: because I like biology and chemistry; and I also want to study medicine in the future.

4.1.4 Friends

Though not expressed by most girls, there is the experience of one girl who decided to study art because of the influence of her friends.

Li: why did you decide to study art?

Mon: because I hate physics and math, but used to like and was good at biology and chemistry. I had the grade to get into physics but was afraid of physics. I've always wanted to work in the laboratory and be a chemist but was also afraid of being assigned to a very difficult field like engineering when I join the university. Everyone in my family wanted to me to study science but could not and plan to do my second degree in science related fields. But still inspired when I see chemists

Li: oh okay. This is amazing that you gave it up so easily. Who made you give up the subject that you like so much?

Mon: first of all it is my friends, they all got into art and they all don't like math.

Some of them liked chemistry and biology and hated physics, some of them liked biology so much but they hated chemistry and physics, some of them liked physics but not biology and chemistry so we all gave up one thing or another. But in social since we all believed that whether we like it or not, it would not be that much difficult to study because it is just reading while the science subjects need a lot of hard work.

4.2 Choices of Fields of Study

Girls develop interest to join different fields of study in the future, beginning from high school based on several factors. They think of possible options that they have, the fields of study that they choose and the time that they plan to study them. This is related to the career path they want to take. They access information about fields of studies from different sources including

family, friends, neighbors and teachers. Young girls in particular who have to make important choices several times in their lives access information from their parents, siblings, friends, school, and media (Bender, 1994). It is mainly based on their ability to perform in subjects and the interest that they make choices on what they want to study. However information that they get from the different sources affects their choices even if they have the interest and some potential.

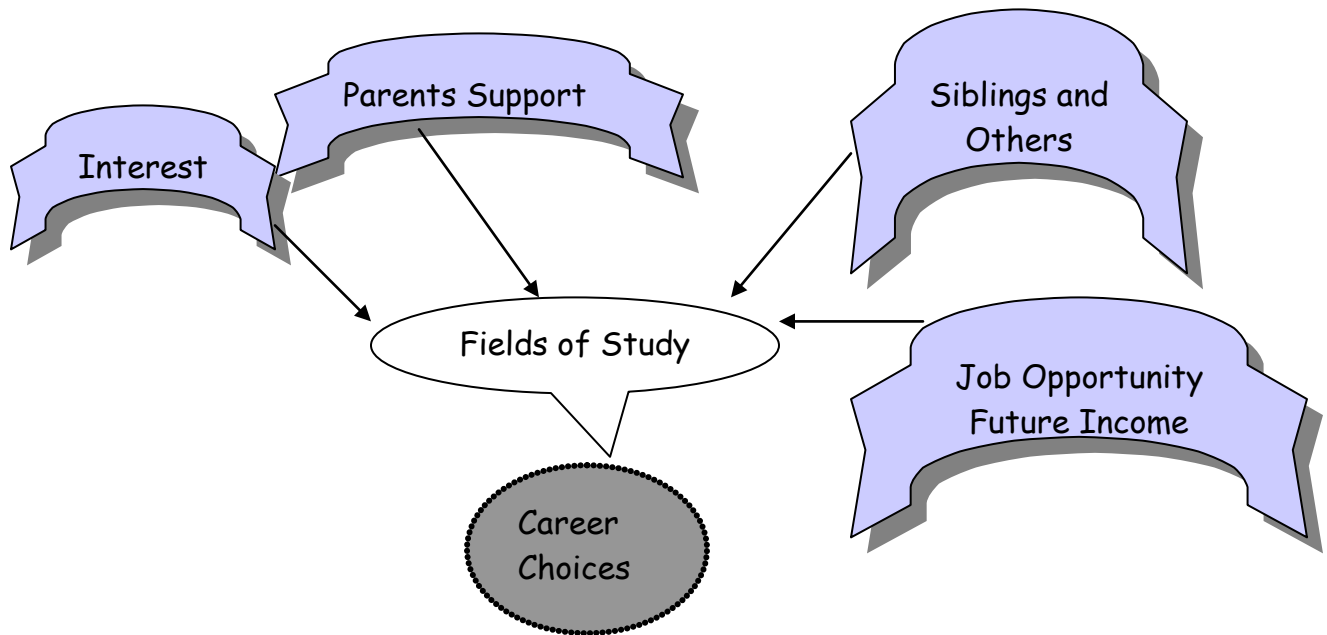


Figure 2: Model for the Relationship between Fields Of Study And Career Choices

By: Liyu Makonnen

4.2.1 Interest

When discussing what they want to study in the future girls state that they have the potential to study their field of choice. The potential may come from what they do in their daily life or due to their exposure to different things. In addition parents play some role in inspiring the girls. Depending on the strong character that the mother has and the role that the mother plays,

girls also identify with the mother's strength and roles which affects what they aspire to be and their career choice (Levine, 1982). Eni discusses how she would like to study psychology because of her interest to help people.

Eni: I know that psychology is about solving social problems and it is interesting to work with people

Li: What made you interested in this subject?

Eni: When you become a psychologist you are supposed to listen to people and share their problems. I like listening and talking to people. I even think of their problems as mine and worry about it until I find a solution to give them. Once I hear someone's problem I continue talking to that person about how things are going until I am sure that the person has found a solution

Li: So you feel like you have the talent?

Eni: Sort of

Li: What inspired you to do such things?

Eni: I think it is my mother who inspired me she is a nurse and she likes to help people so I took things from her

Reda has an exposure to one of the careers that she likes. She was lucky to grow around professionals in the career that she has been interested since she was a child.

Li: What interested you to become a designer?

Reda: It is something that I have been doing since I was a child on my dolls. So I still have the interest a lot. For me, designing is when people look good and that makes me happy. As a designer you are not happy when people are not wearing things that look good on them.

Li: Have you had the chance to talk to people about designing?

Reda: Yes there is this designing school in my neighborhood and I spend a lot of time there. It is because of that I developed the interest to do designing. I actually work there in the summer break.

Like Reda there are girls who have started some initial work on their interest. It may not be work exposure but more of free time activities that develop their talents. Bez is one of the girls who spend their free time doing what they are interested in. Writing is a talent that she wants to develop and a career path that she wants to take.

Li: What would you like to be in the future?

Bez: What I want to be I would like to study art related things. I write and I also do painting so I want to develop that

Li: Oh

Bez: I also write poems

Li: Is there any one who can read your stories and poems?

Bez: Yes I used to read it in my previous class but when I joined a new class this year I stopped because I was scared of the new class. I usually write stories that are both real and that are not real

Alm's dream is to become the prime minister of Ethiopia and she tries to develop leadership skill when she finds the chance.

Alm: I want a better and civilized Ethiopia

Li: Are you involved in any kind of leadership in your class?

Alm: I am interested in leadership so much and I am selected as the leader for graduation bulletin preparation. We got together with my friends and contacted the director. After that I got elected to this job.

Similar to Bez, Mati started practicing one of her dream careers since she was young.

Li: What do you want to be in the future?

Mati: I want to be an artist (actress) and also a writer of films. I am also interested in becoming a journalist.

Li: Do you write now?

Mati: Yes I write stories and also poems

There are times when girls get interested in one career because they had the chance to participate in the profession at one point in their lives. Net has a variety of interests when she thinks of her future and one of her career interests was initiated when she was in the 2nd grade.

Li: What would you like to be in the future?

Net: An actress of drama. My interest for drama came from TV shows and there are actors that I like a lot. I have also been involved in acting as a child in one of the TV dramas when I was in 2nd grade.

4.2.2 Parents Support

Parents or families general influence girls' choices of fields of study or career in various ways. This fact is generally recognized and emphasized in sub Saharan African Studies (Kwesinga, 2002). At times parents provide information that they have on fields of studies to their girls. There are cases where parents purposely provide information to their children to enable them make informed decision in fields of study (Bender, 1994). But mostly it is through their attitude that they inform their girls and influence their interests on what the girls want to study and be engaged in the future. Studies show that children rely more on their parents to get information about future life and career than other sources such as friends because parents have already experienced life (Kandel, 1981). The way girls feel about their education and the time that they spend on their study

is also influenced by the support that they get from their families. The support that parents give varies from encouraging their daughters to study to hiring a tutor.

Rati's interest is to study medicine or pharmacy and she gets most of her information from her mother. The role of mothers to inform their children is significant as they are more responsible to raise children more than fathers (Rowbotham, 1973). Rati lives with only her mother and she says that her mother has helped her with providing information on biology. Leka and Dessie stress the importance of women's education in the education and career of young girls. (Leka and Dessie, 1994)

Li: Why would you like to study Medicine?

Rati: I think it is because I like biology a lot and also my mom works in the hospital. Even with pharmacy I already know a lot of drugs so that is why I got interested. My mom also says if she had the chance she would have studied medicine but now she is a microbiologist.

Li: What is it that you like about Pharmacy?

Rati: It is a very neat job and it also gives the opportunity to do business. It depends on you. I got most of the information from my mom and by visiting her work.

Fask is also interested in studying medicine. Though she is an orphan her relatives give her some information about the subject.

Li: You told me earlier that you want to study medicine, why is that?

Fask: I like it a lot and people tell me that it is a scary thing. However I think it is a good profession and there is something that is inside me.

Li: Have you ever asked anyone about what it involves and what kind of job it is?

Fask: There are people who tell me that it is a little difficult to study medicine. These are students in the science faculty of Addis Ababa University. My family also reflects this view. All of them tell me that I have to work hard. However I don't know much about the job besides seeing doctors when I go to the hospital. Everyone in my family tell me that it is difficult to study and that I have to work hard, yet no one has told me that I have to change my choice.

Lem's father is more active in providing her with information that he thinks she needs.

Li: Who else gives you information about the different fields?

Lem: My father

Casi is interested in becoming an engineer and her father is one of her role models to be an engineer

Li: Is there any role model that you have in this field?

Casi: Yes my father

Li: Is he also an electrical engineer?

Casi: No he is a civil engineer but he inspired me to consider engineering as my future career.

As much as parents can influence girls thinking about fields of study positively they can also be discouraging by reflecting societal views and their own values.

Studying psychology was Eza's interest before she sifted to economics. Her reason to like the field was because she wants to be involved in solving peoples' problems. However because of what people in her family say about psychology she started to look for other options in the social science area.

Eza: I am also interested in sociology. At first I was interested in psychology because I am interested in solving people's problems and understand them but people don't have a good opinion about it. They even believe that it will get you crazy after some time.

Li: Who says so?

Eza: It is family that says this most of the time. These days I mostly talk about economics because I lost interest in it as a result of what people say

Bez is also discouraged by her parents comment on what she wants to be even though she is working a lot to develop her talent towards her dream.

Li: Do you have an idea what kind of course you can take in the University to be a writer?

Bez: I don't know I have no information. I have never asked and since they don't like what I want to do nobody tells me any information. It is because they just want me to be successful in my education

Li: But you can also be an educated writer don't they know that?

Bez: Yes I can be but they don't have that understanding so it is difficult to explain to them. They don't see it as a profession.

Girls develop images around the career or profession they want to pursue based on the things that they hear their parents say. Because of what her mom says Mati has developed a negative impression on the type of life that writers live. However she is not discouraged and wants to change the image of writers in the society.

Li: Do you have any information on what you can study in the university and what kind of work you can do writing and acting?

Mati: I hear that writers do not have good life because they focus on their writing. It is said that they live for the society but I do not want to be like that. I want to be in control of myself and develop my profession. I want to be smart. Even when I say that I want to be a writer at home they say that it is not a good profession because of the life that everyone attaches with the profession. But I want to change that and be a good professional writer.

Li: Why do you think your family does not like this profession?

Mati: It is my mom who does not like it and her reason is that writers do not take care of themselves and live for the society. In addition she says that you have to know a lot of things like drinking and smoking if you want to be an actress. That is what she does not like but my father is very supportive and respects my choice. My mom's objection to what I want to do sometimes worries me but I know that I may not have to necessarily be engaged in these things when the time comes. I do not think I will be forced to do anything that I do not want in acting.

Other than providing information and sharing values parents influence their daughter's education by the support that they provide at home. What girls feel about their education also affects what they want to be in the future both positively and negatively. One of the ways that parents can support their children is by hiring a tutor that assists them in their studies. Eza and Lom had tutors before and now they both study on their own. However the reasons for them to stop having tutors are different.

Eza decided that she did not need a tutor anymore because she could study on her own.

Li: Have you ever had a person to help you with your studies?

Eza: Yes in 7th grade and 8th grade my parents hired me a tutor and he used to help me. But after that I started studying on my own

However, Lom had a bad experience with her tutor and that is why she does not want to have one now.

Li: What if you need a tutor would they hire one for you?

Lom: Yes they would. But it is not a good thing to have a tutor because most of them are male and it is not safe. I had a tutor in 10th grade and 8th grade to help me with studying for the national exams. He is the one who made me like math but the end was not good because he asked me out after I finished my exam. He is a university student and these kinds of things happen when you spend a lot of time together.

Bez is scared of having a tutor not because she had a bad experience but because of the expectation attached to having a tutor. She says that if she gets a tutor her parents will expect her to get better grades.

Li: What if you need an assistant would your parents pay for it

Bez: The thing is that they would say I have to get good grades for the extra that they are paying. Because I am not sure that I will get better grades I never ask my parents to pay for a tutor.

On the other hand Reda enjoys her freedom to have a tutor because he helps her with her study.

Li: Does anyone help you with your study at home?

Reda: Yes I have tutor

Li: Do you like it?

Reda: Yes I think it is good for me I like it

Other than hiring a tutor parents give support to their daughters by just encouraging them to study, paying attention to their education and giving advices. There are some lucky girls who benefit from that kind of support from family and there are girls who study without any attention or care from their parents.

Net enjoys encouragement from all members of her family including her mom and if she needs a tutor they are willing to pay for it.

Li: Does anyone in your family support you with our study or by giving you information?

Net: Yes they help me a lot

Li: Who helps you?

Net: My brother, my mom and my sister help me. They do not sit and study with me but they encourage me a lot and if I need a tutor my brother would pay for it.

Sal and Eni are also lucky to be in a supporting family and they find it very helpful in their studies.

Li: Do your parents support you with your studies?

Sal: Yes

Li: How do they support you?

Sal: With the advices that they give me, by telling me that I can be what I want and have a strong standing point in life. That is more than enough for me, I mean that, is really helpful and it always remind me of what you have to do to be successful and achieve what I want to be.

Eni expresses the support that she gets from her family as follows.

Li: What do they feel about what they want to be?

Eni: My family respects my wish most of the time and they give me a lot of support on what I want to do. They listen to me and encourage me

Li: Does anyone help you with your study?

Eni: I study by my self and I will not have a problem to get a tutor my mom can pay for it if I need one.

Wag has an encouraging family but she has her support discontinued her study because her father left town.

Li: Does anyone help you with your study?

Wag: They support me but they don't help me much. My father used to help me but now he lives out of Addis so he cannot help me. I work on my own. I also ask people in our compound and those who have passed 10th grade.

Aji and Jap are survivors of lack of family attention on their education in general. Both have non-educated parents and there is lack of interest from the parents to even educate their daughters. Level of parent's education has its own contribution in how they socialize their children and how successful their girls could be in their education (Emebet, 2000).

Aji's parents are not educated and none of her siblings continued their education. Her parents do not give her any advice on her education but she gets a lot of encouragement from her brothers.

Li: Does anyone help you with your study at home?

Aji: No there is not anyone. My parents are not educated and my sisters and brothers dropped out of school. My brothers just want me to be educated they don't ask about what I want to be, as they

cannot give me a lot of advice. They just say that I have to continue with my education if that is what I want.

However Jap does not have anyone who supports her. Her grand parents who have raised her do not show any interest in her education.

Li: Is there anyone who helps you with your study?

Jap: No one even cares about my school let alone help me with my study. Ever since I was a kid I worked on my own so I have never asked for help with my study.

4.2.3 Siblings and Others

Besides parents other members of the family play some role in informing the girls and shaping the girls' thinking about fields of studies and careers. In the social learning theory observing models is taken as one the major ways of learning behavior (Bandura, 1977) and as stated above role models include family, friends and other members of the family. By directly observing how parents behave girls grow up learning certain behaviors using different levels of cognition.

Ami lives with her brother and his wife in Addis after she moved here from Wolega. Her brother helps her with her study and has also influenced her interest of career.

Li: Does your brother help you with your study?

Ami: Yes he sits with me and helps with the things that I have difficulty.

Li: What do you want to be in the future?

Ami: Becoming a doctor is my childhood dream but I also have the interest to become a judge so I believe that I have the choice.

Li: Is there anyone who inspired you to be a doctor?

Ami: Not for becoming a doctor but my brother in a judge and I like what he does at home bringing cases.

Siblings' success in education plays a significant role in the courage and the information that they get about fields of studies and careers. Older sibling's success in education has an impact on girls because they believe that they can also make it through their education and eventually their career (Bender, 1994). Older siblings and peer groups have their own share of influence though peer influence is not seen as a significant factor in career choice (Ibid).

Lom wants to study engineering because of her interest in science subjects mostly physics. Her decision to become an architect however came from her brother who is studying architecture.

Li: Which engineering field do you want to get in?

Lom: I like architecture

Li: Do you know what Architecture involves or how it is different from other engineering fields?

Lom: To be honest with you I just like engineering but I have no idea what it involves. My brother studies Architecture and that is the only reason why I got interested in it.

Girls are more vulnerable to the types of comments given by older siblings on their abilities and the career path they can take as girls (Bender, 1994). Casi shares a similar experience with Lom, in getting interested in engineering because of her brothers.

Li: In what field do you want to work?

Casi: I like electrical engineering

Li: Why electrical engineering? Many people like civil engineering

Casi: It could be the influence of my elders

Li: Are they involved in electrical engineering?

Casi: Yes they are engineers and they do their own work. They are self-employed

Eni and Net got information from their cousins on what they can become as a result of their close contact. Information that they got from their cousins has helped them to see options they have and developed their interest further on what they want to be in the future.

Eni got the information about psychology and sociology from her cousin who is going to the university.

Eni: I like them but I like the social fields like psychology or sociology

Li: What made you interested in these subjects?

Eni: When you become a psychologist you are supposed to listen to people and share their problems. That makes me happy

Li: Who tells you about these fields?

Eni: My cousin tells me about it

Li: What does she tell you?

Eni: She tells me that it is very interesting and people do research on children, which interested me a lot.

Net got inspired to become an airhostess because of her cousin who is working in one of the airlines.

Net: My dream is to become an airhostess. One of my cousins is a hostess and I really like her job.

As much as members of the family, other society members such as neighbors and family friends play some role in informing girls and making an impression. Sometimes it influences the girls to change their interest while at times they just create an impression without any effect. Cognitive theory argues that beyond what their parents tell them children have their own reasoning in understanding and aspiring to practice certain behaviors or careers (Anderson, 1997).

Rati's mother works in a hospital so Rati has the chance to meet a lot of doctors. They tell her that medicine is tuff to study but she only got more interested to study it and face the challenge with God.

Rati: I talk to my mom's friends who studied medicine. They all tell me that I should not do it and that it is very tuff. However I don't give up on medicine just because they say so. But everyone supports me with Pharmacy. They say that medicine makes you suicidal and it is frustrating. But I don't agree with that. I believe that God will guide me in what ever I do and I am not afraid of getting frustrated or committing suicide because of that. I know that God will help me to be a good doctor for my patients.

Even though Aji does not get a lot of support from family and she does not have a lot of information on the field that she is interested in, she had the chance to talk to one person on her field of interest.

Li: Do you have any information about pharmacy?

Aji: I don't have much information and the only time I asked about it is to a person that I met. I told him about the subject that easy for me and he told me that I could study pharmacy. He is a pharmacist himself, teaching pharmacy in a private collage and he has told me what kind of field it is.

Bel is interested to become a chemist or a psychologist. She also has some idea of what she can do in the future if she studies any of the two fields.

Li: What do you want to be in the future?

Bel: I would like to be a psychologist but if I can I would prefer to be a chemist.

Li: What do you know about chemistry and the kind of work that you can be involved in?

Bel: I think it involves laboratory work and other related studies on the chemical. I would also like to know more about it because I believe that it is related to our daily life. It is most likely going to be in a laboratory.

Li: What about psychology what made you want to study it?

Bel: I want to study psychology because I want to solve people's problems and also want to understand people more so that I don't do anything to make them sad. I want to know people's feelings and how they think. I would like to do a lot of studies and research on people's behavior so that I can help people to solve their problems.

Li: Is there anyone who supports you at home?

Bel: Yes I have friends who are going to the university one is a chemist and the other one is studying social science in AAU. They are the ones who give me advices

Friends and society in general contributed to the picture that Mess has about writers. There are things that her friends say when she tells them that she wants to be a writer. In addition she hears what other people say about the life of writers. Her male friends are more supportive than her female friends.

Li: Do you have any idea what kind of life that writers have or have you ever asked?

Mess: I don't know I have not asked but I have an idea of what kind of life they have. I think they are quiet but people think that they are isolated wanting to be alone. They are not anti social

because they write as part of the society and if they are isolated they would not be able to write. Sometimes they are different and I think that is okay.

Li: How did you get the information that writers have those characters that you told me earlier?

Mess: Well I hear what people say about them. For example I like Sibhat G/ Egziabher but people say that he is wired and he is not accepted. But he does not care about what they say. So people will understand them one day.

Li: What do your friends say when you tell them that you want to be a writer?

Mess: Some of them get surprised and say how can you do that. They also say that I can be a good writer when they see what I write.

Li: What do you male friends say?

Mess: we talk about it and they don't say anything different actually one of my male friends edits my poems. He is very supportive and he likes it so much. He waits for it all the time.

4.2.4 Job Opportunity and Income

As any member of the society girls also attach what they want to do in the future with job opportunity and income that they can get. On the basis of information that they get from others they make their own conclusions and make a shift of interest or develop an interest to certain careers. Eza started to like economics because of the teacher and the other reason that made her decide that she wants to study economics is the availability of job. These two added together made her loose her interest to be a psychologist or a sociologist and help people solve their problems.

Eza: But my reason is related to the availability of job after graduation more than anything I am not thinking of the interesting thing that I can do.

Li: So you like economics because you believe that you can get a job after you graduate

Eza: Yes

Casi is influenced by her brothers and father to study engineering and one of the things that she likes most about the field is that it gives more chance for self employment.

Casi: It could be the influence of my elders

Li: Are they involved in electrical engineering?

Casi: Yes they are engineers and they do their own work. They are self-employed and that is what interested me to study engineering

Girls change their interests as they grow up because of changes that occur when they pass through different levels of education (Schooling). Accommodation in cognitive theory means “changing cognitive structure to take something from the environment” (Huitt and Hummel, 2003). This is more related to learning to adopt new behaviors as things change in the environment and as children grow up. As she was growing up Sal had the dream to become a pilot because she believes that there are not many female pilots in this country. However since she started studying science she got interested in studying engineering and similar to Casi she believes that there is less control and more chance for self-employment in engineering.

Li: What do you want to be in future?

Sal: I would like to become in engineer

Li: Why?

Sal: I don't know Uh... when you study engineering you become a planer and you plan Uh... you don't work under someone's control even if you have to work under someone it would be for a short time then you can do your own thing but if you learn something else you have to be in the office and you will have a boss

Li: You don't want to work under a supervisor or a boss?

Sal: Yes

Li: Where did you get this information from? How did you learn that engineering is like this?

Sal: I know a lot of people but was not sure if I wanted to do that until 11th grade. It is after 11th grade when I joined the science department that I decided to study engineering in the future. Other wise I was interested to become a pilot because there aren't many female pilots. Even now I think of doing both side by side, if the piloting does not work then I will do engineering.

Girls' choice of career is affected by the benefits they attach to the different careers, which could be economic or social that motivate them to choose those careers (Bandura, 1977). Jap has indicated the different fields that she likes and she has put concrete reasons why she wants to study one and not the other. Her two reasons are job opportunity and the amount of income that she can get in each field. She has thought about both very well and she had plans to overcome any challenge that she might face as a result of her choices. This determination does not come from only her mind but from information that she gets from those in the university.

Li: What do you want to be in the future?

Jap: From the classes I like economics but seeing it in terms of job opportunity I don't think I can earn lots money so I am thinking of studying sociology or some other field that is not commonly chosen by students such as tourism management. When you ask most of the students from last year, economics is what everyone wants and I am afraid that it would be difficult to get a job after we graduate. I like behavior and relationship studies and which makes me like sociology. In addition I can earn a lot of money by working in NGOs. I am thinking of the money to earn; that is why I want to also study tourism management, as it is a very new field and there are a lot of job

opportunities with high pay. Those in tourism management school are already getting jobs before they finish school.

Chapter Five

Empirical Findings on Girls' Aspiration

In relation to what they want to be in the future there were discussions on what the girls aspire to have in the future including job opportunities that they see for themselves. Their aspirations developed as a result of information and support that they get from their families. Other than families friends also contribute to what the girls aspire to have and be. Girls' family situation varies and this has resulted in a variety of aspirations. Similarity of experiences also shows similarity in definitions of future life such as marriage and family life. Depending on who they are close to girls put preconditions for life and values to different things in life. None of the girls said that education is not important, as they mostly see it as a base of a better future.

The school environment, where girls spend most of their day, has its own share in influencing girls' aspiration. Schools have traditions of how male and female students behave in general and for this the support that teachers give and their attitude towards male and female students had some contribution. The support that teachers provide and efforts that they make to initiate students' participation in class makes a difference for girls particularly. Male student's attitude plays a significant role in how girls perceive themselves and how much they participate in class.

5.1 Family Environment and Girls' Aspirations

Participants live in various kinds of families but mostly single mother headed families. Family environment that girls are living in influence their future aspirations from different angles. The support and attention they get from their families affect their desire to know more and aspire for a better future. Attitude of parents towards girls' ability to take responsibility for themselves affects girls' exposure to the outside world. This is because parents don't allow their daughters to leave the house based on their belief that their daughters' ability to protect themselves from dangerous things like bad friends or boys.

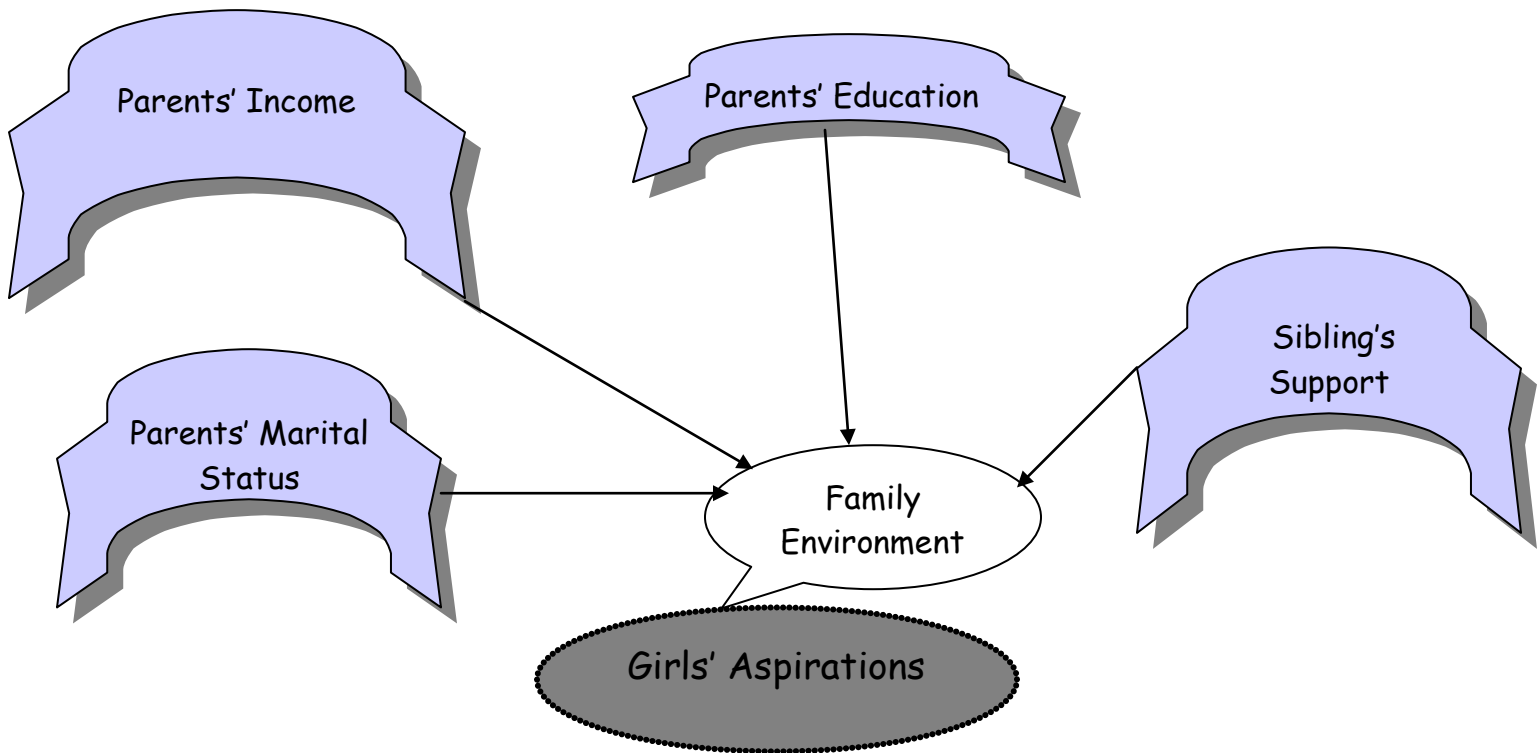


Figure 3: Model for Relationship between Family Environment and Girls' Aspiration

By: Liyu Makonnen

5.1.1 Parents Marital Status

Girls live in families with both parents, one parent or with grandparents. This affects how much information they get on future job possibilities and type of information that they get. In families where two parents are present parents share responsibility of informing girls and providing support. They have preferences to whom they are closer to depending on the attention and support that they get from their father or mother.

Eza is one of the lucky girls who have both their parents at home. Her father provides support with her education and her mom is very supportive in social life related issues. She has a positive dream about life and future job that she wants to have. She is not also expected to work at home. She also has a friend who shares her dreams.

Li: Would you tell your parents if any thing happens?

Eza: Yes I tell things to my father. I always think of good things meaning having my own car my own house that is what most of us dream of about the future. My mom says a girl should get married soon and the reason that she gives is my aunt who is not married and my mom thinks that my aunt is getting old to get married. So she says that I have to get married soon after I finish school.

Li: So that is what you want

Eza: I don't feel like I have to rush into it but I want to get married and have kids

There are times when girls have both parents but they see that parents don't get along very well. This affects the way they imagine their marriage and the time that they want to get married. Lom lives with both her parents but they don't get along and this frustrates her. She loves the life of marriage but she wants to give better life for her kids than the one she has.

Li: What kind of relations do you have with them?

Lom: I have no communication with my dad but I am good with my mom

Li: Why is it that you don't have a good relationship with your dad?

Lom: I don't like him. He has never showed me any love. He is an old man and he still thinks like the old days. He does not know how to give love. He just believes in providing material things for kids and that is the end of it. But my mom is much better.

Li: Have you ever given up on the idea of marriage?

Lom: Yes my mom and dad do not have peace most of the time and I fell so down and give up when they fight. It takes away my peace. I cry sometimes and feel so bad.

Lom: I don't know marriage I would like to get married soon I love the life of marriage everyone knows about this. It is a life that I respect a lot.

Li: Do you think marriage and education go together?

Lom: After I graduate and get a job I would like to get married but I don't think I will have kids soon. I want my kids to grow in a much better way than myself so I will wait until I find a good condition. I want to spend most of my life in marriage I don't like staying without marriage having youthful fun.

Some girls and boys who participated in the focus group discussion in Holy Trinity School expressed the relationship that they have with their fathers. Even male students say that they don't feel comfortable talking to their fathers because of the way fathers perceive children. They say that fathers don't give time to listen to what girls and boys want to tell them. In addition they criticize a lot and get angry easily.

Not only because of fathers definition about what is important in children's lives, but mothers' presence at home regularly than fathers makes a difference in who children prefer to be closer to. FGD participants say that mothers spend more time at home than fathers which makes

then closer to children. Mothers also play protective roles from fathers' reaction to what children do. It is mostly when children want to do things out of the house and fathers do not allow it that mothers protect boys and girls. Mothers are however more protective of boys from fathers than girls.

Parents may be supportive and helpful in all they can but there are times when they have different opinions about what they want their daughters to be. This makes it sometimes difficult for the girls to make a decision on what they want to be. Even if girls make decision they always have a question in their mind about their decision. Mati lives with her parents and they have differing views about what she wants to be.

Li: Do you think you will get a job if you become a writer?

Mati: It is difficult to say. I know that I will have to write to educate people and sell what I write I am not just going to write for the sake of writing. In addition I will be able to do a lot of things once I get in this profession, such as film scripts. The film industry is growing in this country so I will have a good chance to do a lot of things.

Li: Do your parents say that it is good to get married?

Mati: My parents differ in this issue. My father wants me to wait and be successful in my career. He wants me to focus on my career more than marriage because he wants me to be in control of my life and never depend on a man. But my mom says that if I finish my education and get a job that is a good condition to get married. She also does not like my interest to become an actress and a writer.

When parents separate or divorce girls lose half the support and information that they could get if parents were together. There are times that girls get to meet with fathers while living with mothers but it is limited to phone calls and short meetings.

Depending on the strong character that the mother has and the role that the mother plays, girls also identify with the mother's strength and roles which affects what they aspire to be and their career choice. (Levine, 1982) Rati lives with her mother only because her parents are separated. She gets a lot of support from her mom and has a strong feeling that she will succeed in life. However her feeling of getting married has gotten colder because of her parents situation. She only gets to meet her father when he comes to Addis.

Rati: Yes I talk to him on the phone and I meet him outside of the house when he comes for work in Addis. Actually my plan after 12th grade is to make them meet even if they don't become a husband and a wife again I want them to make peace. For me it is not a big problem I am a grown up but for the little ones it would be good if my parents make peace. Anyways I don't think about marriage much I think it has to do with my parents. I consider all men to be the same and a few like 5% of them could be good. My mom always regrets it because my dad was not good for her. He is a very good person for us but not for her, so it is difficult to say.

Rati also has friends at the church who help her with her studies. She says that she prefers her mother than anyone else to take advice or get help from.

Rati: My mother is like a friend to me we are very close and she shares things with me. She tells me things from her past life, we also make decisions at home together. It is based on our decision that she buys things that we need.

Li: Why do you prefer your mom than anyone else?

Rati: She is very encouraging understanding. Even if I fail in anything she always reminds me that this is not the end and tries to understand the source of the problem. She always makes the big problems very simple.

Wag similarly lives with her mom only and she meets with her father sometimes. She has preference to talk to her father than mother. She wants to wait before she gets married and she does not see a very bright future with getting a job.

Li: Do you think you can get a job if you study archeology?

Wag: No I don't think so because of the current availability of educated people and job saturation. It only depends on the high grades that you get.

Li: What about marriage?

Wag: I think I will wait for that because I have to know the person I will marry very well and I think I need time for that.

Li: Who do you go to when you need help or advice?

Wag: I may go to my mom but I will try to solve it on my own.

Li: How about your father do you have good communication with him?

Wag: Yes we are very close. Actually I am closer with him than I am with my mom because mothers don't give freedom for girls, as you know they are afraid that something might happen to us so mothers don't make us free. They feel that we can easily be cheated.

Casi's parents are also separated and she lives with her mom and uncle who control the house. She also likes her father a lot and she benefits from the meetings that she has with him because he given her a lot of advices.

Casi: I want to reach somewhere big and special. I want to be someone big. I would like to have my own organization. I want to have children and a good family.

Li: Okay you have these dreams do you think you will be successful in your work if you get married?

Casi: I believe that I have to have my own thing before I get married because I don't want to be dependent on my husband.

Li: How close are you with your dad?

Casi: We are very close. We call each other and we talk. We talk about school and how I can improve my relations with people especially how I should not trust people all the time and also be patient. Other than my brothers my father is a civil engineer and he inspired me to get into engineering.

Being raised by a single mother does not only reduce the time spent and affection with father but also exposes the family to some tension and control by others. Tension may be created because of miscommunication at home with mother. Sometimes brothers and relatives try to take over the fathers' role, which the girls find unacceptable.

Alm's dad passed away when she was 6 years old and she has always been close to her mom until she reached puberty. She now feels that she is not understood at home. She is very isolated at home. She wants to be the one to make all kinds of decision in her life, taking no advices and not willing to compromise even in marriage.

Li: What kind of relations do you have with your mom?

Alm: I was very open with her when I was younger but now it is not like that. After I grew up I stopped telling her things because she started questioning me. So now I don't tell her what I do. I

just tell her that I am meeting with my friends. When I tell her long before I do things she makes all kinds of excuses to prevent me from going out but if I tell her at the moment she accepts it. So I don't tell her my plans.

Alm expressed how she is annoyed because of the unfair treatment of her and her brother.

Alm: In our house we are all equal and we are both asked to do something but he is not asked to do things at home while I am asked to do thing at home. That annoys me. In addition I am not allowed to stay late and he is while he is younger than me. If I get home late my mom says a lot of things so I don't think that is fair.

Li: What about marriage do you think about it?

Alm: I only think about getting married after my 31st birthday probably before I become a Prime Minister. But I prefer not to get married

Li: What kind of marital partner would you like to have?

Alm: Someone who earns less than me, someone who does not lie and is honest. He has to support what I do and if he does not support me I will divorce him I will not say I have to stay in that marriage for my kids. I think I will get married 10 times if need be. I don't believe in staying in marriage when I am not happy.

In addition they are not allowed to and study with their friends or go to the library (Emebet, 2000). Parents' justification for not allowing their daughters to stay late than boys, is that girls are girls and boys are boys. This was reflected in the FGDs by both girls and boys that they don't see equality at home equality at home with the way boys and girls are treated. Boys go out of the house as they wish more than girls as girls are involved in house hold work.

Mon's father also passed away and her brother tried to take over making all kinds of rules at home that annoys her. Her mother does not help either.

Li: What kind of relations do you have with your family?

Mon: There is not openness in our family though we spend a lot of time together. I only talk with my sister. Even when there is program on TV or radio about HIV we are told to shut it down. My mother is very old and she thinks like the old days. She does not want me to get out of the house and she does not want me to have friends. She and my brothers do not want my friends to come to our house. It is one of my brothers who is going to college that does not want me to have friends. It is probably because he does not have friends himself. He does not want anyone to call at home and for a guy to call me at home is unthinkable. There was this time that a guy called me and I did not even give him my number. That time he gave me a hard time. I feel bad when I hear that my friends do when got together.

Li: Do you think of marriage?

Mon: Not in seven years from now. I want to see everything so that I can be a good person in marriage.

In cases where fathers are present they could be too protective to let girls go out of the house just like Mon's mother and brother who are very protective. FGD participants also discussed of how fathers are too protective of girls that they take them everywhere even if girls have to get out of the house. There are father, according to the girls and boys, who take girls to school and from school everyday and to where ever girls have to go to.

In case of Bez she lost her mother and she lives with her father and her stepmother. She has brothers and they don't get along with their stepmother because they make independent decisions.

However she suffers from the tension at home and has less information about what she can do as a writer.

Li: do you believe that you can get a job as a writer?

Bez: I don't think I can get a job as a writer

Li: why

Bez: I don't know what can you do as a writer? May be it is because I don't know. My dad does not like talking much he is a very quiet person so I don't talk to him about these kinds of things

Li: You don't talk about anything?

Bez: At the time my mom passed away he was the only one that I used to talk to but now it is not like that may be it is because he has a new wife or he is getting old or something like that. Because of the death of my mom and the presence of my step mom things are not fine. We did not get the share that we deserve and that is because my step mom does not want us to get anything. That is what my brothers told me it is not very clear for me.

Li: What do you do when you get home?

Bez: My dad plays cards with himself, I sit in the living room and watch TV or be in my room, my brothers have their own rooms but they never get home early. My step mom plays with the newborn baby. My dad does not respect her or he sometimes insults her and I feel so sorry for her. But she also does not know her responsibilities, she knew that he has three kids but she does not respect our wishes.

Reda lives in a house where there is a lot of tension because of the lack of communication between her mother and uncle. Her mother divorced twice because she could not deal financial problems both men had. This has negatively affected her plans for marriage and the set or preconditions she has for marriage.

Reda: I don't go to anyone if I need help I don't like going to people

Li: What do you do then?

Reda: I usually go somewhere quiet and talk to God and myself. I just talk to my self and God. And people sometimes think I am crazy and tell my mom especially when they see me talking on the road.

Li: Have you ever given up on life?

Reda: I do that I think more often. For me giving up is when you are so devastated that you have stoped even going to school. I could do that more than once in a year. It is when I have a problem at home or when I fight with my mom. It could be at times when my mom and her brother fight. At that time I give up with life and get frustrated. Even for example last year I did not go to class for two months. I don't want to get married unless I have my own things

Li: What do mean when you say your own things?

Reda: I want to have equal income with my future husband. I want to have adequate income to support myself. I don't want to depend on what he has.

5.1.2 Parents' Income

Parents' income affects the way girls think of their future and the determination that they have to achieve their dreams. In a study conducted in Addis Ababa it was indicated that family income has its own influence on future aspiration of youth (Birhane, 2000). In one way or another girls develop the idea that they have to get better income or have a better life than they have when they get a job. Due to lack of income parents may not be able to provide all things that girls need for schooling.

Mini comes from a poor family headed by her mother only. She gets good moral support from her mother in her education and aspirations. Helping poor people by having her own organization is her lifetime dream.

Li: What if you need a tutor would your mom hire one for you?

Mini: No she cannot afford but I can study on my own

Li: Do you communicate well with your mom?

Mini: Yes we are very close she gives us advice on how we have to work hard. She does not want us to pass through what she passed through so she tells us how she dealt with life and how we can protect ourselves. I want to live in Ethiopia. I will be working and be a better person. I also want to help those younger than me. It may not be my brothers and sisters but I want to help those in need. I want to help street children. In addition if I have the ability I will try to have my own organization that helps poor children.

At times parents' low income makes girls focus on income only when they think of what they want to do in the future. Many families in Addis Ababa also depend on the labor and income generated by their daughters (Erulkar and Getahun, 2003). Jap grew up with her grand parents who are not educated and also have low income. She is expected to work at home with minimal support from a little girl.

Li: Are you expected to work at home as the only child?

Jap: Yes I am expected to do all kinds of things it is after my mom came and told them that I need time to study that they began to be easy on me. But before that I was expected to wash the cloth, cook and other things. Now we have a little girl that helps at home and even now they don't like it when I spend time in the library. For me it is a challenge but I believe that I have to face my challenge to reach where I want. After I graduate from the university I will get a job and I think I

will have a good life fulfilling my needs and also doing things what interest me. But I don't think of getting married because I always hear women that I know complain about marriage. Even from my parents that is what I learned. I haven't seen anyone who could be a role model for me.

5.1.3 Parents Education

Parents low education affects the way they view their daughters' education and the degree of support that they give to their daughters. In general more girls want greater equality at home between men and women than boys (Birhane, 2000). Aji's parents are not educated and have strong cultural and religious believes. The low status of women that she sees in her house and in the general in her culture, made her believe that she has to be educated to live a better life than any of the other women.

Aji: I am expected to work at home and it affects my study a lot. I can only study until 3 pm in the library because I have to get home and I have to cook, clean the house and other things. Then when I finish the work I go to my brother's house, which is quiet and I study there until 9 in the evening to prepare dinner. When I was in 10th grade I used to have a tutor but because of work in the house I could not continue with him so I started studying on my own.

Li: Aren't you interested in doing business like your family than being educated?

Aji: My family and relatives are involved in business and most of them are not educated but they have a good life as to their definition. However I see some miscommunications or wrong perception about women. So for me I want to be able to go out and work with my husband equally. As I told you earlier in my religion and culture we are not allowed to uncover ourselves and go out and work but I don't want that. I want to participate in work equally to my husband with my education.

Mess lives with her grand mother because her mother lives abroad. She gets some support from her grandmother but because of lack of education her grandmother cannot totally understand her. She believes that people should not go broad leaving Ethiopia because there are a lot of things to change in the country.

Li: What kind of relations do you have with your grandma?

Mess: Well in terms of being open she is not very open or willing to talk to me much since she is a very old person. However what she tells me good things when she feels she needs to.

Li: Who would you go to when you need help or advice on something?

Mess: I have a person that I created in myself and I talk to her first and if I can not find solution from her I go to my friends.

Li: Where do you see yourself in seven to ten years from now?

Mess: I will be able to be on my own and make a difference on my own. I want to make a difference in my country with the things that I write. As a female I want to fight for the right of women using my writings. Everyone thinks that our country is very poor but I believe that we have a lot of resources that we can use and I also want to make educated people stay in their country and make them work here to use those resources.

5.1.4 Siblings' Support

Siblings support and success in education helps girls not only to aspire a good future with education but also to cope up with problems that they face in life. In families where girls have older siblings girls benefit from advices in education from their siblings. In cases where there is tension and lack of communication and understanding with parents, girls get support to get their rights respected by parents.

Ami is a girl who escaped arranged marriage when she was very young. Her brother played a big role in preventing the marriage by taking her father and the boys' father to court. Now she not only looks up to her brother for help she also wants to do what he does.

Li: Why did you come from Wolega?

Ami: You know that we get married very early in the countryside because they don't believe that we will get somewhere if we get educated. Then at a very young age they gave me to a husband. There was a schedule made for the marriage and when I got to fifth grade I quit my school. Then my brother came and stopped the marriage by suing my father and the boy's father in court. After that I continued my education because the court decided that I couldn't get married unless I am 18 years old. Then after a year when he finished his school I came here with him.

Li: Whom would you go to for help or any advice if you need it?

Ami: I will go to my brother because I am very free with him. Even if I face a problem with a guy I am free to talk to him. My brother is a judge and I like what he does at home bringing cases. That is why I think of studying law as a second option.

Aji is also a girl who escaped arranged marriage when she was in the 6th grade. Social and economic factors are often used as excuses for not letting girls attend school (World Bank, 2005). Her brothers helped her in stopping the marriage even if it was difficult for them too. She gets a lot of support from her brothers in her education even if they are not educated.

Aji: My parents sent me to school up to grade 6 and then I stopped with the excuse that I have to help at home. Once they told me that I have to get married. I said well if they don't need me at home to work then I could go back to school. This made my parents mad and then I told my brothers. Both my brothers tried to convince my parents. Though they tried hard it was very difficult for them. So my brothers sent me to my cousin who supported me. Then those people who

asked me for marriage stopped the question. Then my big brother asked me what I want and when I told him that I want to be educated he took me to the elementary school that I used to go to before this school and I continued my education.

Li: What if you have something that you want to talk about with someone or you need advice, who would you go to?

Aji: I talk to my brothers I am not afraid of telling them anything I am free with them. Especially the older one is good for me he is a good listener and the younger one is also good for me. I always believe that what ever I want I have to convince them to get what I want.

Casi's brothers not only helped her with information about fields of studies they also helped her in seeing a bright future with engineering. She is confident that she will get a job if she study engineering because of what her brothers told her and because of what she sees their lives experience.

Li: Do you believe that you will get a job if you study electrical engineering?

Casi: Yes

Li: What makes you so sure?

Casi: As I told you earlier I see my elders and I know how they got a job so I believe that I will not have the problem. I know that they will help me.

Depending on the closeness that they have with family and the availability of friends girls seek advises from parents, siblings or best friends. When they don't feel comfortable talking to anyone they prefer taking matters in their own hands. Girls who are living with single mothers have very close relations with their mothers as a friend. Yet some have preference to talk to their friends while other depend on mothers for everything.

Eni is one of the girls who lives with her mother only and gets most of her work inspiration from her. However she prefers talking to her sister who is going to the university when she needs advices.

Li: What kind of relations do you have with your mom?

Eni: It is very good. We communicate very well and I love being with her. She tells me that I have to be educated and be independent and have a better life. She encourages me in all the things that I tell her that I want to do. She also tells us a lot of things about HIV and I think it is beneficial that my mom is a nurse for us to know a lot of health related things.

Li: What would you do when you need help that you need someone to talk to?

Eni: Mostly I go to my sister if I have to I call her at the university especially when it is something I cannot tell to my mom. I choose my sister because nothing goes out when you tell things to your sister she keeps it to her self and gives me good advices

Eza lives with her parents and she is very close with her father. She says that she is not afraid of telling him anything. However she prefers talking to her friend because her friend also has a similar future aspiration to be a psychologist.

Li: Would you tell your parents if any thing happens?

Eza: Yes I tell things to my father

Li: What about things that you need advice on or help on, who do you go to?

Eza: I go to my friend because she understands me and there is no one better than her. She is the one who want to be a psychologist?

Mon depended on her friends when she made a choice between science and art. In her family everyone cares about her education but they don't communicate with her well. Therefore she also takes advices from her best friends than anyone else.

Li: Whom would you go to if you need help or advice?

Mon: I go to my friend who is going to school with me. She is not like other girls, she is very cool and she gives me wise advices for my life. I may go to my other friends but they are not like her. She is very wise.

5.2. Schools' Environment and Girls' Aspiration

It is in the school that girls spend most of their time during the day and where they meet most of their friends. As a result they access most of their information from their friends in school, from their teachers and processes in the school. Though most teachers have similar effects on the girls and boys there are times when they could be role models with respect to gender or could be bad examples of those who are not gender sensitive. The attitude and action of male students has a significant contribution in how girls see themselves now and the future. Simple administrative decisions make a difference in how girls and boys are treated in the school. Traditional beliefs that have been going on for years may still exist despite the efforts made by some teachers and clubs to show the equality between men and women.

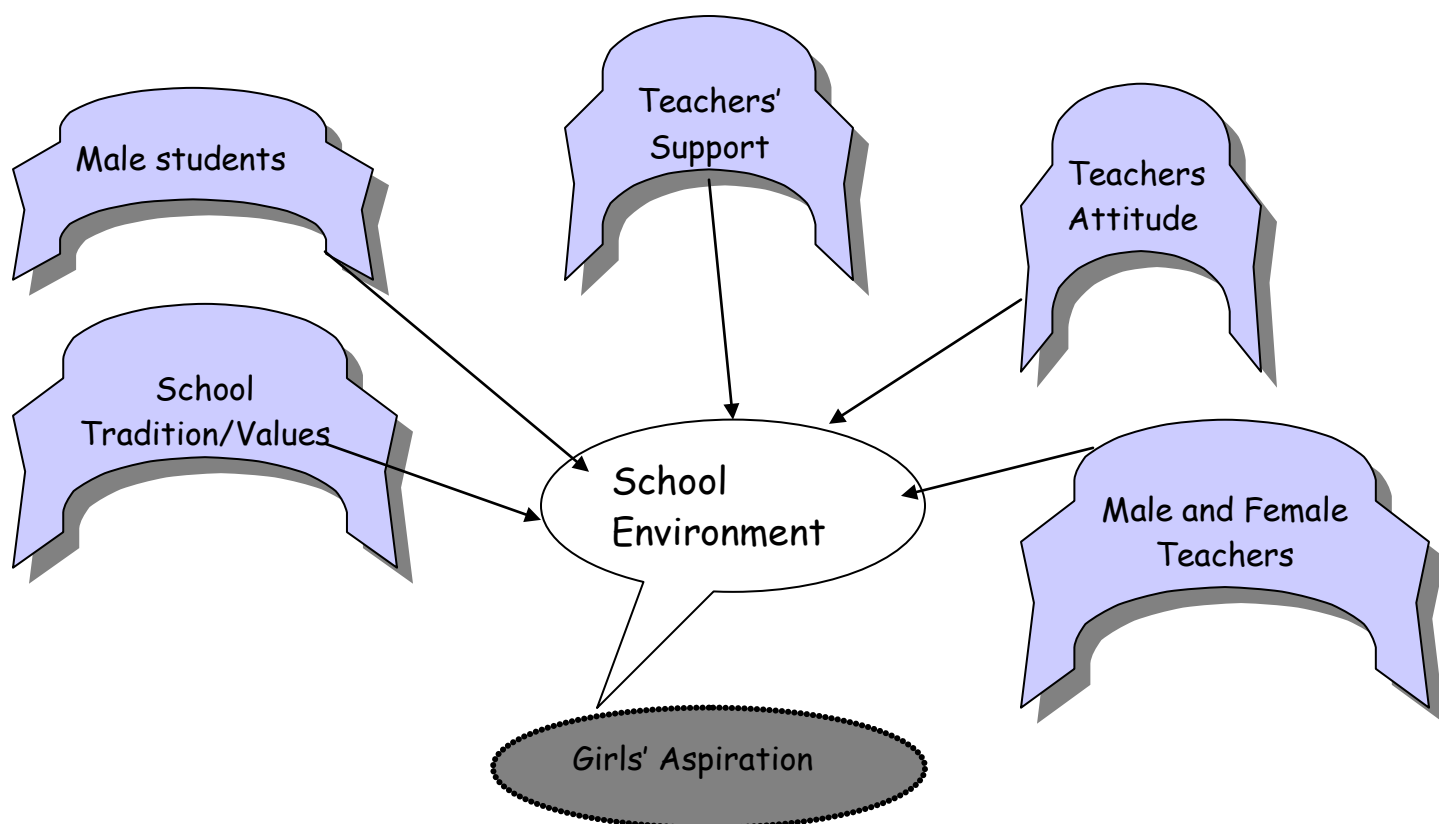


Figure 4: Model for the Relationship between School Environment and Aspiration
By: Liyu Makonnen

5.2.1 School Tradition

Girls going to the two schools have similar and different experiences on how they see the difference between male and female students. In Holy Trinity School girls don't see much difference between male and female students except a few comments on how the school treats them. However in Minilk School the girls indicated that there is a difference between male and female students.

In Holy Trinity School girls mostly see themselves as students than female students. Some of them mentioned affirmative action as the only difference between male and female students in the school. Alm from this school says that there isn't any difference that she sees between male and female students.

Li: How do you see yourself as a female student in this school?

Alm: There isn't any thing that is different I am just a student like any other student.

In the focus group discussion in Holy Trinity School boys and girls expressed that the school administration is not very happy about boys and girls being together and interacting. Even teachers give negative comments about girls who spend time with boys in school. In general the school system enforces the notion that it is wrong or not a good thing for girls and boys to be together. Some even say that even if teachers don't say things directly their thinking is reflected in the way they act towards those girls and boys who spend time together.

Bez however believes that there is equality in the school, agreeing with what Alm says.

Li: How do you see yourself as a female student?

Bez: There isn't any difference I have never even thought of it like that

Some girls see affirmative action as the main and only difference that is seen in the school between girls and boys. Mon and Rati both stated this in our conversation.

Li: How do you see yourself in this school as a female?

Mon: I don't see any difference there is no problem, and the teachers treat us equally. There is only affirmative action, which I believe helps girls.

Li: How about as a student, how do you see yourself?

Rati: There isn't a difference as such but I like affirmative action in national exams. I believe that they are useful for female students.

Girls and boys who participated in the FGD conducted in Menilik School agreed on the issue that affirmative action is always a reminder that girls are weak even if we say they are equal. This not by denying the fact that it is needed for those girls who have work at home that can not perform as much as boys. However males believe that it is something that works for rural girls than urban girls as urban girls have better chance as boys than their rural counter parts. When compared to rural girls urban girls do less household work and therefore perform better in their education (Leka and Dessie, 1994). On the other hand girls say that even urban girls have household roles that deter them from attaining success in education; therefore affirmative action is useful to take them through the education ladder.

Others tried to indicate that girls have some advantages in the school than boys just by the way they are treated. Lom for example mentioned that teachers respect girls

Li: How do you see yourself as a female student?

Lom: I don't see any difference. We are the same. Well teachers respect girls and give us priority when we ask questions. You can see this especially with the male teachers.

Bel from Menilik School also says the same thing.

Li: Is there any difference that you see between girls and boys in this school?

Bel: When I think priority is given to girls. But in general there is equality more reflected in anything than girl's discrimination.

In elaborating the priority given to girls Mati says that girls benefit from some arrangements made by the school to make girls perform better in their education.

Mati: I don't say that I have lost anything as a girl but I would say I have benefited from the tutorial class that we were given when we were in 10th grade. It was only for female students and that helped me a lot.

Fask from Menilik School puts it not as an advantage for girls but as a disadvantage for boys when she discussed how girls and boys are treated.

Fask: There isn't as such a difference between female and male students but male students are not treated well. The reason I think is that it is mostly male students who get in trouble or behave bad. But normally we are treated equally and we spend time together freely.

Mini from Menilik School mentioned that there is some discomfort among girls in the school because of what male students do.

Li: Do you believe that you are equal to boys in this school?

Mini: Yes but I think there is some discomfort among girls in this school.

Li: Why do you think that is?

Mini: It is not because girls feel inferior to boys but it is because boys make girls feel low. They ridicule us. Other wise we believe that we are not any less.

This idea is reflected in a different way in the FGDs that even if girls and boys are close they always prefer to be with the same sex as they don't even go out of class together. They think it is related to preference that they have for best friends that are mostly same sex. For example girls have a lot of male friends who they come with from home to school but they don't spend time in the compound.

Mess from Holy Trinity School also says that males think that they are better even if they are treated equally in school.

Li: How do you see yourself as a female in this school?

Mess: I don't see much difference. But the guys think that they are better than girls, otherwise there no difference.

Li: How is that expressed?

Mess: For example when there is fight between a girl and a boy he is expected to feel sorry for her.

Reda sees the relationship between girls and boys from a different angle and she does not feel that there is respect for the female gender in general.

Reda: For me the concept female in this school is very low. Even when they selected a class monitor it is one male and one female student but the male always dominates. When you see teachers it is only male teachers who are respected.

Participation in class by girls is in general low in both schools according to the girls. However in terms of grades the girls in the two schools share different experience. There is the tradition for girls to participate less in class because that is the way things have been going on.

Girls feel scared of making a mistake while responding to questions. Besides the traditional way of acting in class also plays a negative role in making sure that girls don't participate as well. This may be intentional or not.

Most of the girls agree that girls have low participation in class while they put different reasons for girls' participation to be low. Some of them just share their experience in class in relation to participation while others reflect their opinion on why they think girls don't participate in class. Male students who participated in the focus group discussion held in Holy Trinity School also agree with the fact that girls have lower participation in class. They said that it depends on the situation but the girls' participation compared to males is like 1:10. It is rare to see girls' hands for participation. There is low encouragement in general by the teachers for them to participate in class equally. Teachers make fun of students who make mistakes or who have different questions. They talk about it when they meet in the teachers' room and this discourages students to participate and ask questions. The situation is not encouraging.

Casi says that the reason for girls to have lower participation is that they work at home and take more responsibility. Their responsibility not only takes up their study time but also make them worry about home than their education.

Casi: I think it is because male students have better time in both school and home. Even if they are not forced to work at home girls have the tendency to think about home and voluntarily work at home. Girls feel responsible when there is no one to do the work so they work even if they are not told to do so.

Li: Are you saying that boys are irresponsible?

Casi: No they don't even spend time at home so they don't know what is going on at home. I think mothers are to blame for this because they are the ones who allow this to happen. It is after we grow up that they try to make us equal but if they try to do that when we are young by giving us equal time to have fun and work this would not have happened.

Mati and Mini share this feeling that girls' participation is low because of work at home and also lack of exposure to the public.

Mati: Most of the girls are afraid to participate in class. I think it is related to the way we are raised. Boys are allowed to go out and do things that they like while we are mostly forced to stay at home. I think this gives more courage for boys to speak in public. I think it is because girls don't have the exposure.

Mini: Most of the good performers in class are the boys. It could be because girls have a lot of responsibility at home. It depends on the families of the girls. So as a result it could be related to the general situation of girls at home. Even if boys are expected to work they are not given as much work as the girls so it is different.

Some of the girls think that the reason for girls to have low participation is natural, besides the way they are raised.

Aji: Actually it is male students who participate more, even if there are females who know the subject they don't speak and I think it is because they are shy. May be it could be girls nature that is a little different. This does not mean that there aren't girls who are good with their education.

5.2.2 Male Students

Male students have some contribution in making girls participate less in class. Girls are scared of making mistakes in the presence males because of the reaction of the male students. Bel from Menilik mentioned this while discussing girls' participation in class.

Bel: There are more boys who are seen participating in class but there are girls who study very well and have good grades but who don't participate in class. The girls are afraid of making mistakes because they think that everyone will laugh at them

Li: Wouldn't that happen on boys?

Bel: If a girl makes a mistake boys laugh but when a boy makes a mistake no one laughs. This is something that we are used to but now there are strong girls who are confident to participate in class without considering other's reaction. When I first came to this school I came with my friends and most of the girls who scored high in class were the girls who came with me.

Male students have their own way of thinking about how girls should be. They also have their own definition on how they interact with girls in school. The way male students act towards girls creates some impression among the girls. This could be related to education and friendship. This has a contribution in how girls see themselves in the future.

Casi pointed out that she had some challenges with her male friends until they understood her well. All her friends are male and she gets along with them very well however she had to make a lot of effort to be understood by them. Still they are not as open with her as they are among themselves.

Casi: My friends are all male and when I come from home mad and stay quiet they think that I am in love with them or something. That made me extremely mad even more. Finally I just ignored them and they began to understand my point and we became friends. My friends are not as free with me as they are with their male friends even though I am very open with them.

Reda is not affected herself, but sees other girls being affected by what males do. She also thinks that they don't share much of their opinion on education with girls. She blames girls for not defending themselves.

Reda: They don't say what they want to be in the future. May be they think about it but they don't talk about it.

Li: What do they say when you tell them what you wan to be?

Reda: Only one of them supports me the rest don't understand much.

Li: Do you see guys treating other girls in a bad way?

Reda: Yes I see that guys say things to the girls and the girls' response is so annoying. It could be smiling or just saying nothing. They don't defend themselves.

Girls and boys spend time in school and they discuss different things when they are together. At times they talk about serious things, while they joke at other times. In discussing what they want to be in the future some girls experience only jokes with boys while they are serious with girls. Sal talks with her friends about what they want to be in the future.

Sal: There are times when we laugh depending on the time because there are time that we would joke about what we want to be. But when we talk seriously everyone just say what he or she wants to be.

However Eza has never had the chance to talk to her male friends about what she wants to seriously.

Li: Do you talk about what you want to be in the future with your male friends?

Eza: Yes we do but it is mostly joking we don't seriously talk about it. Males have different interests just like us

Compared to boys, girls depend more on peer information to make decision in their lives. (Miz-Hazab, 2002). Bel shares her experience in how girls and boys interact in school and to what extent they feel comfortable to talk to each other.

Bel: We have male friends but we never talk about the future

Li: Why is that?

Bel: I don't know I think it is because we don't have equality may be. I think girls are afraid of making a mistake in front of guys and guys don't feel comfortable asking a girl for advice because they consider it as some kind of shame. There are guys who ask girls if they don't understand something in class but there are those who make fun of such guys.

Li: How about you, are you afraid of talking about this thing with males?

Bel: No I am not but I don't feel comfortable.

Mati and Fask have good communication with male students and they are comfortable talking to them about what they want to be in the future.

Mati: Yes I have a few male friends and we do talk about what we want to be in the future. The two that I am close with encourage me to be what I want to be

Li: Do you talk about what you want to be in the future with boys?

Fask: Yes we do talk about what we want to be in the future but they don't give attention to it much or care to give their comments. They only say that I have to study hard if I want to study medicine.

5.2.3 Teachers' Support

In the discussion about teachers most of the girls preferred those teachers who have good way of explaining the subject. Girls know a few teachers who respect them, have good communication with students and also are friendly. Some girls mentioned that there are teachers who have managed to get the attention of the whole class. Girls say that they understand the subjects more and give more attention when they get more exercises and examples.

Casi, Jap, Rati and Mini like the teachers who are more friendly and young because of the communication that they have with students.

Casi: I like this because he teaches well and he has a very good communication with students. The others just do their job but he makes sure that students get the education and are comfortable

Rati: He is very good in explaining things and he is very free. He does not put us in tension and he only brings in exams from what he teaches. I understand his subject very well and one thing that I appreciate is the fact that he recognizes our age and he treats us like our age.

Mini: He is very friendly and he is also very helpful. In addition he is very young and he is like a family helping us to understand the things well.

Jap: I like our economics teacher he is very young and I like his way of teaching. He is good in explaining

Most of the teachers that girls did not like are not welcoming and give very little attention to what students feel. Some teachers are known for not being cooperative and not understanding. In describing how supportive their teachers are one of the things that they mentioned is the willingness of the teachers to help students out of class. Girls appreciate most of their teachers for being willing to answer questions that they have even if it is out of class. A few teachers get credit for being more supportive because they respect and fight for the right of students.

Some of the girls experienced having a supportive teacher only in elementary school. And some of the teachers give more attention to girls because they see the need that girls have with their education. In addition the teachers are also protective to the girls from bad boys who harass them. Missing this in high school was one of the things that girls mentioned as a disadvantage. As the number of students is very large in high schools, teachers may not be able to provide support that is seen in elementary schools where the number of students is much less.

5.2.4 Teachers' Attitude

Except a few girls most of them firmly said that teachers give attention to students who perform better in class and who have good grades. The few girls who say that teachers don't make any distinction between students have different insights on the issue. Alm for example says that one of the qualities of the school is that teachers don't make any distinction between students.

Li: Whom do teachers give attention to most of the time?

Alm: They give attention to everyone they don't make distinction between hard working and low-grade students. That is what I like about this school. There is no discrimination

Fask argues that teachers cannot discriminate between the students because all the students are taking national exams and they want all the students to perform well in the exam. As a result they give attention to all students.

Li: To what kind of students do teachers give attention to?

Fask: We cannot say that it is for hard working students that teachers give attention to. That is because in the last year of high school most students are engaged in studying and teachers take all of us as hard working since we have passed the 10th grade national exam. But if a student pays more attention in class that student gets more attention from the teachers.

Rati says that there are a variety of teachers and it would be hard to conclude that all teachers have the same group of students who they give attention to.

Li: To what kind of students do teachers give attention to most of the time?

Rati: It depends on the teacher some of them give attention to students with good grades and some others give attention to every kind of student in the class. For example civics teacher pays attention to those who don't understand things quickly. But math teachers may not be as understanding as civics teacher.

Even though Bez says that teachers generally give attention to students who have good grades she indicated that there are exceptional teachers.

Li: To what kind of students do teachers give attention to?

Bez: Mostly for hardworking and high ranking students but biology teacher helps all students to participate in class by asking question to all of us without any discrimination. That helps us to participate better.

Ami strongly feels that teachers give attention to those who work hard and only to them than any of the other students.

Li: To what kind of students do teachers give attention to in general?

Ami: They give attention to hard working student. They don't see average and lazy students equal attention as to the hard working students. They give everything to hard working students.

Mini has a similar feeling about teachers

Li: To what kind of students teachers give attention to?

Mini1: Obviously it is for students with good grades (hard working students)

Mon is one of the girls who say that teachers don't care about other students other than those who participate in class.

Li: In general to what kind of students do teachers give attention?

Mon: For students who participate well. They don't seem to care much about students with low performance.

Eni also says that one of the way teachers view students is by the way students participate and the grades they get.

Li: To what kind of students do teachers give attention to?

Eni: For those who participate well and have good grades I think that is how they commonly view students.

Aji says that to get teachers attention students have to show some interest in class by asking questions because that is the value that teachers give on their students.

Li: To what kind of students do teachers give attention?

Aji: It is to students who are close to them, meaning when you ask questions. This gives them the impression that you are interested in the subject. Therefore they give attention to those who participate and ask questions.

Teachers' support and attention that they give to students make them more accepted by students. Students sometimes refer their teachers as fathers, mothers, big sisters or brothers when they give students attention. Students feel protected by their teachers when they stand for them. The support teachers give also make students like the subject that the supportive teacher is giving. In general the support and attention that teachers give make a difference in how students see themselves.

5.2.5 Female and Male Teachers

Most of the girls mentioned that they have a few female teachers and they have their own qualities. This view is shared by most of the girls who said that they have a few female teachers. Among those few female teachers most of them have their own qualities of teaching that make the subjects interesting. This is not necessarily because they are female but because they have their own way of teaching.

Eza for example has two female teachers and she likes one of them because she has a nice way of teaching.

Li: How do you see female teachers and male teachers?

Eza: We have two female teachers in our class. One is very nice. And I also used to have a female teacher before who was really nice. She made us all love the subject. She knew how to communicate with us and also make the subject interesting. But in general I cannot say that it is because she is a female or the other is a male

Lom compared her two female teachers and she says that one of them is good in how she makes good efforts to make things interesting. On the other hand, she does not like the other one because of her communication style.

Li: How about female teachers how do you see them?

Lom: There is our Amharic teacher who is very good. She makes extra effort to help us understand the thing more and to make it interesting. She even used materials other than the schoolbook. But it is only her that I like. Our drawing teacher is new and she supports girls but she is very harsh. She always says that we have to be engineers.

Some girls think that it is difficult to compare female and male teachers as they have only a few female teachers. Fask clearly says that she finds it difficult to compare male and female teachers.

Li: How do you see male and female teachers in this school?

Fask: There are only a few female teachers in this school so it is hard to compare them.

Eni has a similar feeling but she identifies some good qualities of the few female teachers she has.

Li: How do you compare male and female teachers in this school?

Eni: I cannot say much about them but there are female teachers with their own qualities

However it was also indicated that female teachers do not maintain class discipline or students don't respect them. Sometimes it is because female teachers are rude and don't have the

confidence to communicate well with students that they don't get respect. Net is one of the girls who say that male teachers are better than female teachers.

Li: How do you see male and female teachers?

Net: I think male teachers are better than female teachers because female teachers don't say anything when students disturb and this disturbs students who want to follow up in class. But male teacher can maintain the class discipline. For example our biology teacher was really good in the way she taught but because she could not maintain the class quiet so we could not benefit from her good way of teaching.

Mati had three female teachers and she has reached the conclusion that female teachers don't have a good way of communication with students.

Li: How do you see the difference between male and female teachers?

Mati: The female teachers are a little difficult because of the way they act. I had three female teacher and especially the two of them were very hard on students in the way they spoke and treat students in general.

This does not mean that there aren't role model female teachers who are credited even for being better than male teachers. Some girls share the view that female teachers are nice and more supportive to female students. For example Mon says that female teachers give attention to female students.

Li: Do you see any difference between male and female teachers?

Mon: Some of the female teachers are caring and they give us advice to focus on our schoolwork than anything else. They get closer to students more.

Li: Do the female teachers give male students attention?

Mon: Not much there are female teachers who give attention to male student and there are male teachers who give attention to female students. However in general it is male teacher more for male students and female teachers for female students.

Alm also says that female teachers are nice and they give attention to female students while male teachers treat students more equally.

Li: How do you see male and female teachers in this school?

Alm: Our drawing teacher encourages girls a lot and the other female teachers give priority to girls but male teachers treat everyone without any distinction.

Bel feels sorry for female teachers because they are not respected in class just because they are female. It is mostly male students who disrespect them and disobey them.

Li: How do you see male and female teachers?

Bel: There are only a few female teachers and with regards to the way they teach female teachers are very good and strong. However female teachers are not respected in class, because they don't say anything when students talk in class. The main reason is that male students say bad things to the female teachers if they tell them to keep quiet in class. There are also some male students who try to use their masculinity to threaten the female teachers.

Chapter Six

Summary, Conclusion and Implication

6.1 Summary

Decision making in school to study one thing or another is influenced by several factors of girls' lives. The girls consider it as an important process but not by putting in mind the degree of importance that determines what they can do and be in the future. Interest and ability to perform in one subject or a group of subjects is one of the most influential factors that influence girls' decision in subject choices. In cases where girls are interested in one subject they are most likely to perform well in that subject because of the time that they spend on it and the attention that they give it. At the same time when girls are able to perform well in one subject they get interested in it and want to continue to study it. As a result, interest and ability to perform well or the attention given to one subject, support each other in two ways.

Continuity of liking and performing well in that subject however is affected by teachers' style of teaching and their approach to students. Teachers influence students tendency to continue liking or discontinue liking a particular subject. When students like the way the teacher teaches they give the subject more attention and prefer to study it. There are teachers who make students get interested in the subject by just giving attention to students' interest, which inspire students give more attention to what the teacher teaches. The degree of girl's interest, at the same time, determines how much the teacher could affect their interest and performance. In cases where students like the subject very much or they really don't like it, they are not affected by the method teaching or treatment of the teacher.

Girls sometimes make a decision on the subject or group of subjects that they want to study based on the career that they want to have. This depends on information that they get regarding the subject and the career that are related. Some girls have information on what type of subject is related to what career or field of study that they can join in collage. For instance those girls who have interest to study engineering or who want to be engineers tend to prefer subjects such as physics and math. In addition interest to do something in the future is determined by ability to develop talent in the area of interest. In cases when girls get the chance to practice talents related to subjects or career that they like they develop the interest to continue studying the subject. For instance girls who are interested to be writers tend to practice writing and develop their talent earlier in school. Some girls develop interest to have one or another career based on their interest in some subjects that they take in preparatory to college. This is because of the interest that they have to continue studying those subjects that they like. Unless they have adequate information on that subject however they don't to the career they can or want to pursue.

Depending on access to information and degree of support from family girls think of what they want to be in the future. In relation to this, girls also think of the field of study that they want to be engaged in when they join the university. As in the choice between art and science girls interest is highly reflected in their choices of fields of studies. Interest in influenced by the girls' belief on their ability to study one field of study or another. Their belief in their ability to study the field of interest is in turn affected by several external factors. Families take the major responsibility in providing information and guidance in girls' lives. The degree and type of support that parents provide to girls vary from family to family mainly depending on the family values. In general families have positive values towards girls' education. However the support that families provide depends on how much they value education and their style of raising children.

One of the most influential is information and comments that parents forward to girls' interest. As stated above parents provide information and guidance based on the values that they have for their daughters. Though most parents value success in education they have different ways of providing support and information. Some parents believe that they have to search for information related to girls' interest to motivate their daughters. On the other hand other parents believe in just encouraging girls with words without providing any concrete information. In cases when parents provide information to their daughters, girls think of possible options they have and develop their interest around information and support that they get from parents. Parents try to influence girls by giving their opinion on girls' interest even if they may not take the initiative to provide information to girls before hand. Even at times when they provide information they tend to focus on what they want their daughters to be than what the girls want to be in the future. This is because parents' opinion is biased as a result of social values and limited information on the fields of study and careers related to them. It is in this case that parents make girls either question their interest or their ability to study their field of interest. This does not necessarily mean that girls will change their mind about what they want to study in the future just because parents give comments on their interest. The degree of influence of parents depends on the level of interest that girls have on the field of study and their access to information form other sources such as friends, siblings and family friends.

Siblings' success in education and support that they provide to girls is another influencing factor in choices of fields of studies. The closeness between siblings creates the environment for older siblings to help girls with information on fields of studies and education in general. Particularly in families where parents don't provide adequate information and guidance siblings play the bigger role in both being role models and giving support and information related to fields

of studies and career. In families where siblings are successful in both education and career they provide information and advice to girls on different fields of studies. Even when siblings are not educated or have limited education they provide support in girls' education when girls face challenges from parents on their education. On the other hand successful siblings have the tendency to influence girls' interest to focus on what they study or on the career they are pursuing. This is because of the limited information and bias that they have about other fields of studies or careers, than their own. In general the simple fact that siblings are successful has a positive effect in making girls believe that they can be successful too in their education.

Girls take advices and information from others such as family friends, neighbors or older friends when they need additional or initial information. This highly depends on the exposure that girls have to others who can provide information and support in career and related choices. Some parents introduce friends that could help girls in making decision on what they want to study in the future mostly related to the career that they can pursue. In other cases girls have neighbors who are supportive in helping girls with their studies and also providing information. However similar to siblings others such as family friends, neighbors and older friends provide information and advice to girls based on limited and biased information that they have on fields of studies and careers. The degree of influence however is determined by prior information and that girls have on the fields of studies or careers that they inquire about from others. Girls sometimes just use information that they get form others as a supplement to what they are interested in already. Even if they get advices that do not support their interest girls may not be influenced to shift their interest. Frequency of contact and intimacy that girls have with these others also affect the degree of influence of information and advice that girls receive.

Job opportunity and income related to the fields of studies and careers are sometimes influencing factors for girls' choices. As it is one of the social values to have a well paying easy to find job, girls use this factor to make decisions on what they want to study in the future and career that they want to have. The values that girls have about life play more roles in making decision on what to study and what to pursue as a career related to job opportunity and income. It is however influenced by information that they get from the different sources that make them develop perception on fields of studies and careers in relation to job opportunity and income. Therefore their perception and degree of being influenced by job opportunity and income to choose fields of studies and careers is highly affected by the sources of information. Other than direct information that they get from the different sources girls also observe what those around them including parents and siblings do and opportunities and income those around them have.

Families that girls grow up in make a difference in the support that they get from their parents in their education. In families where both parents are present and are educated girls get more support and attention in their education. Parents share responsibility at home to raise their children and one of the ways is by sharing responsibilities of helping girls with their education. It is mostly the responsibility of the fathers to help in girls studies. Mothers usually give the moral support so that girls become successful in their education. Girls from these types of families also feel more positive about their future lives. Mothers take both responsibilities of helping is studying and providing the moral support to girls in mothers headed households. In cases of families headed by women only, girls are closer to their mothers and get most of the support from mothers. However it is when mothers are educated that they can give more support related to information on education and careers. Mothers with low educational status sometimes try to give girls chances of being exposed to information such as by introducing them with friends and neighbors who can

help. At other times mothers resort to providing only encouraging words as they may not have the choice to give them any additional information. In addition mothers also depend on the support of older siblings, second husbands or relatives in raising girls when they are alone. In this case there is the possibility of disagreement and instability in the house because of the presence of others. In families where there is less stability girls feel less optimistic about what they dream to have. There are also families where girls face challenges in their education because of family values and household responsibilities. As a result they dream to change the situation by being educated and independent. This is mostly observed in families with less educated parents where girls are expected to work more and get married soon. This is reflected in the experiences of girls who were forced to get married at a very early age.

Older siblings' support depends on the need of the girls and siblings ability to support girls. Having successful siblings in education is an inspiration for girls to work hard in school and perform better in their education. In addition they are able to get more information about fields of studies and different careers. Their support is focused on making girls successful in education as they are successful. However the way they provide support varies that they sometimes just give information and advice and let girls decide things on their own while others are too protective and try to make decisions for the girls all the time. Other than education older brothers also help girls escape arranged marriage and other unfair treatments in the house. Be it educated or uneducated older brothers seem to care for girls' education and are protective mostly. The difference is in the way they show their protection and care.

Girls in protective families face multiple problems related to their confidence in life, household responsibility and ability to go out to study. Girls who have protective parents have less chance than their brothers to go out of the house. This means that they have less chance to meet

people, which reduces their ability to communicate with people out of the house. Staying at home also makes girls more aware of what is going on in the house. Inevitably they take more responsibility of household chores and share expense management responsibility with mothers mostly. Ability to study out of the house such as by going to the library is lessened by extra protection of parents and household responsibilities.

Low income of parents affects what girls imagine for themselves in the future. They aspire to have better income and eventually lead a better life than their parents. They use earning a good income as a defining factor to choose fields of studies and careers in the long run. They mostly aspire to have better income than their future husbands and be more independent. Due to the low income and dependence of women on men in their families girls want to change the image of females in their cultures and religion.

The school environment with many of its players affects girls' perception on gender relations. Teachers' attitude and action have some effect on how girls see themselves as females. The relationship between male and female teachers also has an implication though girls have limited experience with female teachers. The attitude and behavior of male students has its share of influence on how girls see themselves. The superior feeling of boys is reflected in the way they act both in and outside of the class.

6.2 Conclusions

Girls have interest to read, to do calculation or a combination of the two and their interest in reading and calculation determines the subjects that they are interested in. It is based on their interest that they choose between art and science. The choices, which girls make between art and

science limits what they can study in the university and eventually the career path they want to take. Teachers influence the interest girls have on subjects in different forms. Girls have the tendency to like those subjects that their favorite teachers teach. Girls choose between science and art based on their favorite subject and this determines what they want to study in the university and pursue as a career.

Girls who have the interest and information about what they want to be in the future choose subjects that they believe will facilitate their access to the fields of study that they are interested in. Girls discuss and exchange information on different fields and careers with their friends. They gain information from the discussion and use the information to develop their interest. In some cases they make decision as a group. Girls have interest to study certain fields in the university and begin to practice things at an early age. However their interest and believe in being able to study what they are interested in is affected by parents' attitude and information that parents provide. The support and attention that parents give to girls' education makes a difference in how girls see their future. Therefore in families where there is adequate support and attention girls feel more optimistic about their future. In families where girls have older siblings who are successful in their education, girls will get support and information on their interest. Therefore they feel more confident to attain their dreams. In the absence of parents or only fathers older brothers play a lot of role in providing support, information and guidance to girls. Therefore depending on the support, guidance and information that girls get, they develop different images of what they can and want to be in the future.

Girls have the chance to get information from different sources. However it is depending on the sources and the frequency of access to information that girls' interest is affected. Girls' perception of life is affected by the marital status of parents. Therefore in families where parents are separated or have poor communication girls don't have a positive attitude towards marriage

and the relationship between men and women. In families with protective parents girls have less opportunity to go out of the house to study in the library or meet with friends. This makes them less confident to face things and therefore affects their aspiration in terms of being able to attain what they want. Income of parents makes a difference in how girls define their future. Therefore in cases where girls have families with low income they aspire to get better income and lead a better life than parents or use better income as a determining factor to choose career.

Girls are expected to work more at home than boys and this affects their study time. As a result they grow up with the perception that it is always women who are expected to work at home. Girls have the tendency to be closer to their mothers therefore they get most of their information and support from their mothers. However girls prefer to talk to their friends about their problems. Therefore the diverse sources of information that girls get make a difference in their aspiration. The attitude and behavior of male students affects the way girls behave in class and in the school in general. Therefore girls' degree of or ability to do what they want in school, affects what they want to have in the future and their perception about what they can do in the future as females.

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 For Schools

Providing counseling to girls who don't have the information and exposure on fields of studies and careers would help a lot in making girls informed decision between art and science. In relation to counseling talent development venues could also be created in classes and in the school in general to give girls the chance to identify and develop their talents. In order to help students and school counselors in the process of decision-making schools should prepare information kits on the fields of studies that are available in universities and colleges.

Counseling in school could be developed to help girls not only with their education but things that affect their education such as communication at home and study time management. It could also be used to facilitate relationship between teachers and students to develop interest and better performance. In addition counseling sessions could be used to facilitate relationship between male and female students.

6.3.2 For further research

Though the research covered broader issues in relation to girls' education and aspiration it was mainly conducted in the school environment. Parents' perception and support to girls' education could be further investigated to understand how household situations affect girls' education. Other than parents siblings' education in relation to girls' education could be further studied to understand how much educational success of siblings affects girls' education.

Other than girls' opinions teachers' attitude and style of teaching has not been deeply investigated in this study. Therefore teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards female and male students should be examined further. This will help to compare the difference between how teachers perceive themselves in how they treat students and how female students perceive their teachers as indicated in this study.

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Annex 1
In school girls

Part One

- + When did you start learning in The Holy Trinity School?
- + Why did you want to go to this school?
- + Which grade are you in?
- + Do you like this school?

- + Which subject is your favorite?
- + What is the field of study that you are in? (Science of Art)
- + Do you see your self as an average or excellent student?
- + Why did you get in that area?
- + What do you want to be in future?
- + Why do you want to be what you want to be? Or what inspired you to be what you want to be?
- + Where do you get information form about what you want to be in the future?
- + How do your parents or siblings help you with your studies?
- + Does your school provide information about career and related things?
- + How do your friends react to what you want to become?

- + Do you believe you can get a job if you study what you want to study?
- + What do you think you will be doing seven years form now?
- + Do you think that your education can help you to reach where you want? How?
- + Do you believe that you can be what you aspire to be?

Part Two

- + Who do you live with?
- + What kind of family relationships do you have with your parents and siblings?
- + Who do you turn to when you need help in any thing? Why do you choose that person?
- + Who helps you with your studies?
- + What are you expected to do as a female child at home?
- + What do your parents do at home?

- + Was there a time that you just gave up on life?
- + How do you see yourself as a female student?
- + What opportunities do you see for your self as a female student?
- + What obstacles do you see as a female student?

- + Who is your favorite teacher?
- + What is it that you like about this teacher?
- + Do you like the teacher that teaches your favorite subject?
- + Can you tell me about a time when you decided that you never want to take a subject ever again because of the way the teacher taught it?
- + Are there teachers who are particularly helpful in making students understand and like the subject more?
- + Are those teachers females, males or both?
- + In general to what kind of students do teachers give attention to in class?

Annex 2

Focus Group Discussion Guide

- How is it like learning in this school?
- I don't see males and female students hanging together. Can you give me your comments here?
- Do you talk about what you want to be in the future when you are in mixed groups?
- Who participates more in class?
- Who works more at home?
- Are you closer to your mom or dad?
- What do you think is the problem with girls coming home late or as late as the male child of the house?
- What do you think about affirmative action?
- You all have things that dream or want to be. Where do you get information about what you want to study or the profession that you like?