INTERVIEWS

This research is based on an interview conducted between students of the computer science department in the university of Ghana (main sample) and other students from various departments.

In this research, I address why women who have the potential to succeed in the study of IT-related disciplines shy away from an IT education. I find that women face many barriers such as limited access to IT resources and education, family and peers’ negative attitudes toward a career with an IT degree, cultural stereotyping about computers as a male preoccupation, perceptions of an IT career as dull and only for smart boys, and a lack of role models or mentors. In a minority-serving institution of higher learning, however, women face some additional barriers such as the poor match between the challenges posed by the IT curricula and the students’ family and work responsibilities

The interviews were based on both structured and unstructured formats. They were structured in the sense that certain issues were covered; they were unstructured in the sense that they more closely resembled a private conversation with the subjects. Such a combination allowed subjects to express themselves in depth while the interviewer maintained a certain control over the topics and was able to probe interesting leads.

* I interviewed twenty female students at FSKTM. Eleven were undergraduates, and nine were master’s students who also worked as tutors. In addition, I interviewed three heads of departments, the dean, one female lecturer, and two male master’s students. All informants found it acceptable to be interviewed in English. I got in touch with interviewees through one of the master’s students who were asked to help me to meet others. Using so-called snowball sampling, I reached more potential informants through other students. Generally, people were willing to be interviewed. The interviews took place in different locations on campus. The interviews have been transcribed and analyzed according to the main tenets of grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss 1990), emphasizing the method of constant comparison across the empirical data (Glaser and Strauss 1968). In the presentation, illustrative quotes from the interviews have been provided, often showing the dialogue that took place between me and my informants. To let readers make their own interpretations, the dialogue has been reproduced close to the original transcriptions.

NOTE

This research does not provide an accurate picture of students’ academic progress in the field of Computer Science and Information technology.