

DETERMINANTS OF WOMEN LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATION: THE CASE OF PUBLIC SECTORS IN JIMMA TOWN

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to examine determinants of women leadership participation: The case of selected public sectors in Jimma town. The data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained through self-administered questionnaire distributed to female who held leadership positions at lower middle and top level in public sectors of Jimma town. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the response obtained with regard to socio-cultural factors, attitude of females towards themselves, women home responsibility and institutional factors. Inferential statics such as the correlation and regression were used to see the relationship between women leadership participation and the factors that affect it. The finding indicated that personal and social factors are the basic determining factors that affect female leadership participation. It is recommended that women have to develop positive self-image and the society as a whole has to change the attitude toward women.

Key words: Determinants, Jimma Town, Public Sectors, Women Leadership Participation

1. Background of the Study

Women in developing countries suffered from economic, socio-cultural and political dimensions. Just like other developing nations, the worth of women in Ethiopia was considered as value less and their contribution was serving their husbands as house wife and mothers. Especially in rural areas women were considered to have no right and created to be mothers for their children and servants of husbands even having no right to decide on their common properties. Cognizant to this fact, Aycan (2004) posited that women are underrepresented in decision making position in almost all countries. Research concerning gender and gender inequality in Ethiopia is worth discussing. A number of reasons can be cited for the concern. According to Haregewoin and Emebet (2003), Ethiopia is a patriarchal society that keeps women in a subordinate position. Hirut (2004) also indicated that there is a belief that women are docile, submissive, patient, and tolerant of monotonous work and violence, for which culture is used as a justification.

According to Rainbow for Future (2019) more than 85% of Ethiopian women live in rural areas. They experience extreme hardship throughout their lives, doing everything from carrying heavy

loads over long distances, cooking, raising children, working at home, and manually grinding corn. They have far fewer opportunities for education, employment, and personal growth when compared to men. Some changes in the way women in Ethiopia are treated can be noticed in urban areas, where they can access healthcare, employment, and education. However, even when women are employed, they still hold jobs with extremely poor pay.

In recent days countries are applying various strategic mechanisms to enhance corporate performance through empowering women leadership. Qian (2016) gender diversity in corporate leadership concerns efficient allocation of human talents as an economic resource, which attracted the attention of academics and regulatory institutions in recent years. Many governments explicitly urge corporations to increase female representation in boardrooms and senior management positions. The Author indicated the proportion of females that should be within the board rooms for many countries. For example, the United Kingdom (UK) proposes a minimum of 25%, Norway mandates 40%, and Germany mandates 30% female representation in boardrooms. These legislative initiatives are based on the view that tapping female talent pools could positively affect corporate governance and performance. In Ethiopia regardless of the effort by various stakeholders' recommendation to enhance the role of female leadership positions, the number of females in charge of such position is not as expected. There are various factors that contributed to the minimum representation of women leadership in various business and public organizations. Various literatures cited various reasons for the small representations of women leadership. These factors mainly are categorized into personal, institutional and socio-cultural factors.

According to Machirind, Kihonge and Ochieng (2016) the challenges to women leadership participation is because of social factors and they mainly focus on their responsibility at home than focusing on responsibility at work place that makes them to refrain from holding responsibility as leaders. According to Asadul, Jantan & Saimoon (2017) succession planning, flexibility, and communication are the three key determining factors that result in making females progress to leadership position.

Solomon & Mesay (2017) investigated the factors that affect female teachers' involvement in school leadership positions in secondary schools of Sidama zone. The findings indicated that all the four factors (socio-cultural, personal, institutional/policy and affirmative action factors negatively affect the participation of female teachers' involvement in leadership position.

As far as the factors that could affect participation of women leadership in public sector is concerned, there is litter attention and the main objective of this study is to examine the determinants of women leadership participation in Jimma town.

2. Statement of the Problem

Gender issue in Africa in general and Ethiopia in particular was the issue of discussion for politicians and academia for a number of years. According to Onsongo (2004) over the decades, issues concerning women have taken new dimensions and received varied treatments by the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Without gender equality and women's empowerment policy measures, it is hardly possible for least developed countries like Ethiopia to

realize poverty reduction goals, millennium development targets and sustainable development objectives (Ogato, 2013). The argument for women's participation in decision making and leadership is based on the recognition that every human being has the right to participate in decisions that define her or his life. This right is the foundation of the ideal of equal participation in decision-making among women and men.

Reports indicated that Ethiopia suffers from some of lowest gender equality performance indicators in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Global Gender Gap report 2010 ranks Ethiopia at 121 out of 134 countries in terms of the magnitude and scope of gender disparities. The report indicated that women and girls in Ethiopia are strongly disadvantaged compared to boys and men in several areas, including literacy, health, livelihoods and basic human rights. They also suffer from low status in their society and lack social support networks.

Available evidence with regard to the factors that affect women to held leadership position is the focus of many researchers but there were inconclusive arguments among the finding. For instance, Gojjam & Manjit (2015) who conducted their research on factors affecting women's participation in leadership and management in selected public higher education institutions in Amhara Region, Ethiopia found that self-confidence, networking opportunities, self-esteem, suitable organizational working environment, and assertiveness are found to be the most important factors pulling women into leadership. On the other hand, stereotyping, patriarchal culture in academia, lack of support system at work, low academic qualification and lack of role model are the major barriers stifling women to assume leadership positions. Solomon & Mesay (2017) investigated the factors that affect female teachers' involvement in school leadership positions in secondary schools of Sidama zone and the findings indicated that all the four factors (socio-cultural, personal, institutional/policy and affirmative action factors negatively affect the participation of female teachers' involvement in leadership position. Of all the factors affirmative action related factors found the most influencing.

The public sectors are the most important sector that provides significant job opportunity to the citizens and it is the most service giving sector to the general public as well. Female involvement in this sector determines the quality of service to the public and determines the satisfaction of clients. It is the common notion that females should be at position and it is with this understanding that Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed nominated women to significant positions and made the number almost equal to male at ministerial level. But as far as the number of and basic factors that could determine women leadership participation in public sector in general and Jimma town in particular is not researched as far as the knowledge of the researcher is concerned. Hence, conducting research in the area is worth taking and timely. It is with this understanding and research gap that this study is designed to examine factors that determine women leadership participation in Jimma town.

The following basic research questions were answered by this study.

- What is the status of women leadership in Jimma town?
- Do personal factors affect women leadership participation?
- Do institutional factors affect women leadership participation?
- Do the socio-cultural factors affect women leadership participation?

3. Objectives of the Study

This study has got general and specific objectives.

3.1. General Objectives

The general objective of this study is to examine the determinants of women leadership in case of selected public sectors in Jimma town.

3.2. Specific Objectives

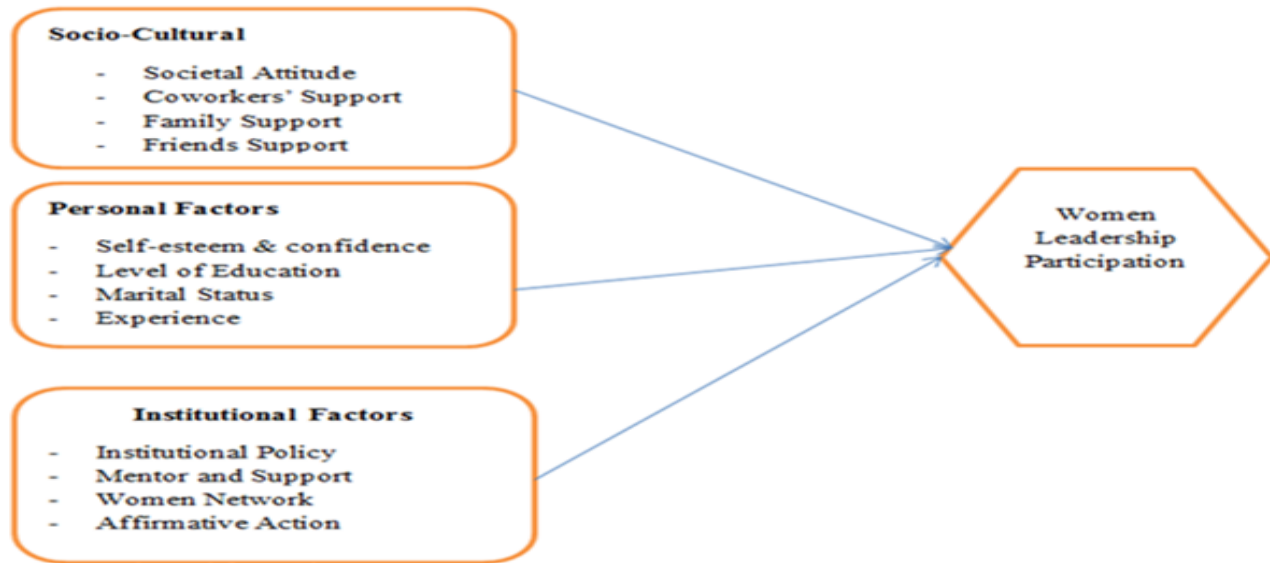
More specifically, the study has got the following objectives

- To examine the status of women leadership in Jimma town
- To analyze the effect of personal factors on women leadership participation
- To examine the effect of institutional factors on women leadership participation
- To analyze the effect of socio-cultural factors on women leadership participation

4. Literature Review

Aycan (2004) conducted research with the objective of identifying key success factors for women in management in Turkey. The result indicated that women's low self-confidence is identified as the greatest of all barriers for women to progress to managerial level. Gender role stereotype, attitude towards women's career advancement, attitude towards women's femininity in business life and employee attitude towards women managers are the basic factors that affected women to participate in leadership position. Endale (2014) analyzed the factors that affect women participation in leadership and decision making position in Bedele town administration. The finding indicated that lack of adequate service year required to hold decision making and leadership positions, overburden of domestic responsibilities, attitude of women themselves to hold public decision making and leadership position, respectively as major factor that has hindered women to hold public leadership and decision making in Bedele town. Furthermore, negative attitude of men towards women and factors as; absence of Women role models in the local areas for girls and women at large, are the major factor that has hindered women from public leadership positions. Gojjam & Manjit (2015) investigate factors that facilitate or constrain women to participate in leadership and management in pursuit of scrutinizing the issue of under-representation of women in selected public higher education institutions in Amhara region using a mixed research approach. The result indicated that self-confidence, networking opportunities; self-esteem, suitable organizational working environment, and assertiveness are found to be the most important factors pulling women into leadership. To other end, stereotyping, patriarchy, lack of support system at work, low academic qualification and lack of role model are the major barriers stifling women to assume leadership positions. Solomon & Mesay (2017) investigated the factors that affect female teachers' involvement in school leadership positions in secondary schools of Sidama zone. The findings indicated that all the four factors (socio-cultural, personal, institutional/policy and affirmative action factors negatively affect the participation of female teachers' involvement in leadership position. Of all the factors affirmative action related factors found the most influencing. Nigist (2019) made an analysis on the challenges and opportunities of women empowerment in leadership positions in Ethiopia. The researcher made narrative review of 13 different researches conducted on the subject area. The researcher then concluded that lack of academic qualification that made female to be on leadership position, gender stereotyping by the society, high domestic responsibility, lack of confidence by the female themselves, lack of support at home and work place, religious practice in some cases and lack of experience are the main factors that hindered women's to be at leadership position in Ethiopia.

5. Conceptual Model



Source: Adopted from literature

6. Research Design and Methodology

Research methodology comprises of research methods and techniques along with the rationale of using them. It is a science how research is done systematically (Kothari 2004). The population of the study is all public services in Jimma town. Census method is used as selecting sample from population is not feasible. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. The primary data were collected from females who held managerial position and secondary data concerning the number of women employees, females who held managerial position at all levels was collected from documents of each office. Reliability and validity of the questions were tested before collecting the data and Cronbach Alpha indicate the absence of reliability problem. From total of 142 questionnaires distributed, 102 were filed and return for data analysis. The populations of this study are all females who work in public sectors in Jimma town and who held certain position from lower to top level of leadership positions in the sectors available in the town. Descriptive statistics is used to analyze and describe the demographic characteristics of women leaders in relation to total leadership positions available in each public sector in Jimma town. In addition, correlation analysis is used to examine the relationship between the various variables. Linear regression is used to examine the effect of various factors categorized as personal, institutional and socio-cultural factors on women leadership participation using SPSS version 20.

7. Model Specification

The following model is used for the regression analysis to examine the effect of independent variable over dependent variable. The regression model which is existed in most literature has the following general form:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta X_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

Where Y_{it} is the dependent variable (women leadership participation) for sector i in year t ,

α is the constant term

β is the vector of coefficient of the independent variables

X_{it} is the vector of the independent variable (SCF, INF and PRF) of sector i for year t , and

ε it is the normal error term with constant variance and zero mean.

Therefore, the general empirical research model indicated above was changed into the study variables to analyze the effect of various factors on women leadership participation.

$$WLP_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (SCF_{it}) + \beta_2 (INF_{it}) + \beta_3 (PRF_{it}) + \varepsilon_{it}$$

8. Data Analysis and Interpretation

8.1. Position held and Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 Position held VS religion of respondents

Crosstab					
Count		Position Held			Total
		Top management	Middle Management	Lower Level Management	
Religion of Respondents	Christian	1	7	21	29
	Muslim	5	18	36	59
	Wakefata	1	7	6	14
Total		7	32	63	102

Source: Questionnaire Survey

The cross tabulation indicate the relationship between religion and position held in the organization. The analysis indicated that majority of Christians hold lower level leadership position while only one held top level leadership position. Although majority of the females hold lower lever leadership position Muslims are better in holding top level leadership position when compared to Christian and Wakefata. This is because of the fact that majority of the population are Muslims and leadership is its replica.

Table 2 Position held VS marital status of female leaders

Crosstab					
Count		Position Held			Total
		Top management	Middle Management	Lower Level Management	
Marital status of Respondents	Married	6	21	45	72
	Unmarried	1	11	15	27
	Divorced	0	0	2	2
	Widow	0	0	1	1
Total		7	32	63	102

Source: Questionnaire Survey

As it can be seen from table 2 above, though female generally held lower and medium level leadership positions, majority of the married females held senior leadership positions when compared to those who are unmarried. This implies that married women tend to take risk of being at managerial position because of their experience in leading their families.

Table 3 Education level VS position hold

Crosstab					
Count					
		Position Held			Total
		Top management	Middle Management	Lower Level Management	
Education Level	Diploma	0	6	22	28
	Degree	7	23	41	71
	Masters	0	3	0	3
Total		7	32	63	102

Source: Questionnaire Survey

As far as the education level of the females who held leadership position is concerned, 28 of the females holders of which 22 are at lower level leadership position whereas, 6 are at middle level leadership position. Of the 71 females who are first degree holders, 41 of them are at lower leadership position, 23 are at middle level leadership and only 7 of them are at top level leadership position. Only 3 of them are master's holders and they held middle level leadership position. This implies that education level is not the only criteria for females to be at the higher leadership position as there are females who hold master's degree but are in the middle leadership position and at the same time those who hold diploma and held the same position.

Table 4 Experience VS position hold

Crosstab					
Count					
		Position Held			Total
		Top management	Middle Management	Lower Level Management	
Work Experience	< 5 years	0	2	8	10
	5-10 years	0	8	19	27
	11-15 years	4	9	28	41
	16-20 years	2	7	4	13
	21-25 years	0	2	3	5
	> 25 years	1	4	1	6
Total		7	32	63	102

Source: Questionnaire Survey

Table 4 shows that total of 10 females have experience of less than five years and of these 8 are on lower level and 2 are on middle level leadership position. Of those who have experience ranging from five to ten years, 19 are on lower level and 8 are on the middle level leadership positions. Majority of the respondents are in the experience rang of eleven to fifteen years and four of the seven females fall in this category. In general, 24 females fall in the experience above 16 years. This also implies that majority of the females who hold leadership position are within the experience range of five to 20 years and it is quite logical as providing leadership

positions in the early experience and late ages have significant impact on efficiency of the public service.

8.2. Correlation Analysis

According to Sakaran (2003) correlation is one of the most widely used measures of association between two or more variables. Measures of correlation are employed to explore the presence or absence of a correlation between the variables.

The correlation coefficient describes the direction of the correlation, which is, whether it is positive or negative, and the strength of the correlation, that is, whether an existing correlation is strong or weak.

Though there are various measures of correlation between nominal or ordinal data, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient is a measure of linear association between two interval or ratio variables. Measure, represented usually by the letter r , varies from -1 to $+1$. A zero correlation indicates that there is no correlation between the variables.

The following section discusses about the correlation between the various factors and female leadership participation measured by the number of females who hold certain leadership positions ranging from lower to top level in Jimma public service offices.

Table 5 Correlation Output

		Correlations								
		Religion	Marital status	Education Level	Work Experience	Position Held	Social Factors	Personal Factors	Institutional Factors	Female on Position
Religion	Pearson Correlation	1								
	Sig. (2-tailed)									
Marital status	N	102								
	Pearson Correlation	-.164	1							
Education Level	Sig. (2-tailed)	.099								
	N	102	102							
Work Experience	Pearson Correlation	.574**	-.094	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.350							
Position Held	N	102	102	102						
	Pearson Correlation	.580**	-.155	.627**	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.119	.002						
	N	102	102	102	102					
	Pearson Correlation	-.194	.065	.565**	.705**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.051	.515	.008	.002					
N		102	102	102	102	102				

Social Factors	Pearson Correlation	.122	-.071	.055	-.065	.139	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.222	.476	.584	.517	.163				
	N	102	102	102	102	102	102			
Personal Factors	Pearson Correlation	.111	.151	.579**	.057	.547**	.087	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.267	.131	.003	.570	.004	.383			
	N	102	102	102	102	102	102	102		
Institutional Factors	Pearson Correlation	-.048	.020	-.101	-.106	.019	.131	.169	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.635	.844	.312	.290	.848	.189	.090		
	N	102	102	102	102	102	102	102	102	
Female on Position	Pearson Correlation	-.029	.102	.623**	.021	-.137	-.769**	.534*	.750**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.776	.305	.003	.832	.169	.001	.032	.002	
	N	102	102	102	102	102	102	102	102	102

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Questionnaire Survey and Secondary data

Table 5 indicate the correlation analysis between the number of female on position and demographic data of the respondents. It can be understood that education and religion of the respondents have statistically significant positive relationship ($r=.574$, $N= 102$, $p=.005$). The correlation output also indicated that there is statistically significant positive relationship between work experience of female leaders and their religion ($r=.580$, $N= 102$, $P< .005$). The result further depicted that there is statistically significant positive relationship between work experience and education level of female leaders in case of Jimma town public service sectors ($r=.627$ $N= 102$, $P< .005$). This implies that those females who have long term service have greater chance to get educational opportunities compared to those who have short-term experiences.

Position held has statistically significant relation with education level of female leaders ($r=.565$ and Sig $.008$). It means that those females with better educational background have the tendency to hold certain leadership positions. There is also statistically significant relationship between position held in the organization and work experience ($r=.705$ and Sig $.002$).

There is statistically significant positive relation ($r=.579$ and Sig $.003$) between personal factors and education level of female leaders implying that the personal effort they made and the perception they have towards themselves could determine their educational destination. Those who have positive perception for themselves and make strong effort are at better educational level and vice versa. At the same time, personal factor also have statistically positive relation with ($r=.547$ and Sig $.004$) position held in an organization. This implies that those females who become determinant and have positive self-image could be at better position that those who do not exert effort and have negative self-image.

The analysis indicated that there is statistically significant positive relation between number of female in position and education level of female leaders ($r=.623$ and Sig $.003$). It means that as education level of females increase, the probably of being on position also increases and providing scholarship opportunities for female employees is important to bring them to a given position. The correlation analysis further indicated that the number of females on position has statistically positive relation with personal related factors ($r=.534$ and Sig $.032$). That means the personal efforts exerted by females; their perception towards themselves positively influences their position in their organization. There is also statistically significant positive relation between number of females on position and institutional factors ($r=.750$ and Sig $.002$). That is, the institutional policies and practices, the affirmative action and other institutional environment have positive influence on bringing females to certain position in that organization.

Finally the correlation coefficient indicated that there is statistically significant negative relation between ($r=-.769$ and Sig $.001$) number of females in position and social factors. This indicated that decreased social pressures on females could increase the number of females in certain leadership position and vice versa.

8.3. Regression Analysis

Assumption Tests of the Classical Linear Regression Model

Before making regression analysis and talk about the effect of independent variables on the dependent variables, assumption tests such as linearity, normality, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity were tested and no problem was observed.

Model Fitness

Table 6 Model summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.805 ^a	.647	.636	.30903
a. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional Factors, Social Factors, Personal Factors				

Source: Questionnaire survey

From model summary, it can be understood that 63.6 % the change in the dependent variable are exhibited by the changes in the three independent variables personal, institutional and personal factors.

Table 8. Analysis of variance table

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.354	3	.154	1.613	.001 ^b
	Residual	9.359	98	.096		
	Total	9.821	101			
a. Dependent Variable: Number of Female on Position						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional Factors, Social Factors, Personal Factors						

Source: Questionnaire Survey and Secondary data

Table 7 indicated that the F-statistics is significant (Sig. 0.001) and it confirms the fact that the model best fits to see analyze the effect of the independent variables namely, social factors,

personal factors and institutional factors on female leadership participation as dependent variable in Jimma town public service sector offices.

Effect of the three Variables on Women leadership Participation

Table 9 Determinants of women leadership participation

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.766	.604		2.923	.004
	Social Factors	-1.261	.611	-.206	-2.063	.042
	Personal Factors	2.076	.447	.317	3.171	.005
	Institutional Factors	-.160	.316	-.051	-.507	.614
a. Dependent Variable: Number of Female on Position						
Source: Questionnaire Survey and Secondary data						

The regression output indicated that social factors have statistically negative effect on female leadership participation at 5 % significance level. The finding is in line with the realities and ground and many previous literatures. Social norms, beliefs, attitude towards women have negative effect on the female leadership participations. The finding is in line with Endale (2014) and Nigist (2019).

The analysis also indicated that personal factors have statistically positive effect on female leadership participation at 1 % significance level. This implies that personal commitment, perception towards oneself determines who we are where we want to go the finding is in line with the finding of Solomon & Mesay (2017).

Finally although there is relation between institutional factors and women leadership participation, it cannot be concluded that it has effect on women leadership participation. The result contradicts the finding of Solomon & Mesay (2017).

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

As education level of females increase, the probability of being on position also increases and providing scholarship opportunities for female employees is important to bring them to a given position. Personal efforts exerted by females; their perception towards themselves positively influences their position in their organization. The result further indicated that social norms, beliefs, attitude towards women have negative effect on the female leadership participations. The analysis further indicated that personal commitment, perception towards oneself determines who they are where they want to go. Boosting self-confidence of women, decreasing social pressure, coworkers and family support and setting institutional policies could enhance women leadership participation.

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