

**JIMMA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**



**AN ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: THE CASE OF  
BONGA TOWN ADMINISTRATION, KAFFA ZONE, SOUTH NATION  
NATIONALITIES AND PEOPLES REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIA**

**M.A THESIS**  
**BY**  
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**JIMMA , ETHIOPIA**

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Thesis submitted to the Department of Governance and Development Studies for partial fulfillment of MA Degree in Governance and Development Studies

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## DECLARATION

Hereby, I, Zerihun Mamo , whose Identification number is RM9090/08, here do declare that this Research is original work of my own and it has not been submitted partially or fully to any Universities so far as a partial fulfillment to Master's Degree award.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>BPA</b>	Beijing Platform for Action
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>FDRE</b>	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
<b>EPRDF</b>	Ethiopia People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front
<b>GTP</b>	Growth and Transformation Plan
<b>HR</b>	Human Resource
<b>IPU</b>	Inter Parliamentary Union
<b>MGDs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>PASDEP</b>	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UDHR</b>	Universal Declaration on Human Rights
<b>WCYA</b>	Women, children and Youth Affairs
<b>WCY</b>	Women, Children and Youth

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### **Abstract**

Women face multi-faceted challenges to participate in leadership position due to different factors. The purpose of this research was to examine women's possibilities to advance to leadership positions. This thesis is based on the hypothesis and figures that there are less female leaders than male leaders, both the local and national levels. The objective of this study was to assess women's political participation in case of Bonga town administration. It also aimed to analyze the level of current women leadership and representation position, describe different forms of political participation, and assess factors that affect women participation in decision making. In order to meet these objectives, quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. The data was collected by interviewing, focus group discussion and conducting questionnaires for women to explore the current gender practices in the town administration and assessing the factors for low representation of women in political leadership position. Consequently, non-probability purposive sampling and probability simple random sampling was used to select the respondents and discussants of the study. The quantitative data was analysed by descriptive statistics and the qualitative data was analyzed by narration. The findings showed that women are highly underrepresented in higher level positions due to the factors such as educational gap, socio cultural attitude, and male dominancy, lack of recommendation, policy gap and organizational culture the major ones. Due to this women are unable to get role model and less confidence for the leadership position. Thus, in order to minimize the existing gender gaps in decision making place, the town administration needs to implement affirmative action at all of leadership level, giving quota number for women at entrance stage as well as clearly needs to set the criteria while assigning employees at different leadership positions.

**Key Words:** Women, Political Leadership, Affirmative Action and Gender

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Women's political participation has been recognized internationally as an important measure of the status of women in any particular country. Hence, in recent years, women's participation in politics and decision making has received significant attention across the world. However, women remain seriously underrepresented in decision-making positions (Shimelis, 2015).

Women have both a right and an obligation to active participation in political leadership. In addition to this right and obligation, political analysts and researchers from different regions of the world (Clinton-Rodham, 2003; Neuman, 1998; Maathai,2006; Thomas and Wilcox, 2005; Wanjohi, 2003) have observed that when women get into leadership and management, they bring a different perspective of political leadership. These analysts and researchers have argued that having more women in politics would help solve problems associated with perpetual poverty, especially as it affects women. Women's leadership not only aids in building nations but also helps to balance up decision making processes (Epstein *et al.*, 2005). Neuman, (1998) writing about women legislators in the United States, observed that decisions concerned with issues of education, health, gender violence, women's economic empowerment, peace, rights, dignity, and democracy are usually of great concern to women leaders.

Despite the progress made in some countries, serious and persistent obstacles still hinder the advancement of women and their participation in political decision making processes. Some of the main obstacles are related to persistent poverty; lack of equal access to health, education, training and employment; cultural barriers; political structures and institutions that discriminate on women; and in some cases the impact of armed conflict and natural disasters, which has also contributed to women's lower participation due to other challenges that accompany conflict, (*Heinrich Böll Foundation, 2010*).

However, women account for larger share of the total population in many countries, including Ethiopia and they provide major labor input to many level of political participation, varying from informal employment to self-employment but the opportunities for women in the formal sector

are very limited due to many reasons and factors. Thus, they are visibly absent or marginalized group in leadership positions in the government organizations. Women remain concentrated in the low level work place and hence miss the decision-making processes at different administrative levels. Thus, women are particularly underrepresented wherever decisions are made, regardless of the level or the institutions they involved in.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Women constitute half of the Ethiopia population. Thus, any political, economic and social activity that doesn't involve and benefit women cannot be fruitful because such an activity is based on half the manpower, half the knowledge, half the effort, etc...of that which is available in the country (WCYA, 2013). Though women's rights to equal participation and benefits, with men, can't be seen separately from the overall economic and political progress in society, it is an established fact that women's rights need special attention in the change process.

According to Afoz (2010) the sustainability of the economy of a country depends on the extent of the integration of women in public decision-making, the inclusion of their needs and interests in policy which ultimately helps to ensure good governance. In Ethiopia, as women are more than fifty percent of the population, it is very important to utilize this part of population. So that the talent of whole population wasn't optimally utilized. Internationally, women's right to participate in decision-making processes at national and local levels were recognized by the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women and the issue of gender equality was also focused by the Millennium Development Goals.

Different studies, like of Birikit G/Michael on An assessment of factors affecting participation of women in management position: The case study of ethio- telecom company; Factors that affect women's participation in leadership and decision making: The case study of Bedele town by Endale Alemu (2014); Factor affect women's participation in leadership and management in selected higher education institution in Amhara region, Ethiopia by Gojjam Ademe and Manjit Singh(2015); and Socio cultural factors affecting the role and status of women in political participation in sululta town Administration by Billa Abebe (2016), have been conducted on women. The above mentioned studies focused on factors affecting on women participation. The

gap of those researches did not show the current status of women in political leadership position and their involvement in decision making process. And thus this study is examine this gap by focusing on assessment of women's political participation: The case of Bonga town is new in time and location and it was find the current status of women on political decision making position and their involvement in decision making process at Bonga town administration.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1. General Objective**

The general objective of study is to assess women's political participation in Bonga town administrative units of Kaffa Zone, South west Ethiopia.

##### **1.3.1.1. Specific objectives**

The study has the following specific objectives. They are :-

- 1 To analyze the current status of women's involvement in political decision making in the study area.
- 2 To explicate different forms of Women's Political Participation in the study area
- 3 To assess factors affect women participation in decision making.

### **1.4. Research questions**

1. What is a current status of women's involvement in political decision making?
2. What are the different forms of women's political participation?
3. What are the factors which affects women's political participation?

### **1.5. Significance of study**

The significance of this study lies in its ability to show the actual representation of women in leadership position and the factors that affect women's political participation in Bonga town administration unit.

The suggestions from the study may also lead to policy makers' new orientation in formulation and implementation of affirmative action policies that could enhance women's political participation in the town administration unit political leadership and how to involve in decision making process.

Moreover, the study may benefit women that it helps to realize factors that affect their representation in leadership position and by suggesting how to overcome it.

Finally, the study may help other researchers as literature in the study area, for Universities in general and it is used for the company as a base for improving the human resource strategic planning in particular.

### **1.6. Delimitations of the Study**

This study mainly concentrates on the discussion relating to the current status, forms and factors affecting women's political participation in the case of Bonga town administration unit, at Kaffa zone south west Ethiopia. Knowing that several factors cause for low number of women in the political leadership and political decision making process, but in this research, it has chosen to focus only on how poverty, culture and lack of educational opportunities factors are responsible for low representation of women in political leadership. Furthermore, the study was limited at Bonga town administrative units of women at political leadership, private business sectors, housewives and public services. But the results of the study will not generalize women's of other woreda in Kaffa zone.

### **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

While doing this research, there were financial, time and resource limitations to investigate the problems in great detail. One of the major limitations of this research was the respondents' reaction towards the questionnaire. The main source of primary data was the FGD women who are placed at top leadership position and most of them were not timely presenting at selected place, responding which had an impact on the research schedule. However, an attempt has been made to fill these gaps by exploring information rich respondents in detail and experiences from studies conducted in other areas were explored.

### **1.8. Organization of the Thesis**

This study is organized in five parts. Chapter one is about introduction of the study which contains background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study; chapter two is about review of related literature; chapter three is about research design of the study comprising all methods and tools which are employed to achieve the stated objectives; chapter four states data presentation and analysis; and the final part of this research presents conclusions and recommendations which are drawn based on the findings.

## 1.9. Definition of Key Terms

- **Gender:** Gender refers to the personal sexual identity of an individual, regardless of the person's biological and outward sex. How people define masculinity and femininity can vary based on the individual's background and surrounding culture. Differing societal expectations in different cultures establish the behavioral, psychological and physical attributes that are associated one gender or another.
- **Women's Participation in Decision Making:** Participation in Decision Making is referred to as the women perceived involvement and influence in the decision making process in an organization that has a direct and indirect impact on their jobs (Afoz, 2010).
- **Culture:** is defined as the shared patterns of value and behaviors that are characteristics of society.
- **Participation:** is "The creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community and larger society to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably the fruits of development". Participation is a process by which community members take part in all stages of a programme right from inception, through planning and design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation to sharing of benefits.
- **Politics:** - is concerned with the formulation and execution of decisions that are binding the population of a community or a society to the relationships between those who make or implement such decisions and those who are affected by them.

## 1.10. Ethical Considerations

This study was carried in line with the approval obtained from Jimma University and Bonga city administration unit also give a written permission to conduct this research in response to a written inquiry. The interview was conducted by letting the participants to have information about the purpose of the study and the type of information needed from them. The interview was carried out after consent from the interviewees and at a place of their choice. In the case of primary data collection, different women positioned in political leadership and employees of the public servants were participated. Through this process, the researcher let the participants to know the purpose of the research and those who was participate according to their willingness.

The questionnaire provided to the respondents has general information about the purpose of the study. In addition to that it that the respondents need not mention their name in the questionnaire and it insures confidentiality. The distribution and collection of questionnaire were made using sealed envelope. This led the respondent to provide their view without any fear and discomfort.

The researcher was take care for using actual data, avoiding data cooking, providing of proper acknowledgement of others people ideas to be uses in the research by proper citation and referencing and maintaining of objectivity (avoid biasness).



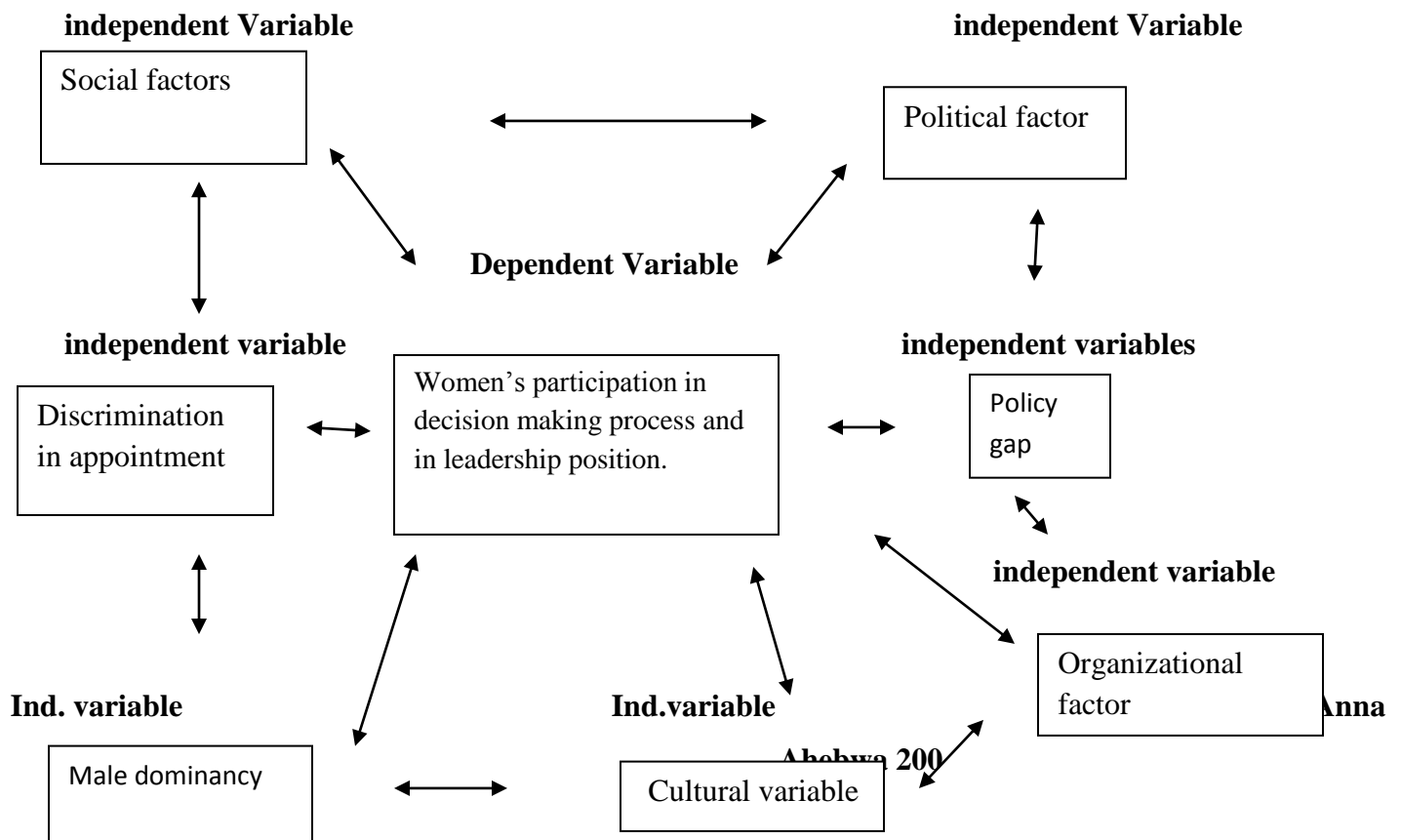
## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

#### 2.1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework defines variables of the study, and discusses the relationship between dependent and independent variables and how they relate to women's participation - the dependent variables being social, male dominance, organizational factor, discrimination in appointment, policy gap, cultural, political factors are the independent variable being women's participation in politics.

**Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework on the relationship between dependent and independent variables in relation to women political participation**



## 2.2. Theoretical frame work

### 2.2.1. Arguments for gender-balanced representation

Gender equality and women's political participation is not just a question of academic interest. It holds many aspects equally important in the political and social sphere for all people. The basic argument is from one point of view a question of fundamental democratic rights, everyone's equal right and possibility to candidate and to exercise political power. There is also the fact that big amounts of aid go to democracy promotions which to some degree seek to increase women's political influence and participation in politics. Different projects work with educating women in political issues, preparing them to be candidates for local governance and increase women's influence in politics (see for example Woman's Political Resource Centre (WPRC)). There is a point in examining hindrances for women's participation connected to the type of projects mentioned, since there needs to prevail some sort of understanding of women's access to politics in order for attempts to increase female representation will lead to desired results. There is in many aspects a great achievement per se to get more women into politics but their possibilities and role in politics need further to be examined.

As Lovenduski writes in the introductory chapter in *Feminism and politics* (2000), there are different arguments for increased female representation: normative arguments that say it is unfair for men to monopolize representation and pragmatic arguments which stress women's special interests and experiences that can only be represented by women. The normative and pragmatic arguments, Lovenduski states, do not say that getting more women into politics will affect the outcome of politics. The third argument, on the other hand, which is based on the stance of difference means that getting more women in politics will lead to an improvement of the politics (Lovenduski 2000: Introduction).

My point of departure concerning under-representation as a problem within political science starts with the reasoning of Anne Phillips. She suggests that social background and opinion-representation should not be separated, but that over-representation of one social group leads to over-representation of opinion (Phillips 1995). She provides the following logic: The most immediately compelling of the remaining arguments is that which presents gender parity as a straightforward matter of justice: that it is patently and grotesquely unfair for men to monopolize representation. If there were no obstacles operating to keep certain groups of people out of political life, we would expect positions of political influence to be randomly distributed between the sexes. There might be some minor and innocent deviations, but any more distorted

distribution is evidence of intentional or structural discrimination. In such contexts (that is, most contexts) women are being denied rights and opportunities that are currently available to men (Phillips 1995: 63).

What Phillips points to is that under-representation of women in politics is to be viewed as structural or intentional discrimination. This implies that there are factors behind the under-representation, factors this study aims to explore.

### **2.3. Concept of Leadership**

Leadership is a process by which one person influences the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of others (Yalem, 2011). Leaders set a direction for the rest of us; they help us see what lies ahead; they help us visualize what we might achieve; they encourage us and inspire us. Leadership is the ability to get other people to do something significant that they might not otherwise do. It's energizing people toward a goal. Yukl (2006, p.8) defines leadership as *“the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, as well as the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives.”*

Davis and Newstrom (1989) defined; leadership as the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically toward objectives. It is the human factor that helps a group identify where it is going and then motivates it towards its goals. Without leadership, an organization would be only a gathering of people and machines, just as an orchestra without a conductor would be only musicians and instrument. The orchestra and all other organizations require Leadership to develop their precious assets to their fullest capacity. Hence, for this study the definition of leadership as a process of encouraging and helping others to work actively toward objectives is considered since the meaning of leadership is taking into consideration as facilitator (transformational leadership style) not as a power (transactional leadership style).

Early research tried to identify the traits that differed between leaders and non-leaders, or between successful and unsuccessful leaders: Some studies focused on personality factors, like intelligence, ambition, and aggressiveness; others examined physical characteristics like height, build and attractiveness. However, no consistent agreements that are stable across groups and tasks have emerged despite continued attempts (Ibid 2003).

Leadership behavior i.e. the way leaders engage in their activities or perform their role as a leader and antecedents of behavior has been widely studied. It has been found that personal direction of leaders is associated with pattern of leadership displayed by individuals (Bass and Duntmen as cited in Sikdar & Mitra, 2008).

According to Sikdar & Mitra, (2008) leadership literature has identified different styles of leadership based on leader's orientation towards task and people. Transactional leadership behavior is associated with the leader being more tasks oriented and with low consideration towards people. Transactional leadership is characterized by behavior associated more with the "agentic attributes" (i.e. agentic behaviors at work includes speaking assertively, influencing others, and initiating tasks of masculine gender). While transformational leadership behavior is associated with the leader having high consideration of people. It is characterized by behavior focusing on relationship and consideration of people and is associated with the "communal attributes" of feminine gender. Communal behaviors' at work include being concerned with the welfare of others (i.e., descriptions of kindness, sympathy, sensitivity, and nurturance), helping others, accepting others' direction, and maintaining relationships. This indicating that gender characteristics impact on leadership behavior. Thus it could be influenced by the gender identification i.e. how individuals identify with characteristics attributed to males or females based on gender. People who see themselves as having more feminine characteristics are likely to exhibit the transformational leadership behavior.

#### **2.4. Male's verse Female's Leadership Style**

Since men and women have different leadership styles, the variances do not mean that one has dominance over the other. The difference may be due in part to men seeing leadership as leading and women seeing leadership as facilitating (Schaeff, as cited in Growe & Montgomery, n.d). Although male and female administrators perform many of the same tasks in carrying out their work, different aspects of the job are emphasized (Chliwniak, as cited in Growe & Montgomery). According to Getskow (as cited in Growe & Montgomery) women embrace relationships, sharing, and process, but men focus on completing tasks, achieving goals, hoarding of information, and winning.

Various literature provide evidences that men utilize the traditional top-down administrative style; while women are more interested in transforming people's self-interest into organizational

goals by encouraging feelings of self-worth, active participation, and sharing of power and information. This type of leadership that is considered to be effective in the current environment of continual change, and rapid globalization, increased labor market participation of women & other excluded groups.

#### **2.4.1. The Nature of Males and Females**

A common interpretation of the behavior and relation between, men and women emphasized the importance of the biological maternal function of the female in determining the nature and content of her being. A women's early life is a preparation for becoming, and her later life is devoted to being, a successful wife and mother. Her activities, though not necessarily confined to the home, at least center around it, for her primary mission is to be a helpmate to her husband and to provide a warm and safe haven for her family. If she does work for pay, she will do best in jobs compatible with her household responsibilities and her feminine personality (Blau & Ferber, 1992).

Men, on the other hand, are not constrained by their paternal function from fully entering the world outside the home. On the contrary, their natural role as provider and protector spurs them on to greater efforts (Ibid). Thus, nature by itself has an impact for women for not to be influential to outside work and not make women more competitive in their assigned position.

## **2.5. The Women and Leadership in Ethiopia**

### **2.5.1. During Haile Selassie Regime**

Before the 1974 revolution, Ethiopian society has a strong religious base and the political culture has derived its strength from those religious beliefs. Orthodox Christianity was the dominant religion at the time forming the ideological base of the ruling monarchs. Within the stratification system, women were not only placed at the lowest hierarchical level, but were also expected to show utmost respect and submission to men and never question the motives of their husbands, fathers or male relatives. This hierarchy was also explicitly stated in the Fetha-Negest (as cited in Biseswar, 2011):

“First, he [the judge] must be a man... the requirement of being a male is based on the consideration that man is the master of a woman, as said by the Apostle[Ephesians 5:23]. The office of a judge belongs to the superior rather than the subordinate; because a man is more intelligent, he must judge”. Over centuries, such indoctrination became further integrated as part

of culture. In this manner, women's inferior status became established unchallenged as universal within the traditional patriarchal ideology.

So according to Fetha-Negest women at that time were subjected to powerful autocratic ideological control that none of them could challenge the emperor. Due to that, the Emperor had no agenda and did not consider women's advancement as an issue. There were women's organized activities run mainly by non-governmental (NGOs) bodies such as the Ethiopian Women's Welfare Association, the Ethiopian Officer's Wives Association, and the Ethiopian Female Students' Association. These Associations were, however, limited in scope, and only existed in the cities. Besides as it was the order that time, the monarchy did not design special measures for women's liberation and also did nothing to alter traditional gender perceptions in the society. Therefore, they had little or no impact on government policies, laws, regulations or development programs. Most of the educated women (at the time there were very few) were also not sensitive to their own problems and could not walk further than functioning as part of the society, abiding by their feminine roles (Ibid, 2003).

Even though the first parliament was established in Ethiopia during Haile Selassie's regime, no woman had been given a chance of nomination. Later on, only two women in 1965 and five women in 1969 have occupied the imperial's parliament and the senate which had 250 and 125 seats respectively (Yalem, 2011).

#### **2.5.2. During the Dergue Regime**

When the Dergue (The Military Government) took political power in the country in 1974, it dramatically changed the political course from monarchy to a communist orientation. The Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association (REWA) was established by proclamation, but this organization was too monolithic and too close to the Dergue to be of any real use to women. The purpose of its establishment was, in fact, the consolidation of the Dergue's power. Promoting the interests of women was not high on its agenda nor was it designed to influence government policies or help women benefit from development programs. As a result there was little improvement in the lives of Ethiopian women, whether in the social, economic or political sphere, especially of those who lived in the rural areas (Yalem, 2011).

The Dergue made it clear that it would not tolerate any resistance from anyone to achieving its own goals. In the first year of its power, women activists engaged on state structures (peasant associations and women's commission) to advance their agenda in mobilizing rural women in

some regions. They exploited the available opportunities at the time. But that did not last long. The Dergue assumed complete monopoly on the emancipation of women, dictating its course and actions from a distorted woman question paradigm. Within this woman question, there was no indication of altering the traditional female and male domains. In fact, these were found to be enforced and exploited to the maximum by the institutional arm of the Dergue representing all women in the country, namely the Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association (Biseswar, 2011).

### **2.5.3. During the EFDRE Regime**

Things looked more promising when the EPRDF took political power in the country in 1991. Many new laws replaced the abundance of state proclamations of the Dergue, creating opportunities for society. Initially, these laws promised much freedom and space to the people (Biseswar, 2011).

The Federal Constitution of Ethiopia was promulgated in 1995 which has renewed the commitment to the gender policy and clearly expressed legislative support for women through its various articles. For example, Article 25 prohibits discrimination on grounds of gender. Article 35 is the most comprehensive law regarding women's rights and consists of nine sub-provisions. These are stipulations on the equal enjoyment of rights; equality of rights in marriage; entitlement to affirmative measures; freedom from harmful traditional practices; maternity leave; equal participation in program planning and implementation; equal rights on property ownership; equality in employment; and full access to reproductive health care.

A number of other constitutional provisions, namely those embodied in Articles 7, 33, 38, 42, and 89, also have a direct bearing on the protection of the rights of Ethiopian women. Beside local efforts, the government in Ethiopia has always been among the first to become a signatory to the many international conventions. It did not stop there. It was quite promising to see that the ruling party included an article in the constitution meant to domesticate these international treaties. Article 9 (4) in the 1995 constitution stipulates that "all international agreements ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the law of the land". Many other steps undertaken by the EFDRE government on women's rights include revision of the family law in 2000; revision of the penal code in 2004; revision of the labor law; launching of a social welfare policy in 1997; an

educational policy; the formulation of a national health policy in 1993; the promulgation of a national population policy, HIV/AIDS policy, and many more.

Besides these, Article 3 of the constitution provides equal opportunity for women to participate in the decision making process by giving them the right to vote and be elected. In this regard, a numbers of measures have been taken in terms of advocacy, lobbying and awareness creation in order to increase the participation of women in the decision making structures of the country. Though much still remains to be done, there are noticeable achievements in the participation of women particularly in the parliament as well as in regional councils.

The Civil Service Reform Programs also contributed a lot to women's participation in decision making. Article 13 (1) of the Civil Service Proclamation No.262/2002 prohibits discrimination Among job seeker on the basis of sex. The proclamation also incorporates an affirmative action by stating that preference shall be given to female candidates who have equal or close scores to that of male candidates. As a result, the number of women indifferent decision making position has increased significantly. Thus, representation of women in the different decision making positions during the current regime (i.e.at Legislative) level is shown below:

**Table 2.1: Distribution of Seats in the House of People's Representation**

Year of Election	Female		Male		Total No. of Seats
	No.	%	No.	%	
1995	15	2.74	532	97.26	547
2000	42	7.7	505	92.23	547
2005	117	21.4	430	78.6	547
2010	152	27.8	395	72.2	547
2015	212	38.8	335	61.24	547

*Source: Federal Election Commission of FDRE, 2016*

## **2.6. Factors that Affect Women's Leadership Position**

Underrepresentation of women in leadership position is problematic for several reasons. First, a lack of women in leadership positions may discourage the lower-level women to aspire to an upper level position, because they feel that it is un-tenable at all. Highly qualified and experienced women may thus not apply for upper level positions. As a result, organizations lose the opportunity to capitalize on the skills and talent of a portion of their workforce. Further, when employees perceive a lack of women in upper leadership positions, they may form ideas



about the implicit values and culture of the organization, such as it is an “old-boys club,” or discriminatory in its hiring and retention practices. Therefore, there are so many reasons that barriers women from moving to upper leadership position and from those factors some of them are described as follows:

### **2.6.1. Social / Cultural Factors**

Willis (1991) culture is that which surrounds us and plays a certain role in determining the way we behave at any given moment in time. By no means a static, concept defines culture and is both defined by events that are taking place both locally as well as regionally and internationally, it is shaped by individual events as well as collective ones, and it is a feature of the time or epoch we live in. Because it is so vast, culture is also often used as a tool to validate all manners of actions not, all of which may be acceptable to all concerned and are often intimately, connected to issues of identity. Cultural frameworks are not always imposed, but are open to manipulation and interpretation from many angles and sources.

According to Bernaars, (as cited in Mbugua, 2007) in any ethnic group in Africa a typical woman has low status particularly lack of power to make decisions on matters affecting her life and those of her family. This culturally determined expectation and attitude towards the girl child influences less allocation of resources towards the girl as compared to the boys. A boy will always be considered first before a girl. This gender biased cultural assumption and the subsequent differential treatment of boys and girls in a homestead not only diminish girls’ access and performance in the education but also tend to push girls to doing the so called ‘feminine careers’.

One of the earliest biological justifications for male superiority comes from Aristotle 5th century B.C (as cited in Amrot, 1998, p.7). He stated that the world is a hierarchy composed of ruling elements and women are “naturally” fit to the second. In his own words he described it as *“The male is naturally fitter to command than the female and female and women benefit most by being subject to male royal authority”*. It is mainly because during that time the inequality of men and women was a legally and socially accepted fact. Therefore, this simply shows his ideological difference from contemporary thinkers. While society believes in the superiority of men, we are in the decade of woman in which the involvement of women in many aspects is a hot issue. As Sitterly cited in Amrot, (1998, p. 7) the women leader confirmed it as follows:

“... The 1990’s have been named the decade of Women ...changes in values technology, labor availability the work force, life styles, public attitudes, family roles, globalization, legal requirements, company recognition, emphasis on team work and employee involvement are all factors that will enhance women’s opportunity to compete and survive in tough economic time.”

### **2.6.2. Work Place Policies**

Women are not the same as men; they have particular biological functions that make them different, which in turn make their work experiences different. To this end, treating men and women the same has effectively created a systemic form of indirect discrimination for women. Mbugua (2007) asserts that pregnancy is a workplace issue that starts well before conception and ends long after birth. It is impossible to separate pregnancy and family responsibilities.

Anecdotal evidence suggests assumptions that women will resign when they have children are still widespread and continue to form the basis for not hiring women among some employers. Large number of women report significant difficulties when they return to work due to the lack of supportive policies and practices in workplace. Issues like childcare, breastfeeding, flexible working hours and part-time work are still very current issues for most working women.

#### **The “Maternal wall”**

It has been argued women managers and professionals are disadvantaged in the labor market due to their status as potential or actual mothers, sticking to the old saying that reads, “The hands that rock the cradle cannot rock the boardroom”. Despite anti-discrimination legislation, a negative link continues to be made, by employers, between a women’s reproductive status and her employment orientation (Gatrell, 2006)

### **2.6.3. Discrimination in Appointments**

Discrimination occur when an employee suffers unfavorable or unfair treatment due to their sex, race, religion, national origin, disabled or veteran status, or other legally protected characteristics. Federal law prohibits discrimination in a number of work-related areas, including recruiting, hiring, job evaluations, promotion policies, training, compensation and disciplinary action. Discrimination can be portrayed in different ways. It can occur in accessing employment, in promotion or in the treatment of an employee.

## **2.7. Political Participation**

The importance of the definition is to clarify what kind of participation in our search is. Taking a Part in this study indicates the effective official contribution of members or groups in all aspects

of a society's activities, including social, economic and political ones, in order to achieve the public interest.

### **2.7.1. The Concept of Political Participation**

Participation is a development approach, which recognizes the need to involve disadvantage segments of population in the design and implementation of policies concerning their wellbeing. The strengthening of women's participation in all spheres of life has become a major issue in the development discourses and hence, socio-economic development cannot be fully achieved without the active involvements of women in the decision making level in all society (Endale A 2012). On the other hand political participation refers the active involvement and engagement by individuals both women and men with political process that affect their lives. The act of active engagements includes voting, standing for office, joining of political party or to take part the political campaigns of the political parties and to exert influence in the decision making process through public debate, and dialogue with the representatives they elected or through their capacity to organize themselves; or exercise public power by holding public office at different levels of administrations- local, regional, national and international (Khadar M 2013). Therefore, political participation is understood as a prerequisite for political development hence, by improving women's political participation, given that they constitute over a half of the world's population may help to advance of political development and improve the quality of women's lives (Seyedeh N, Hasnita K, Hossein A 2010). In fact, without the active participation of women, and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved.

Patrick J. Conge noticed that "Political participation may be defined as individual or collective action at the national or local level that supports or opposes state structures, authorities, and /or decisions regarding allocation of Public good" (Conge 1988, 247).

Herbert McClosky refers to political participation "those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers and, directly or indirectly, in the formation of public policy. These activities typically include voting, seeking information, discussing and proselytizing, attending meetings, contributing financially, and communicating with representatives. The more of 'active' forms of participation include formal enrollment in a party,

canvassing and registering voters, speech writing and making, working on campaigns, and competing for public and party office.” (McClosky 2013).

Based on the former definitions, political participation can be defined as those political activities to which the individual or groups involved in the selection of the governors and the formulation of their policy, starting from voting and electing as well as party affiliation, to working through any political body. The political participation is reflected in terms of the interest of the individuals and groups in observing the political decision, criticizing, evaluation and discussing it with others. The political participation of an individual depends on her or his capacity and motivation. It also depends on opportunities offered by community according to its traditions and ideology. It also depends on the circumstances determined by the nature of the political, social and economic climate in the community. Hence, the importance of political socialization and its role in the creation and configuration of participations’ behavior appeared. Politically growth provides the individual with the values of participation. More of these values mean more possibilities for the individuals to take part in various activities of politics. Political Participation in this study refers to the political activities of women trying attempting to take a part in political process in their country.

### **2.7.2. Level of Political Participation**

The preoccupation of citizen in politics has several levels. It depends on the nature of his or her life and its political manner. For instance, one individual takes part only in voting, the other is a professional politician, and another has nothing to do with politics. There are also party members and political engagement has several areas.

Political participation assessed on five levels: (1) No political participation (2) political discussions (3) Voting (4) Campaigning and (5) Belonging to political groups or holding office. This scale was devised by University of North Carolina political scientists Donald Matthews and James Prothro” (Showalter 2001, 4).Lester Milbrath assumes that there is a hierarchy for taking part in politics ranges between holding an office, and not participating. The lowest level of actual participation is voting and elections. He has divided American people, according to political participation, into three groups:

**Gladiators:** the ones who are in a constant state of activity in the field of politics (such as holding office, candidate for office, active party membership or contributing time in a campaign).

In this study, the researcher would try to have a spot light on this level of political participants.

- **Spectators:** the ones who take part in the non-decision-making political activities (such as donating money to a party, political discussion or voting.)
- **Apathetics:** the ones who do not participate in politics at all. (Ruedin 2007, 9-10). Giving an equal opportunity for all members of a society, women and men, to take a part in the political process in their own country, being in the decision-making positions, or managing the affairs of their community either directly or through their representatives will improve “the quality and quantity of political participation which has an important role in the representation of citizen needs and preferences” (Imbrasaitė 2010, 43). This will also lead to many positive aspects reflected on a community.

## 2.8. Types of political participation

Political participation is action that influences the distribution of social goods and values. Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America* (New York: Macmillan, (1993). People can vote for representatives, who make policies that will determine how much they have to pay in taxes and who will benefit from social programs. They can take part in organizations that work to directly influence policies made by government officials. They can communicate their interests, preferences, and needs to government by engaging in public debate (Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, 1995).

### 2.8.1. Voting

Voting is the primary means of taking part in politics. A unique and special political act, voting allows for the views of more people to be represented than any other activity. Every citizen gets one vote that counts equally. Over 90 percent of Americans agree with the principle that citizens have a duty to vote (William H. Flanigan and Nancy H. Zingale, 1999).

### 2.8.2. Democratic Participation

People have many options for engaging in politics. People can act alone by writing letters to members of Congress or staging acts of civil disobedience. Some political activities, such as

boycotts and protest movements, involve many people working together to attract the attention of public officials. Increasingly people are participating in politics via the media, especially the Internet. (Washington, DC: Congressional Foundation, 2008).

### **2.8.3. Contacting Public Officials**

Expressing opinions about leaders, issues, and policies has become one of the most prominent forms of political participation. The number of people contacting public officials at all levels of government has risen markedly over the past three decades. Seventeen percent of Americans contacted a public official in 1976. By 2008, 44 percent of the public had contacted their member of Congress about an issue or concern. Congressional Management Foundation, *Communicating with Congress: How the Internet Has Changed Citizen Engagement* (Washington, DC: Congressional Management Foundation, 2008).

## **2.9. Factors that Hinder Women's Political Participation in Ethiopia**

The exclusion of women in political participation and decision making processes was one inherited by human history. Even when democracy had birth ancient Athens in 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, the exclusion of women from political participation and decision making was existed. The Athenians women had no a right to vote or to participate in the democratic process and even they had not considered as a citizens (Khadar M 2013). Even in European countries women had neither a right to political participation nor involve the decision making and public affairs up until the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, women franchise right is not recognized in the first wave of democratization (1828–1926) in many of European countries (Hague R, Harrop M 2004). As to the case of Ethiopia, women's status in the political and public sector is very recent phenomena and still their participation is very low. They are still largely underrepresented in decision-making positions at all levels. They have also not made major progress in attaining political power in legislative bodies. The number of elected women representatives is still low; More and more women are engaged in formal employment, but are underrepresented in middle and higher management positions; The number of women leaders and decision makers at the various level of the decentralized government structure is still very low ( Mo WA 2006).

### **2.9.1. Socio-cultural factors**

In many countries, traditions continue to emphasize women's primary roles as mothers and

housewives and to restrict them to those roles. A traditional strong, patriarchal value system favors sexually segregated roles, and 'traditional cultural values' militate against the advancement, progress and participation of women in any political process. Societies all over the world are dominated by an ideology of 'a woman's place'. According to this ideology, women should only play the role of 'working mother', which is generally low-paid and apolitical. In addition, in some countries, men even tell women how to vote. This is the environment, in which a certain collective image of women in traditional, apolitical roles continues to dominate, which many women face (Shvedova N 2002). So that today, cultural ideas about women can affect women's levels of representation throughout the political process, from an individual woman's decision to enter politics, to party selection of candidates, to the decisions made by voters on election day (Kunovich L, Paxton P, Hughes M 2007). Hence, women face prejudice as leaders because people tend to assume that leadership is a masculine trait. And when women do lead, they face a problem. People evaluate autocratic behavior by women more negatively than the same behavior by men (Gidudu H, Enose, M, Betty T 2014). Thus, even in countries where women have made gains in employment or education, they face cultural barriers to participation in politics (Kunovich L, Paxton P, Hughes M 2007). In the context of Ethiopia, there is a traditional belief that, women are made to take care of children and do kitchen works than participating outside home activity. Hence, there is division of works between men and women, which means home activities are belongs to women and outside home activities are belongs to men. Women are overburdened with different household activities like cooking, take caring kids, washing and so on. These all activities make women busy in the household and impede their involvement in the politics of the country. Culturally, there is a belief that women are supposed to be led but not to lead. In fact stereotyped notions about women constitute major barriers; societal perception about leadership ability of women, women's lack of assertiveness is some barriers that hinder the participation of women (Mo WA 2006). In this regard traditional attitudes towards gender equality influence women's advancement in political participation. Theories of socialization have long emphasized the enduring division of sex roles within a society especially the existence of egalitarian or traditional attitudes towards women in the private and public spheres. Socialization theories emphasize that these attitudes are acquired early in life through formative agencies, including the existence of traditional sex role learnt in the home and family, local community, and in schools and the workplace. In cultures with traditional values

concerning the role of women in the home and family, many women may be reluctant to run and, if they seek the office, they may fail to attract sufficient party and electoral support to win (Norris P, Inglehart R 2008). Most importantly in the country Women are considered subordinate to men and second class members/ citizens both in the family and in the society especially in most parts of rural areas.

### **2.9.2. Religious factors**

Religion is another important source of cultural beliefs in most countries. Arguments about women's inferiority to men are present across all dominant religions, and religion has long been used to exclude women from aspects of social, political, or religious life around the world (Kunovich L, Paxton P, Hughes M 2007). But the major religions of the world are differentially conservative or patriarchal in their views about the place of women, both in the church hierarchy and in society. For example, Protestantism promotes nonhierarchical religious practices and more readily accepts women as religious leaders compared with Catholicism and Orthodox Christianity. And Islamic law is typically interpreted in a manner that constrains the activities of women (Ahmed L 1992). Hence, exclusion of women from religious institutions and religious leadership may have a negative impact on women's status in society and limit their opportunities in politics and public life. Hence, religion is one of the anachronistic cultural beliefs in many communities in the country that excludes women from the mainstream of leadership. In most religions, power and authority is believed to divinely belong to men hence subjugating women. Thus women are encouraged to play subsidiary roles since their place is in the kitchen and men are the decision makers. Arguments about women's inferiority to men are present across all dominant religions, and traditionally religion has long been used to exclude women from aspects of social, political, or religious life around the world (Kunovich L, Paxton P, Hughes M 2007). Women are also seem to be their own enemies in their own political advancement and empowerment, especially when they internalize these long held anachronistic assumptions and perceptions that politics is a dirty game thus a preserve game of men (Douglas L 2014).

### **2.9.3. Gender roles-patriarchy**

The family is the main institution of patriarchy, which is an important concept in explaining gender inequality (Kate M 1970). Literarily, it means "the rule of the father"; more broadly, it refers to a society ruled and dominated by men over women. This is inherent in most African families. Giving men a higher social status over females has crept into public life, which reflects



in state activities. The family plays an important role in maintaining this patriarchal order across generations. The socialization of children to expect and accept different roles in life has created a social mechanism for the development of values that engender the several forms of discrimination against the female sex. The greatest psychological weapon available to man is the length of time they have enjoyed dominance over women, who have taken it for granted especially in the area of politics that often continue to stereotype women and justify their subordination (Damilola T 2010). In many societies' women are portrayed as weak and incapable of making smart decisions. They have been depicted across generations to be only capable of trivial matters, constantly engaged in gossip and hearsay, utterly incompetent and less intelligent. This was projected and reinforced through the years through male-dominated institutions and patriarchal societies which internalized the idea that the woman was inferior. With the constant reinforcement of the notion that women are inferior in every aspect, it became hard for women to pursue their political rights as an active participant. For a woman to enter politics, such patriarchal attitudes make it even harder. The truth is that such attitudes are not a thing of the past. Such attitudes towards women still exist in societies all over the world today – in both developed and developing countries (Aswath K 2014). In Ethiopian societies, men and women have clearly defined roles that are dictated by the dominant ideology which is patriarchy. Most of the time men are taken as breadwinners; head of the household who has the authority to represent the family outside of the home. Since house work is solely the responsibility of women, a man never cooks even if he has no choice but cook to satisfy his hunger pang. It is a shame for a man to step into a kitchen let alone cook.

#### **2.9.4. Family work and time constraints**

Continuing uneven distribution of family care responsibilities means that women spend far more time than men in home- and child-care. Studies repeatedly demonstrate that women pay a “motherhood penalty,” across fields relating not just to the time, effort, and medical care of pregnancy and child birth, but to the far greater maternal involvement necessary for breastfeeding, and to the persistent tendency of women to do a larger share of childcare as the child grows. Anyone deeply involved in childcare, whether male or female, would face tough time constraints navigating between family responsibilities and a political position; because the work is rarely equally shared, women are more disadvantaged (Rachel J 2009). Like many other women, in Ethiopia women are traditionally in charge of domestic chores, while men are

responsible for activities outside the home and men often spend their free time socializing outside the home, while women take care of the household which makes them difficult to engage in politics. To summarize the above points, Ethiopia is ranking 118<sup>th</sup> out of 135 countries in the 2012 Global Gender Gap Report, though an improvement from the previous position, reflects the prevalence of resilient gender roles and stereotypes (Ahmed S, George O, Samuel B, Salama P, Yao F, et al. 2012). The position and empowerment of women and girls in society are hindered by negative attitudes perpetuating inequality affecting all aspects of their lives. Although women's political representation has improved over the years, negative social perceptions about the leadership ability of women, their low socio-economic status, low educational and skills levels and lack of strong role models all contribute to women low participation in decision-making positions. The burden of household chores and inequitable access to higher education also limit women's ability to enjoy the opportunities and benefits of citizenship as men on an equal footing in the political sphere. In addition to the above mentioned factors, according to Miranda when many women especially in developing countries were asked if they would consider entering politics, their answer is negative (Miranda R 2005). Foremost their reasons is that politics is reputed to be dirty, where methods employed include the illegal and the unethical to win in elections and assume power, and where the corruption of public service for personal and narrow group interests has been the accepted norm. Another scholar Nadezhda Shvedova mention political obstacle that hinders women involvement in politics (Shvedova N 2002). To this end Shvedova argues that men dominate the political arena; men formulate the rules of the political game; and men define the standards for evaluation (Shvedova N 2002). The existence of this male dominated model results in women either rejecting politics altogether or rejecting male-style politics. Generally many women in Ethiopia have little independents on decision making on most individuals and family issues. Women are also discriminated on the ground of being women and as such low status is characterized virtually every aspects of girls and women's lives.

### **2.10. Importance of Women's Political Participation**

According to Hague ensuring women's political participation is essential to bring legitimacy to government and establish democracy in its real and practical manner, as validity and trustworthiness of democracy can be in question if females, who are 50% of the population, stay marginalized or segregated from the political and public institutions in the society (Haque M

2003). In addition to this the degree and level of women's representation in the government has considerable and significant impacts on the lives of the people in any operational political and public milieu (Panday P 2008). Therefore, increasing women's representation and participation in the political and public decision-making positions:

Is a question of democracy, democratic process, and equality as well as a question of political and civil rights that has been guaranteed by the international organizations' (UN) agreements, treaties, covenants and conventions; Facilitates more changes and pave the way for more spaces to women; calls for the efficient, maximum and equitable utilization of human, financial, material and information resources by all human beings; Avoids the questions that would be raised about the legitimacy of the democratic process and decision making authorities; Can allow women to address their basic problems and needs in the community; and ensures the openness (transparency), real fight against rent-seeking (mainly the recently rampant corruption), accountability, political commitment, political leadership, and political responsiveness of the existing national, regional, zonal/districts, and local levels political democracy, democratization process, and governance of the governments and political institutions, and promotes peace and democratic development in any country as a whole (Melesse A, Ojulu O 2014). More over without greater representation of women in parliamentary and executive positions as well as in the judiciary, it is difficult to achieve participatory, accountable, and transparent governance which can ensure political, cultural, social and economic priority goals of the wider society. Besides 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. This right argues that since women know their situation best, they should participate equally with men to have their perspective effectively incorporated at all levels of decision-making, from the private to the public spheres of their lives, from the local to the global (Miranda R 2005). Equality in political decision-making performs a leverage function without which it is highly unlikely that a real integration of the equality dimension in government policy-making is feasible. In this respect, women's equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the general process of the advancement of women. Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision

making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. Uslaner and Brown indicate that “Greater equality and higher levels of trust are two pathways to participation. Inequality may depress participation, either directly or indirectly, through its effects on trust. First, where inequality is higher, the poor may feel powerless. They will perceive that their views are not represented in the political system and they will opt out of civic engagement. Second, trust in others rests on a foundation of economic equality. When resources are distributed inequitably, people at the top and the bottom will not see each other as facing a shared fate. Therefore, they will have fewer reasons to trust people of different financial backgrounds. Also, trust rests on a psychological foundation of optimism and controls over one’s environment. Where inequality is high, people will be less likely to believe that the future looks bright, and they will have even fewer reasons to believe that they are the masters of their own fate. Inequality leads to lower levels of trust and thus may also have an indirect effect on civic participation.” (Uslaner and Brown 2005, 869).

Inequality and distrust in one community are two faces of the same coin leading to crisis in political participation. There are also other reasons that can lead to the emergence of the crisis of political participation, some of them are: The nonexistence of neutral media and the fact that all media in the society is monopolized by the ruling regime in order to serve its purposes and trends. In this case, the media delivers an oriented message from one side, which is of the ruling regime and not as a result of the interaction among the various parties in the community, including the ruler and the ruled. The oriented media is unable to play a real contributing role in an effective political participation. Method of political socialization. Political repression leads to paralysis of political participation. Fragility or the absence of effective legitimate institutions and political parties. One party policies result a crisis of political participation. Some aspects of the crisis of political participation are: Political apathy and asceticism: people consider in this situation that political activity is unhelpful and useless; the society suffers from lack of political awareness and feels that the objectives of the political regime are ambiguous. Political alienation and the loss of political affiliation. (Alzayat 2000, 129). Women's inability to reach decision-making positions: there must be a political will which supports women's access to decision-making positions and provides a support for each political initiative reformist who introduces women as a hub for political reform. Citizenship and political rights will be fully unreachd if they don't include women in actual practice, not only in the legal scripts; “Women have the right

to participate in decisions that affect their families, their societies, and particularly their own well-being” (USAID 2012).

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with how the study would be carried out. It explains the research design, source of data, sample size, data collection methods, data analysis, description the study area and presentation of research findings.

#### 3.1. Description of the Study Area

Kaffa zone is located in the south western part of Ethiopia in between 6°24' to 7°70' North and 35° 69' to 36°78' East. Kaffa is one of the 13 zones of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State (SNNPRS) located between 6° 24' - 8° 13' North latitude and 35° 30' - 36° 46' East longitude in the western part of the region. The Kaffa zone has a total area of 10,602.7 km<sup>2</sup> which accounts for 7.06 % of the total area of the region. Kaffa is bounded by Oromiya region in the North and North West, Konta special Wereda in the East, South Omo zone in the South, Bench-Maji zone in the West and Southwest and Sheka zone in the West. Bonga, the capital of Kaffa zone, is situated at 465 kilometers Southwest of Addis Ababa and 105 kilometers south of Jimma.

Bonga town administration unit is located at the centre of Kaffa zone. Bonga is bounded by Gimbo woreda in the North, North-West an East and Decha woreda in the South and West. (Kaffa Zone Finance and Economic Development Office, 2016)

#### 3.2. Research design

A descriptive survey method is relevant as the questions require an extensive and in-depth description of some political, social, cultural and economical phenomenon. The investigator in such kind of research method was collecting the real data on the situations and fact of current existing women's involvement in political decision making process. This method requires intensive data source with multiple evidence where the researcher will employ different sources of data ranging from primary to secondary across a certain period of time.

In this study, mixed approach (i.e. qualitative and quantitative) was used. The quantitative and qualitative approach was used based on fieldwork data collected through different techniques namely interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussion.

### 3.3. Sources of data

The source of data of this research is collected both from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected from women who were found in leadership position, private business owner women, housewives, human resource managers and government employees in Bonga town. In addition to this, secondary source of data was collected from different published as well as unpublished documents concerned on women political decision making process. Reviews of various publications were also made to find the facts about the factors that affect women's participation in political leadership position in the Bonga town.

### 3.4. Sampling

The sampling techniques employed to select the respondents was both probable and non-probable sample. Purposive sampling was used in selecting two kebeles from those three kebeles which are kebele 01 and kebele 02 from Bonga town administrative unit and in selecting women for FGD. To select administrator of gender offices, chairperson of women democratic association, women democratic league chair person and gender office capacity building experts for interview, the purposive sampling technique was used. This was for the reason that it was impossible for the researcher to take all numbers of women that comprises 10987 in town administration subjects of study, because of manageability of data, time constraints, and budget constraint. As far as sampling procedures of women that have status, was be purposively taken as subjects, and directly was participated on providing data through questionnaire, focus group discussion and as well as interview session. The researcher took respondents of above 18 age women for the fact that it is legal age by the constitution of FDRE for political participation (FDRE constitution, 1995) but the researcher was determined as a subject from age 18- 65. Bonga town comprises 10987 women (Bonga town administration women Association office: 2016). Of these, 3791 total population of females those are from 18-65 years. From 3791, a researcher selected 346 respondents according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size, with 5.0% *margin of error*, a 95% *confidence interval*, and a 20% *response rate*. The participants of this study were selected by using simple random sample technique.

Generally, from total population size of 3791, the sample size includes the sum of cluster one, two and three participants which is equal to 346 participants based on sample size determination table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) for finite population.

### **3.5. Method of Data Collection.**

The procedure of data collection was conducted by selecting respondents from Bonga town women whose age are above 18-65 years. Those are women who found in political leadership position, private business women, house wives and government employees.

#### **3.5.1. Focused Group Discussion**

This is one of main data collection technique which was used by the researcher. FGD was developed for the house wife women from two different kebeles and Bonga town administrator of gender office, chair person of women democratic association, women democratic league chair person and woreda SEPDM officers. The researcher was conduct three FGD: one for women who found at political leadership position and human resource managers of woreda WCY office and two for women living two villages of Bonga town from two different kebeles. Each FGD consists 10 (ten) participants. The discussion was conducted by ‘Amharic’ and Kafi noonoo languages to get sufficient information.

**3.5.2. Semi-Structured Interviews** while conducting interview with government officials who work at woreda electoral board, SEPDM officer, WCY appointed officials and women who found at zone WCY office appointed officials, semi structured interview was developed. The discussion was conducted by Kafi noonoo and Amharic languages. The interview is used based on the assumption that the participants’ perspectives are meaningful, and they have the knowledge in the area, and able to make explicit points, and that their perspective affect the success of the research. The interview generally is supposed to generate valuable data for the research.

#### **3.5.3. Survey**

To understand the current status of women participation political decision making process and the factors which hinder their participation and to collect information from women of public servants and political leaders, the researcher was sused both close ended and open ended questionnaires for the survey. The questionnaire was prepared by using Amharic, Kafi noonoo and English languages based on the level of participants’ literacy. Furthermore, the questionnaire was distributed and collected by trained enumerators.

#### **3.5.4. Document analysis**

The researcher used this data gathering tool to access the documents like as reports of SEPDM office on appointed officials and different proclamation in relation to the problem under study.



### **3.6. Methods of Data Analysis**

A preliminary survey was conducted for ten days before the actual data collection. During this period, basic information about the study sites are obtained, the physical environment of the study area was assessed and also network was established with governmental and community based organizations. This information helps to determine the study sites which were more familiar with women's current status of political participation at different administrative units in Kaffa zone at Bonga town administrative unit. In this period, all the necessary information of the study area was gathered properly. The stages of women's participation in political decision making process were examined. In addition to this, information about the living condition of the women was gathering from concerned bodies such as selected town administrative unit women, children and youth offices around the study area, governmental office specially different sectors of town administrative units and zone women, children and youth office.

Data analysis was conducted in a descriptive form having identified thematic areas in reference to the research objective. To analyze the qualitative data, the first thing the researcher conducted Focus Group Discussion, and semi-structured Interview as well as organizing his notes. Besides a questionnaire, the whole categorizations were substantiated and analyzed in reference to guidelines and working documents while analyzing an interview. Thus descriptive qualitative data analysis techniques are employed. Further, quantitative technique which was supported by using software SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science verison20) program was used in order to organize and analyze data that was collected through questionnaire method. Hence descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts of political leaders, and percentages of women political leaders was used to show the status of women in decision making position in the Bonga town administration.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents the data collected and analyses and interprets the findings in relation to the objectives of the study. The objective of the study was to analyses the level of current women leadership and representation position, describes different forms of political participation, and assesses factors that affect women participation in decision making.

The findings were interpreted and discussed basing on the aim of the study. By use of qualitative and quantitative methods, the findings were presented using tables, and explanation would follow. This chapter combines findings from focus group discussion, interviews and questionnaires.

#### **4.1. Response Rate of Respondents**

After submitting the support letter to the town administrative unit in order to cooperate in providing the necessary data; HR division had been assigned to take the responsibility in handling the case. The different sectors of Bonga town administration unit, kebele 01 and 02 administrators and WCY offices arranged how to access those respondents and their sections to be facilitating the data collection process. All of the participants are women ages 18- 65 years living in the town.

Thus based on the prepared schedule 346 questionnaires are distributed to the participants and from these 8 respondents did not return back the questionnaire. Due to this reason, 97.687% of the distributed questioners are collected and all respondent express their view.

#### **4.2. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Education is very important to enhance over all socio-economic and political development within the country. Education also helps for adaptation of modern civilization, technology and to solve societal socio-economic, political and cultural problems of the society.

The researcher probed to find out the age, educational level and marital status of respondents that participated in the study.

**Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

No	Description	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age Distribution	Below 20	10	2.95
		21-30	118	34.9
		31-40	132	39.1
		41-50	58	17.2
		51-65	20	5.9
2.	Educational Level	Below grade12	103	30.47
		Certificate	32	9.46
		Diploma	150	44.37
		Degree	49	14.37
		Masters degree	4	1.18
3.	Marital Status	Married	246	72.78
		Unmarried	60	17.75
		Divorced	14	4.14
		Widowed	12	3.55
		Separated	6	1.77

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

As the above table indicate as 103 (30.47%) below 12 grade, certified 32 (9.46%) percent of the respondents had technical level of education. 150 (44.37%) had diploma level of education, 49 (14.37%) had degree level of education, 4 (1.18%) had postgraduate level of education. The results shown in the above table revealed that majority of the respondents had diploma level of education, below grade 12 level of education, degree level of education, certificate level and postgraduate levels of education respectively which is an indication that the respondents were knowledgeable about the women's political participation in Bonga town administration.

As the above table indicates that 246 (72.78%) of respondents were married, 60 (17.75%) were single, 12 (3.55%) were widowed, 14 (4.14%) were divorced and 6 (1.77%) were separated. From the study, it was discovered that most of the respondents in Bonga town administration were married. It can be inferred based on the above table that the majority of the respondents are

productive sectors of the society. According to aforementioned table most of the respondents are above diploma level, married and productive sectors of the population.

### 4.3. Current Status of Women’s Involvement in Political Decision Making at Bonga Town Administrative Unit

Underrepresentation of women in leadership position is problematic for several reasons. First, lack of women in leadership positions may discourage the lower-level women to aspire to an upper level position, because they feel that it is un-tenable at all.

**Table 4.2 Distribution of Respondents by their opinion on the numbers of women in leadership positions are few as compared to men in the town administration**

<b>Women in leadership position are few compared to men</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>No</b>			
<b>1</b>	No	165	48.8
<b>2</b>	Yes	173	51.2
<b>Total</b>		338	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

Table 4.2 presents the distribution of respondents by their opinion on the numbers of women in leadership positions are few as compared to men in the town administrative unit. Of the total 338 respondents, 173 (51.2 %) confirmed that women are underrepresented and less in number at decision making positions. On the other hand, 165 (48.8 %) of respondents are replied as no or unequal in number compared with men. It can be inferred from the aforementioned results show that women in the town administration is underrepresented and low in number in decision making position.

**Table 4.3: Distribution of respondents by the reasons for women’s underrepresentation**

No.	Reasons for Underrepresentation	Frequency	Percent
1	Lack of recommendation	43	12.7
2	Lack of delegation	158	46.7
3	Educational gap	18	5.3
4	Socio-cultural attitudes	43	12.7
5	Lack of women confidence and unable to express themselves	8	2.4
6	Male dominancy	28	8.3
7	Due to double responsibility	36	10.7
8	Lack of information	4	1.2
	Total	338	100

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

The above table indicted, out of 338 respondents 158(46.7%),43(12.7%),36(10.7%),28(8.3%),18(5.3%),8(2.4%),4(1.2%) lack of delegation, lack of recommendation and socio-cultural attitude, due to double responsibility, male dominancy, educational gap, lack of women’s confidence and unable to express themselves and lack of information respectively are confirmed the major reason which contributed for women numbers are very small comparing with men at leadership position in the town administration.

Based on above information the researcher implies that, lack of delegation (both men and women leaders are mostly delegating men rather than women) is the major reason for small number of women found at leadership position at town administrative unit, because of this women lacks experience to exercise their political power to leads and making of decisions independently.

**Table 4.4: Distribution of respondents by their opinion on gender discrimination in career promotion**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	152	45.0
2	No	186	55.0
	Total	338	100

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

As the above table articulates, do you think there is gender discrimination regarding promotion in the town administrative unit? Out of 338 respondents 186(55.0%) are confirms no gender discrimination for promotion of one stage to next stage. But 152 (45.0%) respondents are believe there is gender discrimination. The implication of the researcher is the promotion in the town administration performed based on competence of women.

**Table 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by Affirmative Action**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	254	75.1
2	No	84	24.9
	Total	338	100.0

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

The above table indicated, out of 338 respondents, 254 (75.1%) are confirms there is affirmative action to support women’s political participation in town administration unit. But 84(24.9%) respondents don’t beliefs on properly affirmative action was given for women. The researcher inferences, affirmative action is given for women to economically empower and motivated to make decision on their issues that affect their life. There are better policies and strategies to benefit women but the application problem existing in the real life.

**Table 4.6: Factors contributes women in town administration to achieve decision making position**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	qualification	118	34.9
2	Political support	180	53.3
3	family background	10	3.0
4	Women networking	16	4.7
5	Affirmative action	10	3.0
	Others	4	1.2
	Total	338	100.0

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

The above table articulates, out of the 338 respondents 180(53.3%),118(34.9%),16(4.7%), 10(3.0%),4(1.2%) political support, qualification, women networking, family background and affirmative action and other factors respectively contributes women in town administrative unit to achieve decision making position.

As the researcher implication women achieving political leadership position according to the respondent's response is majorly by political support or through party membership.

#### **4.4. Forms of Political Participation**

Political participation is action that influences the distribution of social goods and values. Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America* (New York: Macmillan, (1993). People can vote for representatives, who make policies that will determine how much they have to pay in taxes and who will benefit from social programs. They can take part in organizations that work to directly influence policies made by government officials. They can communicate their interests, preferences, and needs to government by engaging in public debate. Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, *Voice*

*and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

**Table 4.7: Distribution of Respondents by their engagement in domestic chores**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	92	27.2
2	No	246	72.8
	Total	338	100.0

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

A cursory look into table 4.7 shows that of 338 the respondents, 246(72.8%) confirmed women with domestic chores are advisable to elect for public offices as a officer. On the other hand 92(27.2%) against this. The researcher argued based on the above information the woman has management skill and competence she can hold public office and render services for her customers properly and prevail justices.

**Table 4.8: Distribution of Respondents by their opinion on the impact of social norms on women’s participation**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	300	88.8
2	No	38	11.2
	Total	338	100.0

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

As one can understand from the table 4.8, 300(88.8%) respondents’ responded yes and only 38(11.2%) respondents no. So it is visible that social norm that accepts extra marital has impact on women to participate in election. It was also found out that majority women Polygamous marriage is a form of marriage where a man marries two or more women who in fact have an adverse impact on wellbeing of the family as a whole and women in particular. Accordingly they responded that women’s’ life would be affected since low income generated weaving not cover, the expenses of to home, in addition to this community promotes having many children as an asset and the income insufficient to maintain the needs of all family. This practice affects the women in election on one hand and on the other hand it results in poverty for the family



(society). The researcher implication based on above table large family sized women cannot participate in politics; because the families run to secure basic needs rather than participating in political life.

**Table 4.9: Distribution of respondents by private equality**

No.	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	310	91.7
2	No	28	8.3
	Total	338	100.0

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

As one can understand from the table 4.9, Majority of respondents responded yes 310(91.7%). On the other hand 28(8.3%) responded No. From the analysis it is revealed that women's political participation is curtailed as result of relegating women to the private sphere. This show that women are not well represented in local governments around the world and they faced a number of challenges that ranged from cultural exclusion to the resistance of key political institutions and machineries which created gender imbalance in local administrations. Most of the FGD participants also confirmed the aforementioned.

**Table 4.10: Distribution of respondents by women's effectiveness in improving their participation in government institutions**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
<b>Women are effective in Improving their participation in government institutions if the chance is provided</b>	Strongly Agree	214	63.3
	Agree	89	26.3
	Not decided	8	2.4
	Disagree	8	2.4
	Strongly Disagree	19	5.6
Total		338	100.0

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

As it is indicated in the above table, majority of respondent say strongly agree 214 (63.3%) and 89 (26.3%) responded agree. On contrary about 19 (5.6%),8(2.4) and 8 (2.4%) responded strongly disagree, disagree and not decided respectively. This shows that women are particularly effective in improving their participation in government institutions if they get the chance to be elected. As far as the FGD response of interview, most of the respondents opined that the societies do not motivate the women to be elected directly in the position. These refer the challenge of women to come to position in the study area.

In focus group discussion, one woman cited, women were supposed to be at home looking after children and doing house hold chores while every activity outside the home was allowed for the men. In the political representation, women feel inferiorities. This was come from traditional legacy that considered women as cannot represent. This influence came from the main and women themselves. In addition to this, it made women lack of self-confidence and self-esteem.

In focus group discussion, respondents mentioned women's equal participation in local council and leadership process was critical for creating gender sensitive policies and promoting sustainable development. But women were not well represented in local council in Bonga town administration. And they faced a number of challenges that ranged from cultural exclusion from key political institutions which created gender imbalance in local administration.

Institutional support services `must be advocated for. Bone path and Stoper (1988:11) identified women's gender roles as a challenge and argued that lack of political recognition of women's reproductive and labor roles made it difficult for them to campaign because they were busy washing dishes, dispensing cough syrups to children and cleaning the house. More so Mahatma Gandhi, in his writings was a believer in harmonizing and equalizing productive roles of men and women which were referred to as so called "women's Jobs". Joshi (1986) quotes Gandhi, "More often than not, a woman's time is taken up, not only by the performance of essential domestic duties, but in catering for the egoistic pleasures of her remnant of barbarism. It is high time that our woman kind freed from this incubus". Thus the study will find out if women's gender roles inhibited their political participation in Bonga town administration.

#### 4.5. Women's political participation.

The exclusion of women in political participation and decision making processes was one inherited by human history. Even when democracy had birth ancient Athens in 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, the exclusion of women from political participation and decision making was existed. The Athenians women had no a right to vote or to participate in the democratic process and even they had not considered as a citizens (Khadar, 2013).

**Table 4.11: Major barriers of women's political participation**

No	Major Barriers	Frequency	Percent
1	Social factor	115	34.0
2	Organizational factor	30	8.9
3	Cultural factor	102	30.2
4	Male dominancy	75	22.2
5	Discrimination in appointment	5	1.5
6	Policy gap	8	2.4
7	Others	3	.9
Total		338	100.0

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

Table 4.11 shown, out of 338 respondents 115(34.0%) ,102(30.2%) and 75(22.2%) social, cultural and male dominancy respectively confirmed as major factor affecting women political participation in town administration unit. On the other hand 30(8.9%),8(2.4%),5(1.5%) and 3(0.9) organizational factor, policy gap, discrimination in appointment and other factors contributes for low and underrepresentation of women in political leadership position and political decision making process.

As far as the researcher implications carried out based on the data shown on above table those factors hinder women participation on political leadership and decision making contributes for the existence of low number and underrepresentation of women in Bonga town administration.

**Table 4.12: Economic status of women affects the Political participation of women**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
Economic status of women affects the Political participation of women	Strongly Agree	76	22.5
	Agree	74	21.9
	Not decided	16	4.7
	Disagree	112	33.1
	Strongly Disagree	60	17.8
Total		338	100.0

*Source: Field survey, 2017*

As the above table 4.12 shown, out of 338 respondents 112(33.1%),76(22.5%), 74(21.9%),60(17.8%), 16(4.7%) disagree, strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree and not decided respectively confirm the economic status of women affects their political participation in Bonga town administration unit. The researcher implication based on above information economical empowered women influences political leadership styles and effectively decides during voting.

**Table 4.13: Lack of Confidence affects the Political participation of women**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
Lack of Confidence affects the Political participation of women	Strongly Agree	8	2.4
	Agree	2	0.6
	Not decided	4	1.2
	Disagree	98	29.0
	Strongly Disagree	226	66.9
Total		338	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

As the above table indicates, out of 338 respondents 226(66.9%),98(29.0%), 8(2.4%),4(1.2%), 2(0.6%) strongly disagree, disagree, strongly agree, not decided and agree respectively. Majority of respondents strongly disagree women lack confidence to make political decision.

As far as the researcher implication based on above information women have confidence to make political decision and capable to participate in political issues in town administration.

**Table 4.14: Culture gives more chance for men to participate in Political Decision Making**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
Culture gives more chance for men to participate in Political Decision Making	Strongly Agree	92	27.2
	Agree	82	24.3
	Not decided	22	6.5
	Disagree	78	23.1
	Strongly Disagree	64	18.9
Total		338	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

Based on table 4.14, out of 338 respondents 92 (27.2%), 82(24.3%),78(23.1%),64(18.9%), 22(6.5%) strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree and not decided respectively. Most of respondents agreed culture gives more chance for men to participate in political decision making than women, which indicates women are still influenced by such kind of cultural problems. On contrast to this about 64 (18.9%) and 22 (6.5%) provide strongly disagree and not decided. This expresses that men are the major determinants of political actions and inactions generally concerned with the perpetuation of power of the state...when women compete with men for access to political power, they do so on the terms already established by men for competition among themselves. The success of women in politics like that of any group cannot be achieved within a system without displacing or replacing the existing elite.

**Table 4.15: Women are culturally believed to be led rather than to lead**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
Women are culturally believed to be led rather than to lead	Strongly Agree	100	29.6
	Agree	102	30.2
	Not decided	30	8.9
	Disagree	58	17.2
	Strongly Disagree	48	14.2
Total		338	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

As it is depicted in the table 4.15, 30.2 % ( 102) respondents responded agree and 29.6% (100) responded strongly agree which indicates culturally women are supposed to be led rather than lead. The table shown that around 59.8% respondents responded women are culturally believed to be led but not to lead attitudes still cannot depart from the society of Bonga towns administration. Only 17.2% (58) and 14.2% (48) responses shows disagree and strongly disagree with cultural believes which reveals women are culturally believed to be led rather than to lead. About 8.9% (30) respondents provided not decided.

These show that, culturally, there is a belief that women are supposed to be led but not to lead. In fact stereotyped notions about women constitute major barriers; assertiveness is frequently interpreted as aggression. In this respect women find it difficult to exert authority over males since the society still suffer from the myth that women are too emotional and weak for senior management. When women share these stereotypes and accept them uncritically it leaves them marginalized and with limited career effectiveness. This is inherent in most Bonga families. Giving men a higher social status over females has crept into public life, which reflects in state activities.

**Table 4.16: Women face prejudice as leadership is masculine trait**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
women face prejudice as leadership is masculine trait	Strongly Agree	100	29.6
	Agree	104	30.8
	Not decided	32	9.5
	Disagree	52	15.4
	Strongly Disagree	50	14.8
Total		338	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

Among respondents asked about whether women face prejudice as leaders due to people tend to assume that leadership is masculine trait 30.8%(104) of them said agree and 29.6%(100) said strongly agree. It is not that much sound to conclude that women in Bonga town administration faces prejudice as leaders due to people tend to assume that leadership is masculine trait. As respondents mentioned only 15.4% (52) and 14.8% (50) provides disagree and strongly disagree which is low comparable with that of agree and strongly agree. Only 9.5% (32) responses are not decided. To generalize from the responses women of Bonga town administration faces prejudice due to masculine trait which is believes assumed by the society of Bonga in particular. Men largely dominate the political arena; largely formulate the rules of the political game; and often define the standards for evaluation. Furthermore, political life is organized according to male norms and values, and in some cases even male lifestyles. For instance, politics is often based on the idea of ‘winners and losers’, competition and confrontation. Political life is organized according to male norms and values, and in some cases even male lifestyles.

**Table 4.17: Greater family responsibility make women not to participate in leadership**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
Greater family responsibility make women not to participate in leadership	Strongly Agree	90	26.6
	Agree	110	32.5
	Not decided	8	2.4
	Disagree	79	23.4
	Strongly Disagree	51	15.1
Total		338	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2017

According to Table 4.17, 32.5 % (110) and 90(26.6 %) of the respondents were provided greater family responsibility make women not to participate in leadership while only 23.4%(79) disagree and 15.1%(51) provided disagree and strongly disagree. While only 2.4 % (8) provided not decided. This shows that, women's life purpose is fulfilled if she gives birth to a son. A women's most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family. A bride should bring sufficient dowry to her husband's house in order to maintain marital harmony. The gives priority to keep healthy family and secure basic needs.

**Table 4.18: Women's Political Position and Gender Stigma**

no		Frequency	Percent
Women who is in position do not face gender stigima	str.agree	74	21.9
	agree	58	17.2
	notdecided	60	17.8
	disagree	98	29.0
	str.disagree	48	14.2
	Total	338	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2017

As revealed in the table 4.18 majority of respondents responded disagree 29.0%(98) and 14.2%(48) responded strongly disagree this show that about 43.2% responded women who held



position do not face gender stigma from male members of the political parties to which they belong cannot undermine the ability of women to reach leadership roles. This indicated that women to be leadership are not faces gender stigma. On the other hand, 21.9% (74) and 17.2% (58) provided strongly agree and agree respectively. On contrast only 17.8% (60) responded not decided. The boundaries between public and private in regards of women lives project something positive to women politics.

Although, the gender role ideology is not static rather remain in flux while intersecting with economic, social and political systems of a particular society. Women continue to be defined as private across countries which result in their exclusion from politics. The overall impact of gender bias, cultural norms and practices has entrenched a feeling of inferiority in women and place them at a disadvantage vis-à- vis their male counterpart in the socio-political scene even in urban centers.

**Table 4.19: Women are capable of making decisions**

No	Category	Frequency	Percent
Women are capable of making decisions	Strongly Agree	36	10.7
	Agree	12	3.6
	Not decided	8	2.4
	Disagree	82	24.3
	Strongly Disagree	200	59.2
Total		338	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

As far as observed from the table, about 59.2 % (200) respondents responded strongly disagree and 24.3% (82) respondents say disagree. On the other hand about 10.7% (36) respondents responded strongly agree and 3.6% (12) respondents responded agree. It is only 2.4% (8) respondents provided not decided. As it is revealed in the table it is clearly indicated that women are not incapable to make decision. This show that even though cultural believes hinder women from decision making they can make decision if they can get the chance to make decision.

Hence, it suffices to say that, culture is that complex whole which include knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, religion, roles, attitudes, hierarchies and any other practices and habits acquired by man through the processes of socialization. Culture is made up of structures, primarily institutions and practices that reflect and uphold a particular social order through the definition of certain social groups, values, expectations, meanings and patterns of behavior as natural and good while others as unnatural, bad or wrong. In the first concept, culture implies superior values reserved for the dominant few. In the second, it implies a whole way of life. In the third, culture is a set of behaviors or beliefs imposed on the majority by those who rule them. The last concept recognizes that various communities in the society have distinctive codes of behavior and different value systems.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the discussion, conclusions and recommendations of the study. It is divided into two sections where the first section presents the discussion of the study and the second one presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The purpose of the study was to analyse the women's political participation in Bonga town administration.

In this section, the researcher analyses whether the study accomplished what it set out to investigate or not. The improvement in the areas of political participation for women had remained low in town. In Bonga town women representatives in local council were very low because of social, cultural, male dominancy, organizational, discrimination in appointments and work place policies factors that hinder women political participation. The FDRE constitution of 1995, granted women have the right to voting and to be elected. Women have the right to vote and to be eligible for electoral appointment to public office and to exercise public function on equal terms with men at local, and national levels.

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

Women issues are public issues which should be reflected from the household, Workplace and community in general. There were general agreement among the respondents in Bonga town administration that the under-representation of women in local council and as well in leadership position, decision making and election. Even though it was also found out that majority women preferred to participate in local council, to be leadership, election, and decision making social and cultural factors still didn't depart from the society which resulted in under representatives of women in political participation. It was also realized that the number of women that participated in local council elections was low. As respondents agreed indicated that women faced social and cultural challenges as a hindrance to their participation in local council elections. Most of the social and cultural challenges dated way back to the historical legacy and still affects till women's participation in politics.

The study also concluded that women faced many social cultural challenges in political participation at Bonga town administrative unit. As it is clearly revealed from the study comparison of the assessments of women and men in this study revealed a clear gender gap. Men held themselves in greater esteem than women. An assessment of women's suitability for local

council elections, leadership, decision making was clearly linked to discriminatory structure where particularly men dominated political participation by using traditional view and socio cultural beliefs that hinder women from political participation. Therefore, challenges that limited women's political participation in Bonga town administration is fitted within social and cultural factors.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

A comprehensive enabling legal and institutional framework and empowerment of women organizations as some of the opportunities available for women participation.

Much as Ethiopia had opened up way for women, real participation in decision making, election, and leadership was still lacking. There is need for women legislators to exert their energies to ensure that the interests of women get to the policy agenda. This could be achieved if they maintained regular contact with women at the grassroots level who may also be encouraged to participate in local council, leadership, decision making and elections. This would also enhance effective participation of women in the democratization process be more visible on the political line. There is need for nongovernmental organizations dealing in women's issues to sensitize and educate women (especially rural women) about their rights and the importance of joining local council, decision making, leadership and elections. The town administration unit also follows the same way to support women's political participation and motivate to exercise their rights. Much as affirmative action had helped pave the way for an increased involvement of women in social circles, it is not an end in itself. Many women were still under socio-cultural bondage which reinforced oppression, discrimination and subordination. Women are still the majority of the Bonga town administration illiterates: they suffer inferiority complex and male chauvinism, and still stick to their traditional roles. There is also need for continuous sensitization programs for enhancing women's political participation. This could be carried out through seminars, workshops that are participatory aimed at equipping voters and candidates with leadership skills. This would enable women build confidence and reduce inferiority complex associated with low participation. NGOs have been commended for pushing for women's rights hence the onus remains on government to fund the continuity of such programs. The town administration devoted to properly implement gender policies and practically shows gender equality.

As it is described in the Beijing declaration and Platform for Action (1995), literacy of women is an important key to empowering women to participate in the decision-making processes and

competition in the labor market. This implies educating women is one of the basic tools for getting decision making position and empowering women as well it is one of the factor in the town administration that hinder women from moving up to the leadership position. So the concerned body provides educational opportunities at all levels.

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**JIMMA UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**  
**Questionnaire for collecting Data on an assessment of women’s political participation in**  
**Bonga town Administration**

**Dear Sir/Madam**

I am a graduate student in the department of Governance and development studies at Jimma University. Currently, I am undertaking a research on “An Assessment of Women’s political Participation: Case of Bonga town administration”. You are one of the respondents selected to participate in this study.

Thus, I would kindly request you to answer these questions. Your honesty and kindness would be of great help in many aspects.

Finally, the information that you will share will be kept **confidential** and only used for the academic purpose. **So no need of writing your name.**

Thank you in advance for your support and commitment.

Zerihun Mamo

Mobile 0910030926

E-mail brukzm@gmail.com

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR WOMEN**

**PERSONAL BACKGROUD**

1. Gender:

Male

Female

2. Age \_\_\_\_\_

3. Marital Status

a) Married

c) Windowed

e) Separated

b) Single

d) Divorced

4. Educational level

a) below 12 grade

c) Diploma

e) Master and above

b) Certificate

d) Degree

5. How long have you been living in the town? \_\_\_\_\_ (years)

6. What is your current position?

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## GENERAL QUESTIONS

### Part- I

1. Do you think that the numbers of women in leadership positions are few as compared to men in the town administrative unit?

- a) Yes                       b) No

2. If yes, what is the reason? (Please tick the relevant one)

- a) Lack of recommendation   
b) Lack of delegation (both men & women leader are mostly delegating men rather than women employee)   
c) Educational gap   
d) Socio-cultural attitudes   
e) Lack of women confidence & unable to express themselves.   
f) Male dominancy   
g) Due to double responsibility   
h) Lack of information   
i) Other. Please specify
- 
- 
- 

3. Do you think there is gender discrimination regarding promotion in the town administrative unit?

- a) Yes   
b) No

4. Is there any affirmative action used by the government to support women for promotion?

- a) Yes   
b) No

5. If yes, is it applicable to all positions (such as leader and officers)?

- a) Yes   
b) No

6. If no, what is the reason behind it? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What are the major barriers that hinder women's from leadership position in general? (Please tick the relevant items)

- a) Social factor   
b) Organizational factor   
c) Cultural factor   
d) Male dominancy   
e) Discrimination in appointments   
f) Work place Policies (Lack of polices or policy gap)   
g) Other, specify
-

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8. In your opinion, how do women achieve decision making positions in the town administrative unit? (Please tick the relevant one)

- a) Qualification
- b) Political support
- c) Family background
- d) Women's networking
- e) Affirmative action
- f) Other, Specify)

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9. Do you think that women with domestic chores are not advisable to be elected for public office?

A.YES      B.NO

10. Does the Social norms which accept extra marital have impact on women to participate in election?    A. YES      B. NO.

11. Do relegating women to the private equality, their ability to enter the political arena such as election is curtailed.    A. YES    B .NO

No	Item	Str.agree	agree	Not decided	disagree	Str. disagree
12	The employers and subordinates' present attitude towards women leaders.					
13	Economic status of women affects their involvement in decision making					
14	Women are weak and incapable of making political decisions					
15	Women are hopeless on confidence of decision making.					
16	Culture gives more chance for men to participate in decision making than women.					
17	Women are particularly effective in promoting honest government if they will be elected					
18	Culturally women are believed to be led but not to lead					
19	Women face prejudice as leaders due to people tend to assume that leadership is masculine trait					
20	Greater family responsibilities make women not to participate in leadership.					
21	Women political face gender stigma from male members of the political parties					
22	Men are head of women so women are incapable leading men.					

**Part - II**  
**Interview checklist for gender office**

1. Do you think that women are equal in number with men in leadership position in the Town? if it is not equal, which one is getting more position and why?
2. What is the impact of gender gap in leadership due to an imbalance of leadership in the town?
3. What are the major barriers that hinder women from moving up to the decision making position?
4. Does the WCY office have any contribution to enhance women a decision making position?

**Interview- (semi structured interview) Checklist for Human Resource Officer**  
**Time – 1 hour.**

1. Do you think that the women are equal in numbers with men in the leadership position?  
If not, what is the reason for it?
2. Does the town administration have any criteria that used for promotion purpose in the political participation?
3. Does the town maintain any rules or procedure to ensure women's participation in leadership position?
4. What are the major barriers that hinder women from moving up to the decision making position?
5. What are the most important things or strategy that the town administrative unit considers for ensuring women's political participation and leadership position?
6. What are women faces by ideological and political challenges which can hinder women Participation in election?
7. In your opinion do you think that sometimes men discourage women from participating in leadership?

## **Part - III**

### **III. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. What are the challenges of women elected as member of decision makers of the town administration?
2. While women participation in leadership is low and discuss it.