

Assessment of Gender Equality in Ethiopia: The Position of Ethiopian Women's Political Representation from the World, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Eastern Africa Ethiopian Civil Service University

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Abstract

Gender Mainstreaming (GM) is an issue of growing concern in the world community. Presence of women/females in the parliament around the world has already become a reality that is impacting on the social, cultural, political, and economic fabric of the world's nations. Despite the limited improvements made by very few countries, gender inequalities are on the increase in the developing countries, including Ethiopia. On the other hand, representation of women and inclusion of their perspectives and experiences into the decision-making processes can result to the solutions that satisfy larger number of the society. Economic and social empowerment of women is greatly reliable on their integration into the political decision-making process through involving them in the political and public offices. Women can enjoy their political and civil rights through political representation and/or participation in the public life, as ensuring women's political participation is essential to bring legitimacy to the government and establish democracy in a practical sense which may lead to validity and trustworthiness of democracy and democratic process by the public and stakeholders. Women remain under-represented in the executive and political leadership positions mostly in the world regardless of their advanced educational levels and political participation. Policy-makers have responded through the introduction of 'gender quota' for females' representation in the governments. Adoption of gender quotas is related with attitudes about women within a particular country, calling for increased levels of democratic freedoms to improve women's access to public and political decision making positions. Proportional (descriptive) representation systems offer greater opportunities of gaining political access for women. Gender quotas are good policy tool to achieving equitable representation of women in the policy-making positions, serving as a tool for consolidating strong female representation. They facilitate the process of change for women's political inclusion in the political arena. They can increase female leadership; influence policy outcomes, and reduce gender discrimination. Thus, introduction and adoption of gender quotas in the political and public service offices do increase female leadership in both political and executive/public offices. This study has revealed that there exists a "wider gender gap" in the representations of women in the ministerial positions than the national parliamentary representation in Ethiopia. The study has also shown that Ethiopian women's executive representation is lagging behind the parliamentary representation, and repelling women from the executive positions. It has also found that Ethiopia lacks relatively proportional regional shares of women in the national parliamentary representation. However, there had been a remarkable progress in the number/percentages/ of women in national parliamentary standing committees and presiding higher officials in the house of peoples' representatives. Finally, the study had also shown that women's representation in the House of Federation (HoF) at national level relatively lacks proportional regional shares in both 3rd and 4th election terms. This paper, therefore, explores the status of women's political empowerment/ representation in the public and political decision-making positions in Ethiopia in line with creating conducive conditions for policy implications ("National Gender Equality Policy") towards the achievement of effective gender equality and/or reducing gender inequality specifically in the Gambella region as well as in Ethiopia in general.

Keywords: Assessment, Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Inequality, Gender Equality, Women's Political Empowerment/Representation, and Gender Quotas.

1. Introduction

Gender inequality is an acute and persistent problem in the world, mainly in the developing countries (Kabeer et al. 2008). It is entrenched in social, economic, cultural and political structures and thus closely intertwined with every development challenge ranging from the elimination of poverty to the promotion of peace and democracy. In other words, countries will not be able to combat poverty, corruption, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and ensure sustained development without a deliberate attempt to overcome gender inequality (MoWA 2006, p1).

Around the world, 70% females from 1.3 billion people remain under absolute poverty not because of scarcity of resources but due to denial of rights, curtailed opportunities and voices or representations (UNFPA 2006). Gender equality is still very lacking worldwide. Although most governments of the world have gender equality commissions, electoral gender quotas, and laws that protect women against violence and discrimination; women/females in the world are still far from reaching political leadership and positions or assignments. Only fourteen (14) of them have served as elected heads of state or governments, including the five who served as both worldwide (CQ 2008, P24).

Worldwide, recently, 80.3% parliamentarians are men; while women are only 19.7% in the world regions of Nordic countries, European countries, Americas, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Pacific, and Arab states (UNWOMEN 2012). The official positions in the parliamentary committees and officers (secretariat officers); ministerial positions; sub-ministerial positions; commissioners; heads of states; heads of governments; and other public and political decision making and leadership positions in the government bodies are dominated by men worldwide (ibid). The percentage of women as presiding officers of parliament has become 15.1%, which is six times the percentage (84.9%) of men (UNWOMEN 2012). Women also remain in lower proportions for being the head of government or of states in the governments of the world, as they are still far below the percentages of men up to January 2012. They remain 6.3% while men are 93.7% in heading the states and governments of the states, putting the 30% and 50% gender quota representations of the 1995 BPA, women's movement agreements and efforts under question (ibid).

Gender equality and empowerment of women, the third goal of MDGs, is recently and widely recognized as central to fulfilling all the rest of the MDGs (<http://www.enpi-info.eu>). Both of them are the objectives of poverty reduction and sustainable development that facilitate women's access to and control over fundamental assets and resources (IFAD 2004). Improving gender equality (GE) and empowering women is the road-map to making sustainable human development and to attaining other MDGs in the world (AGPR 2012 MDG, P37). Thus, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is an essential component of an effective economic and human (social) development strategy (Derek and Chen 2004, P.1).

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. Women can be empowered through transparency and open participation in the political process; as "Global 50/50 campaign" to increasing women's representation in all decision-making processes at all levels is now becoming the top priority issue of women's environment and development organizations (WEDO) worldwide (OECD 2008, P62).

National and regional level policies targeted towards improving and strengthening women's status; their roles in political, civil, social, economic, and cultural life; and combating all forms of discrimination against women and girls are fundamental to sustainable development and poverty reduction. Though gender equality is essential for growth and poverty reduction and reaching MDGs, gender inequalities are still entrenched in the various political systems in the developing world (ENPI 2011).

The manner gender has been mainstreamed and incorporated within various policy documents in Ethiopia, in relation to addressing gender inequalities, is a critical element in every sphere. The Ethiopian National Policy on Women (1993) was an initiative to gender mainstreaming with the goal of facilitating conditions for equality between women and men. On the other hand, the National Action Plan for gender equality (NAP-GE) is the sole commitment document to putting gender mainstreaming into action in Ethiopia and its regions across the various policies (Julie 2007). The government of Ethiopia has declared its commitment to gender equality and empowerment of women by stipulating the rights of women in its constitution, issuing the women's policy of the country, and revising the family and Criminal law. It has also established gender as across-cutting issue through joint-planning sessions between sectorial line ministries and MoWA at the national level (MoFED 2010). The country has also incorporated gender issues in different national policies of health, education and training, HIV/AIDS, population and other sectorial development and governance policies (MoFED 2010). Establishment of the NAP-GE and development plan, and gender unit structures at the national ministries and regional sector bureaus in 2006 G.C is also an incidence of the Ethiopian government's commitment to gender equality (MoFED 2010).

In addition to revising the family and criminal laws in 2004 to address women's rights issues, the Ethiopia's Growth and Transformational Plan (GTP) and the Sector Development Plan for Women and Children (SDPWC), 2011-2028, has broadened the government's specific initiative commitments towards promoting women's social, economic and political empowerment (UNCT 2011, P22). However, gender inequality is still persistent in Ethiopia, enabling the country's gender mainstreaming practice to be in crisis/danger (WABEKON Development PLC 2006). Even though the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) has formulated several laws and policies, and established institutional/organizational machineries and structures at all levels to promote gender equality through gender mainstreaming, the issue of political will and institutional/organizational practices for the success of the implementation of NAP-GE at all levels is still

lacking (Julie 2007).

Gambella Peoples National Regional State is one of the nine (9) regions of Ethiopia which had formulated gender laws and established organizational machineries at all levels to promote gender equality through gender mainstreaming. The region had committed itself for successful and effective implementation of Regional Action Plan for Gender Equality (RAP-GE) at all levels since 2007 G.C (GRWCYAB 2006). Therefore, the basic purpose of this study is to answer one of the research questions of the ongoing PhD dissertation study in the gender equality policy area. The research question “what is the actual extent (level) of gender equality attained in the public sector of the Gambella regional state?” necessitates knowing the status of women’s political empowerment/representation of Ethiopia as a whole to answer the question itself.

The assessment was conducted by using secondary data sources such as document review of relevant books, journals, performance reports, and appropriate official websites. The study is organized into six parts. The first part introduces the study. The second section discusses the empirical literatures on women’s political representation and gender quotas. The third part is about a comparative data presentation, analysis, and discussion on the Ethiopian women’s political representation status from the World, Africa (Sub-Saharan Africa), and Eastern Africa. The fourth section is about data presentation, analysis, and discussion about the state of women’s political representation in Ethiopia. The fifth part provides a conclusive summary towards the need for future policy implications (“National Gender Equality Policy”) regarding women’s political empowerment/representation in the public and political decision-making positions at national and regional levels in the country, Ethiopia. Finally, some strategic options have been recommended for future effective and efficient attainment of the goal of gender mainstreaming, i.e. gender equality, at national, regional, and local levels in Ethiopia.

2. Empirical Literature on Women’s Political Representation/Participation and Gender Quotas

2.1 Women’s Political Representation

Gender stereotyping has an influence on women’s own perceptions of their abilities to practice and participate in the decision-making process and on general assumptions regarding whether or not women can make “good” leaders in the developing world (Oxfam GB 2008). Presence of women/females in the parliament around the world has already become a reality that is impacting on the social, cultural, political, and economic fabric of the world’s nations, including Ethiopia. Democracy lies in the principle that legitimacy of the power to making decisions about peoples’ lives and their country should stem from a choice of the affected ones. On the other hand, representation of women and inclusion of their perspectives and experiences into the decision-making processes can result to the solutions that satisfy larger number of the society. This can have social and economic benefits, better and more appropriate social, political, legal, and economic solutions for their problems (Ballington and Karam 2005).

Globally, women/females are now holding more elective offices than ever before. In Sub-Saharan Africa (IPU 2005), where Ethiopia is a member state, the combined parliamentary representation of women was 14.8% only. Although women’s parliamentary representation, a segment of women’s political representation in addition to their executive representation, has made progress in most regions of the world, the issue of gender quotas to the representation of women in the public and political ministries, bureaus, offices, agencies, corporations and authorities is still undermined and forgotten (Ballington and Karam 2005, p25).

It is conventionally true that women had obtained the right to vote in 96% of the world countries by 1994 and had been the beneficiaries of parliamentary gender quotas since 1981. However, women remain under-represented in the executive and political leadership positions mostly in the world regardless of their advanced educational levels and political participation. In response to such a situation, policy-makers have responded through the introduction of ‘**gender quota**’, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) and the 2000 Beijing+5 update, for females’ representation in the government and corporate boards in many countries of the world since adoption of gender quotas is related with attitudes about women within a particular country (Pande and Ford 2011).

From descriptive representation aspect, in the political arena, there is no evidence that women are unwilling to participate in leadership contests and no instances of countries having to disband quota systems for the reasons of not finding enough leaders from women. This, therefore, calls for increasing levels of democratic freedoms to improve women’s access to public and political decision making positions. On the other hand, the structure of the electoral system for political quotas and the sanctions for non-compliance in both the political and corporate/executive is critical. It is obvious, in politics, that party and voters’ concerns of women’s worse leadership and/or the desire to protect the male incumbents has been restricting the success of candidate quota systems in women representations, similar to the concerns of firms senior management tactics to circumventing the quota law (Pande and Ford* 2011, p16). Despite the globally pervasive moments towards democratization processes in most countries of the world, females are still widely underrepresented at most levels of governments. Higher levels of women’s legislative representation correlate with the passage of more women-centered policies

and increase in the representation of women in political, public, and civil society organizations as well (Fallon, Swiss and Viterna 2012).

The international women's movement has grown overtime and became intertwined with the carriers of global culture such as the UN. Accordingly, world states have experienced increasing pressures over time to incorporate women into politics due to the existence of powerful international organizations network that resulted to influencing all states through agents of world society (Paxton, Hughes and Green 2006, p901). On the other hand, the changing discourse of the international women's movement emphasized different policy scripts associated with women's inclusion in politics over time. Scholars of women politics also theorize that social structure, political, and cultural aspects are the important sets of domestic influences to women's incorporation into the political powers. On the basis of the fact that political elites are pulled from the highly educated members of the society with some professional backgrounds, structural explanations argue that women need human and financial capital, gained through education and employment, to stand for or to be represented in the political offices-making domestic levels of females' educational attainment and labor force participation (employment levels) to influence the political arena and outcomes (Paxton, Hughes and Green 2006, p903). Another domestic theory of women's political incorporation is the importance of political factors of electoral system structures or rules, features of particular parties, and broad regime characteristics such as levels of democracy. Proportional representation systems (descriptive representation) offer greater opportunities of gaining political access for women when composed with plurality (majority) systems as in the USA. Thus, under the proportional representation systems, citizens vote for a party with a list of candidates than for individual candidates (Paxton, Hughes and Green 2006, p903). This representation seems to be very similar to the Ethiopian representation system, descriptive in its nature, and which is similar to the Gambella regional state where the citizens' vote for a party with a list of candidates than for individual candidates. This proportional representation can pave the way for women party members to hold public and political decision-making positions easily if their political party had won the election.

On the other hand, culture is a powerful predictor of women's political representation as ideas about women's roles and positions in a given society are the basic elements to enhance or constrain women's ability to obtain political positions in the various political and public institutions. Thus, domestic social, structural, political and cultural factors are the basic ingredients that could work either in conjunction with or against the global pressures for the incorporation of females in the political power and in the offices in the society (Paxton, Hughes and Green 2006, p904).

Sustainability (Husain and Sadiqi 2002) of economic and social empowerment of women is greatly reliable on their integration into the political decision-making process through their involvement in the political and public offices. Women can enjoy their political and civil rights through political representation and/or participation in the public life. The goals of (gender) equality, development and peace cannot be efficiently and effectively attained without the active participation of women and the incorporation of their perspectives at all levels of decision-making bodies in the political democratic processes of the states and governments (Panday 2008, P 489).

In whole, increased participation of women in the decision-making positions can create a new culture and shed new light on the style to exercising power at different levels as women attach great importance to the quality of contact among people and are less individualistic than their counter parts, being less prone to corruption. In addition, policy institutions and processes must be representative of women since women/females hold specific interests different from that of men (Panday 2008, P 490).

Haque (2003:584) stated that 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. 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 2008, P 491). Therefore, increasing women's representation and participation in the political and public decision-making positions:

- i. 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;
- ii. facilitates more changes and pave the way for more spaces to women;
- iii. calls for the efficient, maximum and equitable utilization of human , financial, material and information resources by all human beings;
- iv. avoids the questions that would be raised about the legitimacy of the democratic process and decision-making authorities;
- v. can allow women to address their basic problems and needs in the community; and
- vi. 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.

2.2 Gender Quotas

Gender quotas are good policy tool to achieving equitable representation of women in the policy-making positions. They serve as a tool for consolidating strong female representation. They are the process of change and facilitator for women's political inclusion in the political arena. Gender quotas can increase female leadership; influence policy outcomes, and reduce gender discrimination in the long-term. There is strong evidence on the impact of political (gender) quotas. For instance, the Indian 1993 constitutional amendment has given one-third of the leadership positions (political and executive) to be reserved for women/females in the village council or gram panchayat, allowing a natural experiment for measuring and unleashing the potential of female leaders. Similarly, Norway had also done so for corporate gender quotas in the 2003 legislation, making 40% of women to be on the corporate boards. Thus, introduction and adoption of gender quotas in the political and public service offices do increase female leadership in both political and executive/public offices and influence policy outcomes (Pande and Ford* 2011, p3).

Quotas are the necessary precondition for women to receive a boost to their representation on a party's national or regional executive. For instance when women hold 20% of the party's national or regional executive, their representation in the parliament also increases even in the absence of a candidate gender quota, showing that women's presence in a reasonable proportion in the political party's executive or government cabinet can have the effect to increasing their number in the parliament and other government entities. This generally provides a relatively standard consideration or adoption of (political) gender quotas in any instances like political power and public office gender quotas for females' representation in the society at large (Galligan 2007, PP 557-559).

Gender quotas have impacts towards equity and efficiency. They can improve both descriptive and substantive representation of women by enabling more equitable representation of women and improving representation of women's policy interests respectively. Quotas can also improve efficiency by overcoming taste discrimination, and changing attitudes and social norms in the short and long-terms respectively. It can also improve efficiency by increasing information through correcting beliefs about female labor benefits and reducing incorrect statistical discrimination, which in turn increase the average quality of women's representation. Quotas also have a positive effect on potential women leaders to being more efficient in selecting (attracting) other women leaders (positive externalities), by role modeling towards attracting other aspiring women leaders (role model effect), increasing entry in to politics by women (Aspirations improvement), and providing incentives or the opportunity for political or corporate/executive advancement, and encourage women to invest more in their education, career, and leadership potential (Pande and Ford* 2011, pp11-13).

Political quotas can be in the forms of voluntary party quotas (adopted by the political parties to nominating certain percentage of women candidates for electoral lists); candidate quotas (required by the law (constitution) of a country and stipulate for a certain number of candidate positions reserved for women); and reserved seats (positions reserved only for female candidates and used as a more direct way of regulating the number of women in elected positions). From the countries with current gender quotas, 61% have voluntary party quotas, 38% have legislated candidate quotas, and 20% have reserved seats (Pande and Ford* 2011, p8). Political quotas can also have direct effects on participation in politics in addition to increasing women's number in leadership positions towards running for election as a candidate, voting as a constituent, or voicing one's political references as a citizen (Pande and Ford* 2011, p16).

Gender quota policy can lead into increase in reported crimes against women and increase in number of arrests for similar crimes. Though political experience is relevant for effective leadership, lack of experience does not preclude effective leadership for women. Although women with no previous political experience perform worse than men or senior politicians, the gap can be absorbed after very few months or years of leadership exercise. Their leadership experience also does not translate into worse policy-making as well (Pande and Ford* 2011, pp25-26). Therefore, on the basis of such facts, there should be an effective temporary measure to allow the avoidance of false negative attitudes of senior men and women political leaders acting as barriers to descriptive representation of both men and women for the long-term effect.

Evidences indicate that female representation has been promoting a more gender-equal society, as women have been exercising political power as government ministers, political leaders, and legislatures. For instance, presence of large number of women in the Sub-Saharan Africa parliaments is an important aspect for the inclusion of women in the political institutions, making the issue of gender representations to being part of the negotiations to shaping political institutions. In establishing new political institutions, the preferred quota is the constitutionally mandated reserved seats in parliaments, as in Rwanda, Uganda, Eritrea, and Tanzania, and

in the executive, as in Kenya and Swaziland, that can guarantee the gendered outcome of the process of election. Regardless of the challenges that it poses to women, the perception that politics is a ‘male-dominated’ or ‘male-only activity’ and manipulation of women occupying reserved seats by the powerful or the power over male politicians where their potential to making genuine differences remain restricted, voluntary party quotas are less reliable than the constitutionally stipulated or reserved gender quota system or method (Galligan 2007, P562).

3. Data Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion on the Ethiopian Women’s Political Empowerment/Representation Situation/Context from the World, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Eastern Africa

3.1. Worldwide Political Empowerment Scenario

Worldwide, recently, 80.3% parliamentarians are men; while women are only 19.7% (UN 2012). Without women’s equal participation at all levels of decision-making positions, including public and political offices, democracy is incomplete. Without active participation of women and incorporation of their perspectives at all levels of decision making, the goals of Equality, Development, and Peace cannot be effectively attained (BPA, 1995). Quotas (Gender Quotas) remain the single most effective way to increasing the number of women in politics, as in the political participation and representation. Many world countries have adopted legislated women’s participation quotas, including Rwanda, Argentina, Costa Rica, Angola, Belgium, Spain, Mozambique, Afghanistan, Brazil, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Burundi, Republic of Sudan, Dominican Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, and Jordan. But, most countries of the world, including Ethiopia, are using and implementing voluntary party (gender) quotas to enhancing the participation and involvement of women in the public life affairs/or decision making levels in the society (IPU 2010).

In addition to the parliamentary representations of women in the world parliaments, women presiding officers of parliament, women assigned in the parliamentary offices and committees, as well as women in the executive decision making positions are important as it is in the highest position of power in any parliament. But, the official positions in the Parliamentary Committees and Officers (Secretariat officers); Ministerial Positions; Sub-Ministerial Positions; Commissioners; Heads of States; Heads of Governments; and other public and political decision making agencies, authorities, and portfolios in the government bodies are dominated by men worldwide (UN 2012).

Table 1: Worldwide Percentages of Women’s Parliamentary Representations in the Single/Lower Houses by Regions (2005-2012 G.C).

Regions	Years					
	2005	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Nordic Countries	40.5%	41.4%	-----	42%	42.1%	42.0%
Europe OSCE (Nordic Countries Included)	18.9%	20.9%	21.0%	21.8%	21.7%	22.6%
Europe OSCE (Nordic Countries Excluded)	16.8%	19.0%		19.9%	20.2%	20.8%
The Americas	18.7%	20.7%	20.5%	22.1%	22.2%	22.6%
Sub-Saharan Africa	14.9%	17.3%	18.3%	18.4%	19.4%	20.4%
Asia	15.1%	16.9%	18.0%	18.7%	18.0%	18.3%
Asia	11.2%	12.9%	13.0%	13.2%	14.7%	12.4%
The Pacific	6.7%	9.6%	9.7%	10.1%	10.3%	11.3%
The Arab States	15.8%	17.9%	18.5%	19.0%	19.3%	19.7%
Global average	40.5%	41.4%	-----	42%	42.1%	42.0%

Source: IDEA (2005); IPU (2009, 2011); UN (2008, 2010, 2012).

From the table 1, we can see that there is a significant increase in the number/percentages of women parliamentarians in the single house in the world. Women parliamentarians were 15.8% worldwide, by regions, in 2005. Importantly, this percentage had increased by 3.9%, within seven years, to 19.7% in 2012. Though the percentages of men parliamentarians remain very higher (80.9%) in 2012 than that of women, the increase of the percentages of women is remarkably significant and promising when compared with that of women in the higher positions (head of governments or head of states) from 2005 to 2012 worldwide. Women were still far below the percentages of men till January 2012. Women remain 6.3% while men are 93.7% in 2012 in heading the states and governments of the different world sates, putting the 30% of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) and the 2000 BPA+5 for 50/50 as well as women’s movements agreements and efforts for representation of women in all aspects under question. This is because 19.7% parliamentary representation of women is almost approaching the 30% representation of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), while the 6.3% representation of the women heading the states and governments of the various world sates is far lagging behind

the 30% representation of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPA).

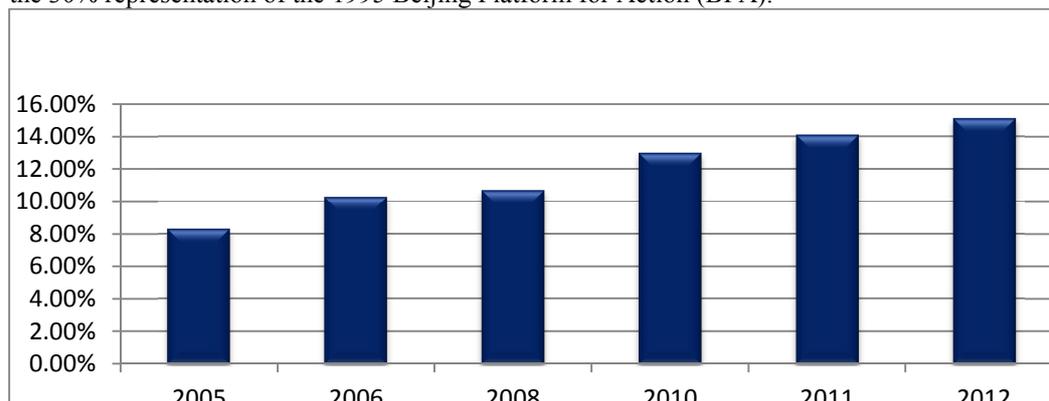


Figure 1. Worldwide Percentages of Women Presiding Officers of Parliaments (2005-2012 G.C).
 Sources: IPU (2006, 2011); UN (2008, 2010, 2012).

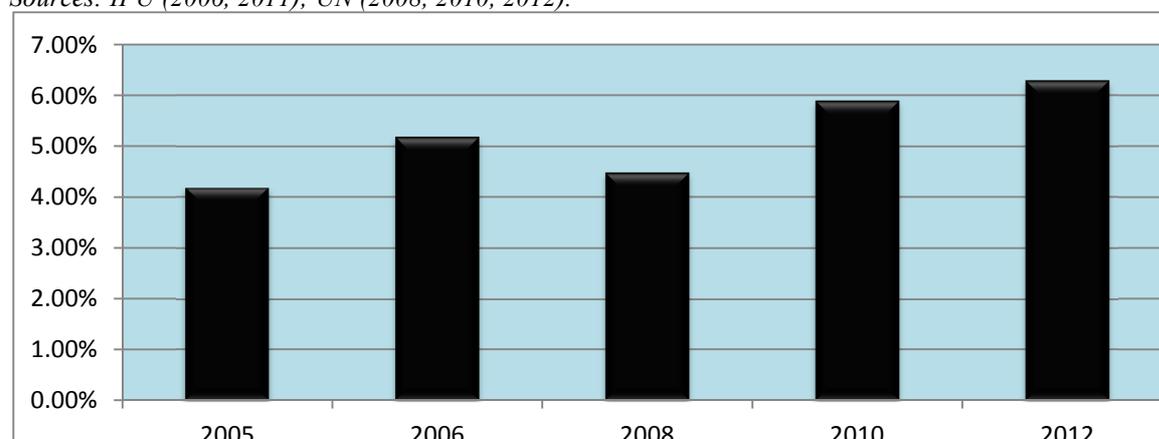


Figure 2: Worldwide Percentages of Women in the Higher Positions (Head of Governments or /Head of States) from 2005 to 2012 G.C.
 Source: IPU (2006); UN (2008, 2010, 2012).

From the chart1 above, women in the presiding officers of parliament were 8.3% in the year 2005. This percentage had significantly increased to 10.3 and 10.7 percent in the years 2006 and 2008 respectively. Finally, the percentage had dramatically increased to 13.0% and 14.1% in 2010 and 2011 respectively and had become 15.1%, which is almost six times the percentages (84.9%) of men, in the year 2012, as of January 2012 worldwide. The percentage had increased from 8.3% to 15.1% by 6.8%, within eight (8) years, from 2005 to 2012 G.C. This, generally, shows that there is an incremental change or increase in the number or percentages of women in the presiding officers of parliament in eight years in the world. This is really a promising change to women’s political empowerment/representation regarding women presiding officers of parliaments globally.

Table 2: Percentages of Women in the Highest Positions in the World (2005-2012 G.C)

	2005	2006	2008	2010	2012
Head of Governments Or Heads of States	4.2%	5.2%	4.5%	5.9%	6.3%

Source: IPU (2006); UN (2008, 2010, 2012).

From Chart 2 and Table 2, we can understand that women still remain in very lower proportions for being the head of government or states in the governments of the world. They are still far below the percentages of men until January 2012. They remain 6.3% while men are 93.7% in heading the states and governments of the sates. This actually threatens the 30% of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) and the 2000 BPA+5 update for 50/50 as well as women’s movements agreements and efforts for representation of women in all aspects. Even the percentages of women for being the head of government or states in the various world states governments had dropped from 5.2% in 2006 to 4.5% in 2008, by 0.7%, showing that how women are not prioritized for heading the states or state governments in the world.

Table 3: Ethiopian Women's Ministerial Representation Status from the World(2005-2012 G.C): Percentages of Ethiopian Women's Ministerial Positions, including Deputies, from the Top 15, 10, and 15 World Countries, as of January 1/ 2005; January 1/ 2008; and January 1/2010 respectively.

Country(2005)	%(2005)	Country(2008)	%(2008)	Country(2010)	%(2010)
Sweden (1 st)	52.4% (11/21)	Finland (1 st)	57.9% (11/19)	Finland (1 st)	63.2% (12/19)
Spain (2 nd)	50.0% (8/16)	Norway (2 nd)	55.6% (10/18)	Cape Verde (2 nd)	53.3% (8/15)
Finland (3 rd)	47.1% (8/17)	Grenada (3 rd)	50.0% (6/12)	Spain (3 rd)	52.9% (9/17)
Germany (5 th)	46.2% (6/13)	Sweden (4 th)	47.6% (10/21)	Norway (4 th)	52.6% (10/19)
Norway (5 th)	44.4% (8/18)	France (5 th)	46.7% (7/15)	Chile (5 th)	45.5% (10/22)
South Africa(6 th)	41.4% (12/29)	South Africa(6 th)	44.8% (13/29)	Iceland (5 th)	45.5% (5/11)
Grenada (7 th)	40.0% (6/15)	Spain (7 th)	43.8% (13/29)	Sweden (6 th)	45.0% (9/20)
Guinea-Bissau (8 th)	37.5% (6/16)	Switzerland (8 th)	42.9% (3/7)	Switzerland (7 th)	42.9% (3/7)
Netherlands (9 th)	36.0% (9/25)	Chile (9 th)	40.9% (9/22)	Denmark (8 th)	42.1% (8/19)
Colombia (10 th)	35.7% (5/14)	Salvador (10 th)	38.9% (7/18)	Liechtenstein (9 th)	40.0% (2/5)
Rwanda (10 th)	35.7% (10/28)	Austria (11 th)	38.5% (5/13)	Austria(10 th)	38.5% (5/13)
Austria (11 th)	35.3% (6/17)	Andorra (12 th)	37.5% (3/8)	Nicaragua (10 th)	38.5% (5/13)
Salvador (11 th)	35.3% (6/17)	Denmark (13 th)	36.8% (7/19)	Saõ Tomé and Príncipe (10 th)	38.5% (5/13)
Andorra (12 th)	33.3% (3/9)	Iceland (14 th)	36.4% (4/11)	Honduras (11 th)	35.7% (5/14)
Croatia (12 th)	33.3% (5/15)	Trinidad and Tobago (14 th)	36.4% (8/22)	Costa Rica (12 th)	35.0% (7/20)
Denmark (12 th)	33.3% (6/18)	Cape Verde (15 th)	35.7% (5/14)	Trinidad and Tobago (13 th)	34.5% (10/29)
Paraguay (13 th)	30.8% (8/26)	Ethiopia (70 th)	9.5% (2/21)	South Africa (14 th)	34.3% (12/35)
Barbados (14 th)	29.4% (5/17)			Andorra (15 th)	33.3% (2/6)
UK and Northern Ireland (15 th)	28.6% (6/21)			Belgium (15 th)	33.3% (5/15)
Ethiopia (66 th)*	5.9% (1/17)			Germany (15 th)	33.3% (6/18)
				Rwanda (15 th)	33.3% (8/24)
				United States of America (15 th)	33.3% (7/21)
				(15 th)	
				Ethiopia (76 th)*	7.4% (2/27)

NB: The numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd ...66th) in the brackets indicate the ranks of the countries in the world women's ministerial positions. *Ethiopia ranking 66th, 70th, and 76th in representing women in the ministerial Positions in the World in 2005, 2008, and 2010.

Table 4: Ethiopian Women's Ministerial Positions Status from the Top 20 World Countries, as of January 1, 2012 G.C.

Rank	Country	Percentages of Women
1	Norway	52.6 % (10/19)
2	Sweden	52.2% (12/2)
3	Finland	50.0% (9/18)
3	Iceland	50.0% (4/8)
4	Cape Verde	47.1% (8/17)
5	Austria	46.2% (6/13)
5	Nicaragua	46.2% (6/13)
6	Bolivia	45.5% (10/22)
7	Switzerland	42.9% (3/7)
8	Belgium	41.7% (5/12)
9	Ecuador	40.0% (12/30)
9	Liechtenstein	40.0% (2/5)
9	South Africa	40.0% (14/35)
10	Denmark	39.1% (9/23)
11	Venezuela	37.8% (12/31)
12	Lesotho	36.8% (7/19)
13	Burundi	34.8% (8/23)
14	Colombia	33.3% (5/15)
15	Germany	33.35 (5/15)
15	Netherlands	33.3% (4/12)
15	Uganda	32.1% (9/28)
16	Rwanda	32.0% (8/25)
17	Gambia	31.3% (5/16)
18	Benin	30.8% (8/26)
19	Latvia	30.8% (4/13)
19	Spain	30.8 4 13
19	Guyana	29.4% (5/17)
19	Panama	29.4% (5/17)
20	Costa Rica	29.2% (7/24)
73 rd	Ethiopia*	9.7% (3/31)

Source: UN, 2012. *Women in Politics: January 1, 2012.*

N.B: *Ethiopia ranking 73rd in representing women in the ministerial Positions, after India and before Turkmenistan in the World in 2012.

3.1.1. World-wide Comparative Discussion on the Status of Representation of Women in the Ministerial Positions vs. Women's Parliamentary Representation for Ethiopia

Knowing the actual position of Ethiopia with regard to gender equality and/or gender inequality is worthwhile. This enables the policy and decision makers, mainly politicians, as well as country wise researchers and scholars to seek for alternative gender equality policy and/or adjust the existing different gender policy documents into a consolidated one. It also allows them to utilize the appropriate gender equality frameworks (approaches, models) for future effective gender mainstreaming implementation towards its goal of gender equality and women's empowerment. There was no evidence to whether there had been a woman minister or a deputy minister in the years from 1995 to 2004 G.C in the Ethiopian government system. As it can be seen from tables 3 and 4 above, globally, Ethiopia was ranking 66th from a total of 77 ranks for 183 countries in the women's ministerial positions in the world in January 2005. It was also ranking 70th in the world next to Marshall Islands, Mauritius, and Thailand and before Malaysia, and Antigua and Barbuda from a total of 93 ranks for 184 world countries in January 2008. It was also ranking 76th, sharing the same rank with Afghanistan and before Pakistan (76th), from a total of 94 ranks for 188 world countries in January 2010. It is also very clear from Table 4 below that the country has also added only one more woman Minister in 2012. It was ranking 73rd from a total of 96 world ranks for 189 world countries in January 2012. This, generally, shows that Ethiopia was ranking last before 11 ranks; before 23 ranks; before 18 ranks and before 23 ranks with 1 woman minister, 2 women ministers, 2 women ministers and 3 women ministers from a total of 17, 21, 27 and 31 ministers of state government in 2005, 2008, 2010 and 2012 respectively. This also shows that the country is in a devastating situation in this regard, as these percentages (5.9% (1/17), 9.5% (2/21), 7.4% (2/27, and 9.7 (3/31)) position the country against 30% and 50/50 percentages of the BPA (Beijing Platform for Action), Women's Movements, and other international organizations' (the UN Agencies) signed agreements and efforts. In conclusion, the country did not joined the

world's top 10 to 15 countries' rank lists and it was also not incorporated in the list of the world's top 50 to 60 countries list since 2005 till 2012.

Even though the country's women's ministerial positions representation percentages had increased by 3.6% in 2008 and by 2.3 in 2012 (i.e. it increased from 5.9% (1/17) to 9.5% (2/21) in 2008 and increased from 7.4 (2/27) to 9.7(3/31) in 2012), it had deteriorated by 2.1% i.e. it decreased from 9.5% in 2008 to 7.4% in 2010. This shows that the incremental change (3.6% increases) that was registered in 2008 would have been maintained and continued in 2010. This is the reason why Ethiopia shifted its rank in the women ministerial representation from 70th in 2008 to 76th in 2010 and remained 73rd in 2012, while those countries that had increased the number of women ministers relative to the number of men ministers had advanced in their global ranks. This also means that as the number of the ministerial positions increased, the number of women ministers would have also been increased to some extent relative to the number of men ministers. Generally, this shows the existence of the lack of clearly established political (gender) quotas, either in the form of voluntary political party quotas or stipulated in the constitution, for the representation of women in the ministerial and/or public and political decision making positions at the national and the rest levels in the country.

3.2. Ethiopia's Political Empowerment/Representation Status or Scenario from African Countries

3.2.1 Ethiopian Women's Parliamentary Representations from the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) Countries'(2008-2012 G.C):

Table 5: Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Women's Parliamentary Representations (2008): Percentages of the 15 Top ranking SSA Countries in Women Parliaments, as of January 1/2008.

Country	Single/lower House Percentages of Women
Rwanda*	48.8% (39/80) (Pure Blue Ranking)
Mozambique*	34.8% (87/250) (Light-Blue Ranking)
South Africa*	33.0% (132/400) (Light-Blue Ranking)
Uganda*	30.7% (102/332) (Light-Blue Ranking)
Burundi*	30.5% (36/118) (Light-Blue Ranking)
United Republic of Tanzania*	30.4% (97/319) (Light-Blue Ranking)
Namibia*	26.9% (21/78) (Brown Ranking)
Lesotho*	23.5% (28/119) (Red Ranking Countries)
Tunisia*	22.8% (43/189) (Red Ranking Countries)
Mauritania*	22.1% (21/95) (Red Ranking Countries)
Eritrea*	22.0% (33/150) (Red Ranking Countries)
Senegal*	22.0% (33/150) (Red Ranking Countries)
Ethiopia**	21.9% (116/529) (Red Ranking Countries)
Guinea*	19.3% (22/114) (Below the standard)
Sudan***	18.1% (80/443) (Below the standard)
Equatorial Guinea*	18.0% (18/100) (Below the standard)

Source: UN, *Women in Politics: Situation on January 1, 2008*.

N.B: *All of these countries ranking 1st, 12th, 15th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 28th, 38th, 42nd, 46th, 47th, 61st, 65th, and 66th respectively in the world parliaments. ** Ethiopia ranking 47th from the world countries. *** Republic of Sudan (Sudan) before its separation in to North and South.

As table 5 shows, parliamentary representations of the Ethiopian women was ranking 12th among 15 top ranking Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries. According to the United Nations (UN, 2008) ranking standards for gender equality status of a particular country, Ethiopia was grouped in the "red ranking category" countries with 21.9% (116/529) women parliament members in 2008 for equal (50:50) representation. It was the first country approaching to fall "below the standard" in the same year, leaving three countries (Guinea, Sudan, and Equatorial Guinea) lying below the standard while Rwanda was heading these top 15 SSA countries by 48.8% (39/80) in women's parliamentary representation. Even though the number or share of Ethiopian women parliament members had increased from 42 to 116 in the 2005 election, it became insignificant due to the large number (529) of the total composition of the parliamentarians for the house of peoples' representatives.

Table 6: Ethiopian Women's Parliamentary Representations Status from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (2010G.C): Percentages of the Parliamentary Representations of Women for the 15 Top ranking SSA Countries with 20 and above Percentages, as of January 1/2010.

Country	Single/Lower House Percentages (Seats) of Women	Category of the Country's Rank
Rwanda (1 st)*	56.3% (45/80)	50 to 59.9% (Top Dark Blue-Black Ranking)
South Africa (3 rd)*	44.5% (178/400)	40 to 49.9% (Pure Blue Ranking)
Mozambique(9 th)*	39.2% (98/250)	35 to 39.9% (Light-Blue Ranking)
Angola(10 th)*	38.6% (85/220)	30 to 39.9% (Light-Blue Ranking)
Uganda(22 nd)*	31.5% (102/324)	30 to 34.9% (Lighter-Blue Ranking)
Burundi(23 rd)*	31.4% (37/118)	30 to 34.9% (Lighter-Blue Ranking)
United Republic of Tanzania(24 th)*	30.7% (99/323)	30 to 34.9% (Lighter-Blue Ranking)
Tunisia(29 th)*	27.6% (59/214)	25 to 29.9% (Brown Ranking)
Namibia(33 rd)*	26.9% (21/78)	25 to 29.9% (Brown Ranking)
Lesotho(40 th)*	24.2% (29/120)	25 to 29.9% (Brown Ranking)
Senegal (46 th)*	22.7% (34/150)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking Countries)
Mauritania(50 th)*	22.1% (21/95)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking Countries)
Eritrea(51 st)*	22.0% (33/150)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking Countries)
Ethiopia(52 nd)*	21.9% (116/529)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking Countries)
Malawi(58 th)*	20.8% (40/192)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking Countries)

Source: UN, 2010. *Women in Politics: January 1, 2010.*

N.B: *Indicating the ranks of the countries in the world.

The same trend, as in Table 5, was also observed in table 6. In this aspect, Ethiopia was ranking 14th, with similar percentage (21.9%) as in 2008, in women's parliamentary representations among the 15 top ranking Sub-Saharan African countries in 2010. As per the United Nations (UN, 2010) ranking standards for gender equality status of a particular country, Ethiopia was again found in the "red ranking category" countries with 21.9% (116/529) women parliament members in 2010 for equal (50:50) representation. It was the second country to fall "below the standard" in the same year, before Malawi which is lying in similar ranking category in 2010. Rwanda was again the country heading these 15 top ranking SSA countries by 56.3% (45/80) in women's parliamentary representation, exceeding the required 50:50 equal representation in 2010.

Table 7: Ethiopian Women's Parliamentary Representations from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Women's (2012G.C): Percentages of the Parliamentary Representations of Women for the 15 Top ranking African Countries with 20 and above Percentages, as of January 1/2012.

Country	Single/Lower House Percentages (Seats) of Women	Category of the Country's Rank
Rwanda (1 st)*	56.3% (45/80)	50 to 59.9% (Dark Blue-Black Ranking)
South Africa (7 th)*	42.3% (169/400)	40 to 49.9% (Pure Blue Ranking)
Mozambique(12 th)*	39.2% (98/250)	35 to 39.9% (Light-Blue Ranking)
Angola(15 th)*	38.2% (84/220)	35 to 39.9% (Light-Blue Ranking)
United Republic of Tanzania(18 th)*	36.0% (126/350)	35 to 39.9% (Light-Blue Ranking)
Uganda(19 th)*	35.0% (135/386)	35 to 39.9% (Light-Blue Ranking)
Burundi(27 th)*	30.5% (32/105)	30 to 34.9% (Lighter-Blue Ranking)
Ethiopia (33 rd)	27.8% (152/547)	25 to 29.9% (Brown Ranking)
Tunisia(35 th)*	26.7% (58/217)	25 to 29.9% (Brown Ranking)
South Sudan (36 th)	26.5% (88/332)	25 to 29.9% (Brown Ranking)
Republic of Sudan(42 nd)	24.6 (87/354)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking)
Namibia(43 rd)*	24.4% (19/78)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking)
Lesotho(44 th)*	24.2% (29/120)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking)
Senegal (51 st)*	22.7% (34/150)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking)
Malawi(53 rd)*	22.3% (43/193)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking)

Source: UN, 2012. *Women in Politics: January 1, 2012.* *Indicating the ranks of the countries from the world countries.

Table 7 shows that Ethiopia was ranking 8th, with 27.8% (152/547), in women's parliamentary representations among the 15 top ranking SSA countries in 2012. In this regard, Ethiopia had made a progress to its previous position by adding 36 more women parliamentarians in the House of Peoples' Representatives (HoPR) in 2012. Because of this progress, it had shifted its ranking category from the "red" to the "Brown category", which is above half way (25%) for equal (50:50) representation in 2012. It was the leader of the "brown category" countries followed by Tunisia and South Sudan, while Rwanda was still leading the 15 top ranking SSA countries by 56.3% (45/80) in women's parliamentary representation in the same year. The last ranking country was Malawi with 22.3% (43/193) women's parliamentary representation.

3.2.2. Ethiopian Women's Ministerial Representations from the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Countries (2008-2012 G.C)

Table 8: Ethiopian Women's Ministerial Positions from the 15 Top Ranking SSA Countries (2008, 2010, and 2012).

Country (2008)	Percentage of Women (2008)	Country (2010)	Percentage of Women (2010)	Country (2012)	Percentage of Women (2012)
South Africa (1 st)	42.1 (8/19)	Saõ Tomé and Príncipe (1 st)	38.5 (5/13)	South Africa (1 st)	40.0 (14/35)
Lesotho (2 nd)	33.3 (6/18)	South Africa (2 nd)	34.3 (12/35)	Lesotho (2 nd)	36.8 (7/19)
Burundi (2 nd)	33.3 (4/12)	Rwanda (3 rd)	33.3 (8/24)	Burundi (3 rd)	34.8 (8/23)
Uganda (3 rd)	28.5 (6/21)	Uganda (4 th)	32.0 (8/25)	Uganda (4 th)	32.1% (9/28)
Botswana (4 th)	27.5 (8/29)	Lesotho (5 th)	31.6 (6/19)	Rwanda (5 th)	32.0 (8/25)
Gambia (5 th)	26.6 (4/15)	Gambia (6 th)	31.3 (5/16)	Gambia (6 th)	31.3 (5/16)
Mozambique (6 th)	25.0 (4/16)	Liberia (7 th)	30.4 (7/23)	Benin (7 th)	30.8 (8/26)
Niger (6 th)	25.0 (2/8)	Burundi (8 th)	28.6 (8/28)	Angola (8 th)	29.0 (9/31)
Malawi (7 th)	23.0 (3/13)	Angola (9 th)	27.8 (10/36)	Nigeria (9 th)	28.1 (9/32)
Guinea-Bissau (8 th)	22.7 (5/22)	Malawi (10 th)	27.3 (6/22)	Mozambique (10 th)	27.6 (8/29)
Namibia (9 th)	22.2 (4/18)	United Republic of Tanzania (11 th)	26.9 (7/26)	United Republic of Tanzania (10 th)	27.6 (8/29)
Liberia (10 th)	21.4 (3/14)	Swaziland (12 th)	26.3 (5/19)	Madagascar (11 th)	26.5 (9/34)
Nigeria (11 th)	21.0 (4/19)	Mozambique (13 th)	25.9 (7/27)	Niger (12 th)	26.1 (6/23)
Mali (12 th)	20.0 (3/15)	Eritrea (14 th)	25.0 (4/16)	Senegal (13 th)	25.0 (9/36)
Morocco (13 th)	19.2 (5/26)	Namibia (15 th)	24.0 (6/25)	Eritrea (14 th)	23.5 (4/17)
United Republic of Tanzania (14 th)	18.1 (4/22)	Ethiopia (42 nd)*	7.4 (2/27)	Liberia (15 th)	22.7 (5/22)
Benin (14 th)	18.1 (2/11)			Ethiopia (33 rd) *	9.7 (3/31)
Ethiopia (40 th) *	9.5 (2/21)				

Source: UN (2008, 2010, and 2012).

NB: The numbers in brackets (1st, 2nd, 3rd ...) indicate the ranks of the countries from all the SSA countries. *Ethiopia Ranking 40th from the total of 45 African countries (2008), 42nd from 48 African countries (2010), and 33rd from 49 African countries (2012).

As table 8 shows, Ethiopia was not registered in the list of the 15 top ranking SSA countries in positioning women in the government executive posts. This shows how the country's women's executive representation is lagging behind and how much it repels females from joining executive positions. While the country's women's parliamentary representation percentages had placed the country in 12th, 14th, and 8th positions from the 15 top ranking SSA countries in 2008 (21.9%), 2010 (21.9%), and 2012 (27.8%), Ethiopia did not get any rank among these 15 SSA countries in 2008, 2010, and 2012 respectively. This was so because the country's executive representation of women was very insignificant, i.e. below 10%, for 2008 (9.5%), 2010 (7.4%), and 2012 (9.7%). The women's ministerial representation of these 15 top ranking SSA countries was led by South Africa 42.1% with 8 women ministers among the total 19 ministers. The last ranking countries were the United Republic of Tanzania and Benin with 18.1% (43/193) women's parliamentary representation. However, Ethiopia was ranking 40th from the total of 45 African countries (2008), 42nd from 48 African countries (2010), and 33rd from 49 African countries (2012). This shows that Ethiopia was the 15th, 6th, and 16th bottom ranking

country among 45, 48, and 49 African countries in 2008, 2010, and 2012 respectively.

3.2.3 Ethiopian Women's Parliamentary Representations from the Eastern African Countries (2010 and 2012 G.C)

Table 9: Ethiopian Women's Parliamentary Representations Status from the Eastern African Countries, as of January 1, 2010.

Country	Single/Lower House Percentages (Seats) of Women	Category of the Country's Rank
Rwanda (1 st)*	56.3% (45/80)	50 to 59.9% (Top Dark Blue-Black Ranking)
Uganda (5 th)*	31.5% (102/324)	30 to 34.9% (Lighter-Blue Ranking)
Burundi (6 th)*	31.4% (37/118)	30 to 34.9% (Lighter-Blue Ranking)
United Republic of Tanzania (7 th)*	30.7% (99/323)	30 to 34.9% (Ranking Lighter-Blue)
Eritrea (12 st)*	22.0% (33/150)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking Countries)
Ethiopia (13 th)*	21.9% (116/529)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking Countries)
Sudan (15 th)*@	18.9% (84/444)	15 to 19.9% (Light-Red Ranking)
Djibouti (22 nd)*	13.8% (9/65)	10 to 14.9% (Dark-Yellow Ranking)
Kenya (32 nd)*	9.8% (22/224)	5 to 9.9% (Yellow Ranking)
Somalia (45 th)*	6.9% (37/539)	5 to 9.9% (Yellow Ranking)

Source: UN, 2010. Women in Politics: January 1, 2010.

*Indicating the ranks of the countries among the African countries. @Sudan before its separation in to North and South.

As it can be seen from the above table (9), Ethiopia was ranking in the 6th place, with 21.9% (116/529), from a total of 10 Eastern African countries in women's parliamentary representation in 2010. Ethiopia became 6th after Eritrea (22.0% (33/150)) and before Sudan*@(18.9% (84/444)), while the group is led by Rwanda with 56.3% (45/80) and Somalia holding the last position with 6.9% (37/539). This ranking had put the country in the "middle rank (red rank)" of the 4th category together with Eritrea and leaving four countries above and below its category. This percentage had also positioned the country in the 13th place from all African countries in the same year.

From table 10 below, we can also understand that Ethiopia had moved to the 5th position, with 27.8 % (152/547) women parliamentarians, from a total of 11 Eastern African countries in 2012. The country held 5th place after Burundi (30.5% (32/105)) and before South Sudan (26.5% (88/332)), while the group is led by Rwanda with 56.3% (45/80) and again Somalia holding the last position with 6.8% (37/547). This ranking had put the country in the "brown rank" of 4th category. This percentage had also positioned the country in the 8th place from all African countries in the same year.

Table 10: Ethiopian Women's Parliamentary Representations Status from the Eastern African Countries, as of January 1, 2012.

Country	Single/Lower House Percentages (Seats) of Women	Remarks
Rwanda (1 st)*	56.3% (45/80)	50 to 59.9% (Top Dark Blue-Black Ranking) (1 st category)
United Republic of Tanzania (5 th)*	36.0% (126/350)	35 to 39.9% (Lighter-Blue Ranking) (2 nd '')
Uganda (6 th)*	35.0% (135/386)	35 to 39.9% (Lighter-Blue Ranking) (2 nd '')
Burundi (7 th)*	30.5% (32/105)	30 to 34.9% (Ranking Lighter-Blue) (3 rd '')
Ethiopia (8 th)*	27.8% (152/547)	25 to 29.9% (Brown Ranking) (4 th '')
South Sudan (10 th)*	26.5% (88/332)	25 to 29.9% (Red Ranking) (5 th '')
Republic of Sudan (11 th)*	24.6 (87/354)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking) (5 th '')
Eritrea (16 th)*	22.0% (33/150)	20 to 24.9% (Red Ranking) (5 th '')
Djibouti (23 rd)*	13.8% (9/65)	10 to 14.9% (Dark-Yellow Ranking) (7 th '')
Kenya (35 th)*	9.8% (22/224)	5 to 9.9% (Yellow Ranking) (8 th '')
Somalia (44 th)*	6.8% (37/547)	5 to 9.9% (Yellow Ranking) (8 th '')

Source: UN, 2012. Women in Politics: January 1, 2012.*Indicating the ranks of the countries among the African countries.

3.2.4 Ethiopian Ministerial Representation from Eastern African Countries (2008-2012)

Table 11: Ethiopian Women's Ministerial Representation Status from the Eastern African Countries (2008, 2010, and 2012)

Country (2008)	Percentage of Women (2008)	Country (2010)	Percentage of Women (2010)	Country (2012)	Percentage of Women (2012)
Burundi(1 st)	33.3 (4/12)	Rwanda (1 st)	33.3 (8/24)	Burundi (1 st)	34.8 (8/23)
Uganda(2 nd)	28.5 (6/21)	Uganda(2 nd)	32.0 (8/25)	Uganda (2 nd)	32.1 (9/28)
United Republic of Tanzania(3 rd)	22.7 (5/22)	Burundi(3 rd)	28.6 (8/28)	Rwanda (3 rd)	32.0 (8/25)
Eritrea(4 th)	17.6 (3/17)	United Republic of Tanzania(4 th)	26.9 (7/26)	United Republic of Tanzania (4 th)	27.6 (8/29)
Rwanda (5 th)	16.7 (3/18)	Eritrea(5 th)	25.0 (4/16)	Eritrea (5 th)	23.5 (4/17)
Ethiopia (6 th)	9.5 (2/21)	Kenya(6 th)	15.0 (6/40)	South Sudan (6 th)	16.7 (5/30)
Djibouti(7 th)	9.1 (2/22)	Djibouti(7 th)	10.5 (2/19)	Kenya (7 th)	15.4 (6/39)
Sudan (8 th)@	6.3 (2/32)	Ethiopia (8 th)	7.4 (2/27)	Djibouti (8 th)	13.0 (3/23)
		The Republic of Sudan (9 th)*	6.3 (2/32)	Ethiopia (9 th)	9.7 (3/31)
				The Republic of Sudan (10 th)	9.1 (3/33)
				Somalia (11 th)	5.6 (1/18)

Source: UN(2008, 2010, and 2012).

NB: The numbers in the brackets (1st, 2nd, 3rd ...) indicate the respective ranks of the countries from the Eastern African countries, The Republic of Sudan before the Referendum.

Table 11 shows that Ethiopia was ranking 6th with 9.5% (2/21) from a total of 8 Eastern African countries in the women's ministerial representation in 2008. The country held 6th place after Rwanda (16.7% (3/18)) and before Djibouti (9.1% (2/22)), while the group is led by Burundi with 33.3% (4/12) and Somalia holding the last position with 6.3% (2/32) in 2008.

In 2010, Ethiopia was ranking 8th with 7.4% (2/27) from a total of 9 Eastern African countries in the women's ministerial representation. The country held 8th place after Djibouti (10.5% (2/19)) and before the lastly ranking Republic of Sudan (6.3% (2/32)), while the group is led by Rwanda with 33.3% (8/24) in 2010. In 2012, Ethiopia was ranking 9th with 9.7% (3/31) from a total of 11 Eastern African countries in the women's ministerial representation. The country held 9th position after Djibouti (13.0% (3/23)) and before the Republic of Sudan (9.1% (3/33)), while the group is led by Burundi with 34.8% (8/23) and Somalia lastly ranking with 5.6% (1/18) in 2012.

Generally, Ethiopia did not join the middle rank in terms of the women's ministerial or executive representation from the Eastern African countries in 2008, 2010, and 2012 respectively. Rather, it had slipped from the third-last ranking in 2008 to the second-last ranking in 2010, and had again regained the third-last rank from a total of 8, 9, and 11 eastern African countries in the three consecutive years of 2008, 2010, and 2012.

4. Women's Political Empowerment/Representation Scenario/Status in Ethiopia

4.1.1 Comparative Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion on the Context of Representation of Women in the Ministerial Representations Vs. Women's Parliamentary Representations in Ethiopia

Table 12: Women's Parliamentary Representations in the House of the Peoples' Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) during the four election terms.

Parliamentary Term/Election Term	Women's Representation Percentages		Term Period
	Women	Men	
1 st Term	2.7% (13/547)	97.3% (533/546)	1995-2000
2 nd Term	7.7% (42/547)	92.3% (505/547)	2000-2005
3 rd Term	21.9% (116/529)	78.1% (413/529)	2005-2010
4 th Term	27.8% (152/547)	72.2% (395/547)	2010-2015

Source: House of the Peoples' Representatives, www.hop.gov.et accessed on 9th of November 2012.

Comparatively, the Ethiopian women's representation in the ministerial positions trend is "quite different" from that of the Ethiopian women's parliamentary representation. According to UN (2008, 2010, 2012)

and the Ethiopian House of Peoples' Representatives Parliament (www.hop.gov.et, as of Nov.2012) reports, the Ethiopian women's parliamentary representation had elected 13, 42, 116, and 152 women from a total of 547, 547, 529, and 547 parliamentarians during the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th round national elections in 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2010 respectively. This parliamentary representation had positioned the country in the 109th, 47th, 52nd, and 33rd ranks with 2.7% (13/547), 7.7% (42/547), 21.9% (116/529), and 27.8% (152/547) in 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2010 respectively from the world countries, which is a very amazing frog leap and improvement when compared to other world and African countries. This shows that there had been a continuous progress in the representation of women, relative to men, in the national parliament in the country since the 2nd term of the 2000 till the 4th term of the 2010 elections. However, the Ethiopia's government had politically assigned only 1 (5.9%) woman minister, 2 (9.5%) women ministers, 2 (7.4%) women ministers and 3 (9.7%) women ministers from a total of 17, 21, 27 and 31 ministers of state government in 2005, 2008, 2010 and 2012 while men had been holding 94.1%, 90.5%, 92.6%, and 90.3% of the government's ministerial positions respectively. From this, it can be generalized that the percentages of women in the ministerial positions had been below 10% and never been above 10% since 2005 up to 2012. It can also be generalized that men had been holding 90% and above percent of the ministerial positions since 2005 till 2012, showing the existence of "wider gender gap" in the representation among men and women which demands an answer from this study in this regard. This also shows that there exists a "very clear and wider difference" among the representations of women in the parliamentary positions and ministerial positions in the legislative branch versus the executive branch of the government in the country, which needs to be claimed to be minimized. Thus, such position of the country's women's representation in the ministerial and/or public and political decision making positions can give a road map to clearly understand the existence of certain critical constraints and challenges in representing women in the various ministerial and/or public and political decision making positions at national, regional as well as local levels in the country.

Table 13: Women's Comparative Representations for the Legislative and Executive Government Branches during the four election terms (1995-2012 G.C)

Legislative Representation Percentages (%)			Executive Representation Percentages (%)		
Term/ Year	Men	Women	Women	Men	Year
1 st (1995)	97.3% (534/547)	2.7% (13/547)	1/17 (5.9%)	16/17 (94.1%)	2005
2 nd (2000)	92.3% (505/547)	7.7% (42/547)	2/21 (9.5%)	19/21 (90.5%)	2008
3 rd (2005)	78.1% (413/529)	21.9% (116/529)	2/27 (7.4%)	25/27 (92.6%)	2010
4 th (2010)	72.2% (395/547)	27.8% (152/547)	3/31 (9.7%)	28/31 (90.3%)	2012

Source: Researcher's Compilation, 2014

Table 13 shows that the legislative representation of women had changed from 13 positions in the 1st term of 1995 to 152 positions (27.8% of the total positions) of the 4th term election in 2010. This is an incremental progress as the number of women parliamentarians increased from 13 to 42 (5% increase), from 42 to 116 (14% increase), and from 116 to 152 (5.8% increase) in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th terms of elections in 2000, 2005, and 2010 respectively. However, the reverse is true in the case of executive representation of women in the years from 2005 to 2012. As it can be well understood from the table, the number of women ministers had changed from 1 position to 3 positions only from 2005 to 2012. This means that the positions had increased by only 2 positions in seven years (2006-2012). It was an increase from 5.9% in 2005 to 9.7% in 2012, which is an increase of 3.8% only and leaving men holding 90% and above of the total ministerial positions. The question that "why the percentage or number of women executives (ministries or deputies, or others) had not significantly been increased in the past 23 years of the FDRE government as in the legislative positions?" has no legal or theoretical ground to be challenged. But, the number of the positions of women executives would have been increased at all levels (national, regional, district, and local levels) of administration relative to the number of men for the following reasons: a) women have more or less attained better or comparative education levels and work and leadership experiences in the public service in the past 23 years of the FDRE; b) women have also joined politics, mainly the EPRDF and its ally political parties from the four emerging regions; and clearly understood the policy, legal, socio-economic, institutional, and political benefits of being a member of political party; c) women are the basic and majority constituents/members of the ruling political party (EPRDF) and its allies; and d) Ethiopia is a country that had accepted and signed a number of international agreements, conventions, treaties, and conference agreements like that of the 30% BPA (1995) and the Beijing+5 (50/50) update for advocating gender equality and women's empowerment.

Therefore, it can be forecasted that although the number of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) parliamentarians may stay as fixed as 547 in the coming elections, the number of women parliamentarians may be increased by certain percentage until the Beijing+5 agreement for 50/50 (equality)

representation of both sexes is attained in the future election terms due to the existing initiative of the ruling party's voluntary election gender quotas for women's seats in the parliament. But, the question that "may the voluntary party election gender quota (now is 30-35% for EPRDF and its ally political parties) to incorporating women in the elections be avoided or altered in the future?" remains as another source of threat to the initiative. This question remains as a source of threat for two reasons: the first reason is that this percentage of women parliamentarians may be avoided or altered in the future if the voluntary political party gender quota cannot be stipulated in the country's legal umbrella, the constitution. Secondly, it can be so if another political party or parties, mainly the opposition party or parties, won the election and govern the country as the new ruling political part or parties may not abide by the decisions, rules, regulations, and directives of the now ruling political party, the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front-EPRDF.

Table 14: Comparative Regional States' Women's Parliamentary Representation in the House of Peoples' Representatives during the fourth round electoral term, as of November 2012.

Region	Total Seats	Percentages of Representation	
		Women	Men
Tigray	38	34.2% (13/38)	65.8% (25/38)
Amhara	138	33.3% (46/138)	66.7% (92/138)
Addis Ababa	23	30.4% (7/23)	69.6% (16/23)
SNNP	123	29.3% (36/123)	70.7% (87/123)
Oromiya	178	26.4% (47/178)	73.6% (131/178)
B/Gumuz	9	22.2% (2/9)	77.8% (7/9)
Afar	8	12.5% (1/8)	87.5% (7/8)
Gambella	3	0% (0/3)???	100% (3/3)
Harari	2	0% (0/2)???	100% (2/2)
Dire Dawa	2	0% (0/2)???	100% (2/2)
Somali	23	0% (0/23)???	100% (23/23)
National Average	547	27.8% (152/547)	72.2% (395/547)

Source: House of the Peoples' Representatives, www.hop.gov.et-accessed on 9th of November 2012.

From table 14, it can be understood that although women parliamentarians were represented by 27.8% (152/547) at the national level, proportional or some number of regional shares are still under question. Even if the four EPRDF regions, Addis Ababa, B/Gumuz, and Afar had given some shares of their national parliamentary seats to women, as it appears in table 14 above, the remaining two emerging regions of Gambella and Ethiopian Somali regional states, and Dire Dawa city administrative council and Harari regional state had given no chance (all of them 0%) to women's representation at the national level in the 2010 national election. The total share of national parliamentary seats for these four regions (Gambella, Harari, Dire Dawa, and Somali), which is 9 out of 547 seats (1.6%) was taken or controlled by men without any single woman from each region. Tigray regional state is leading the national women's parliamentary representation with 34.2% (13/38) followed by Amhara with 33.3% (46/138), and Addis Ababa City Administrative council ranking 3rd Amhara with 30.4% (7/23). The Southern, Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' (SNNP) regional state, Oromiya, B/Gumuz, and Afar regional states are ranking 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th respectively with 29.3% (36/123), 26.4% (47/178), 22.2% (2/9), and 12.5% (1/8) respectively in the 4th round national election in 2010. This simply means that from the total 152 parliamentary seats for women 98.0% (149/152) was contributed by the EPRDF regions and Addis Ababa city administrative council; while the remaining 2.0% (3/152) was the of the emerging regions of B/Gumuz and Afar. Thus, the question "why only and/or always the share for national women's parliamentary representation is contributed by the six regions (mainly the EPRDF regions) and Addis Ababa, and B/Gumuz and Afar regions without the share of the rest regions (Gambella, Harari, Dire Dawa and Ethiopian Somali)?" needs an answer and clear strategic direction from this study.

Table 15: Women's Representation as the Members of the Standing Committees in the House of Peoples' Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) during the four parliamentary election terms, as of November 2012.

Parliamentary Term/Election Term	Representation percentages		Remark
	Women	Men	
1 st Term	9.4% (11/117)	90.6% (106/117)	1995-2000
2 nd Term	6.0% (10/183)	94.0% (173/183)	2000-2005
3 rd Term	27.0% (42/155)	73.0% (113/155)	2005-2010
4 th Term	30.4% (91/299)	69.6% (208/299)	2010-2015
Cumulative %	20.4% (154/754)	79.6% (600/754)	

Source: House of the Peoples' Representatives, www.hop.gov.et accessed on 9th of November 2012

As we can see from table 15, women possess 20.4% (154/754) of the peoples' representatives standing committees in the past four election terms in the country through 1995 to 2010. Though most seats of the standing committees were occupied by men, there had been a remarkable progress in the composition of women in the parliamentary standing committees in these election terms. This creates a promising future for 50:50 representations in this regard as the shares of women in the standing committees had been progressing from 6.0% (10/183) in the 2nd term to 27.0% (42/155) in the 3rd term, and from 27.0% (42/155) to 30.4% (91/299) in the 4th term. Of course, the percentages had deteriorated from 9.4% (11/117) in the 1st term to 6.0% (10/183) in the 2nd term, by reducing the seat of one woman from the standing committee regardless of adding one or more women to the standing committees.

Table 16: Women's Representation as Members of Higher Officials in the House of Peoples' Representatives during the four parliamentary terms, as of November 2012.

Parliamentary Term	Positions	Percentages		Remarks
		Women	Men	
1 st	Speakers of the House of PR (HoPR)	0% (0/2)	100% (2/2)	1995-2000
2 nd	Speakers of the House of PR	50% (1/2)	50% (1/2)	2000-2005
3 rd	Speakers of the House of PR	50% (1/2)	50% (1/2)	2005-2010
4 th	Speakers of the House of PR	50% (1/2)	50% (1/2)	2010-2015
	Presiding Officers of Parliament (Government Whips and Secretariat)*	33.3% (2/6)	66.7% (4/6)	
	Cumulative Percentages	5/14 (35.7%)	9/14 (64.3%)	

Source: House of the Peoples' Representatives, www.hop.gov.et accessed on 9th of November 2012.

*Chief Government Whip is recently a woman, one of the four Assistant Government Whips is a woman, and the Head of the Secretariat Office is a man.

In table 16, cumulatively, women share 35.7% (5/14) of the higher officials in the house of peoples' representatives in the past four election sessions. It is a remarkable progress, as it had exceeded 30% of the BPA, which is really approaching future 50:50 representations. Uniquely, the two seats of the speakers of the house of peoples' representatives had been equally shared by the two sexes (M and F) since the 2nd term up to the 4th term even though it had been occupied by men speakers in the 1st term. However, there is a demand for adding some more women to the presiding officers' positions (Government Whips and Secretariat as well as advisory posts) in the parliament so as to attain the goal of 50:50 (equality) among the higher officials for the HoPR.

Table 17: Comparative Regional States Women's Representations in the House of Federation of the FDRE during the third and fourth parliamentary terms (Without Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa Administrative Councils).

Third Round National House of Federation (2005-2010)		
Regional States	Representation Percentages	
	Women	Men
Tigray	33.3% (2/6)	66.7% (4/6)
Oromiya	27.8% (5/18)	72.2% (13/18)
Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP)	21.0% (13/62)	79.0% (49/62)
Amhara	11.8% (2/17)	88.2% (15/17)
Harari	0% (0/1)???	100% (1/1)
Afar	0% (0/2)???	100% (2/2)
Somali	0% (0/4)???	100% (4/4)
Gambella	0% (0/4)???	100% (4/4)
Benishangul Gumuz	0% (0/5)???	100% (5/5)
National Average	18.5% (22/119)	81.5% (97/119)
Fourth Round National House of Federation (2010-2015)		
Regional States	Representation Percentages	
	Women	Men
Oromiya	20.0% (5/25)	80% (20/25)
Amhara	16.7% (4/24)	83.3% (20/24)
SNNP	16.7% (12/72)	83.3% (60/72)
Tigray	14.3% (1/7)	85.7% (6/7)
Harari	0% (0/1)???	100% (1/1)
Afar	0% (0/2)???	100% (2/2)
Gambella	0% (0/4)???	100% (4/4)
Somali	0% (0/5)???	100% (5/5)
Benishangul Gumuz	0% (0/5)???	100% (5/5)
National Average	15.7% (22/140)	84.3% (118/140)

Source: House of Federation of the FDRE, www.hof.gov.et accessed on 9th of November 2012.

NB: The Speakers of the House have been men in these two sessions and in the previous two sessions as well.

In addition to being decreased from 18.5% (22/119) in the 3rd term to 15.7% (22/140) in the 4th term, women's representation in the House of Federation (HoF) at the national level, this representation lacks relatively proportional regional shares in both 3rd and 4th election terms. As shown in table 17, it is clearly obvious that the shares of this representation come from only the four EPRDF regions without the remaining five regions, mainly the four emerging regions and the Harari region. Even if there is a probability that the Harari region may be represented by a man member of the HoF, the remaining four emerging regions would, have at least, nominated some number of women to be the members of the HoF in these two terms of election. In practice, it is clear that most members of the HoF from these four emerging regions and Harari region are nominated from the ethnic groups and most of the time the members are pulled from those holding the regional presidential and speakers' positions or posts, which is mainly male-dominated posts in the real sense. However, there is a possibility that one of the speakers from any of these five regions could be a woman, and/or there could also be a possibility of adopting other nomination criteria so as to get some elite and women politicians or regional parliament members from anyone of the regions. This concern also claims an answer and/or clear strategic direction from this study.

Table 18: Women's Representation as Members of the Standing Committees in House of Federation during the third and fourth sessions of election, as of November 2012.

Standing Committees	Representation Percentages	
	Women	Men
Constitutional and Regional Affairs	0% (0/17)	100% (17/17)
Budget Subsidy and Revenue Affairs	0% (0/17)	100% (16/16)
National(Combined) Average	0% (0/17)	100% (33/33)

Source: House of Federation of the FDRE, www.hof.gov.et accessed on 9th of November 2012.

Table 18 shows that there had never been any woman member in the two standing committees of the FDRE HoF in the third and fourth sessions of the 2005 and 2010. This was so due to the fact that most members of the HoF from most of the nine FDRE regions are nominated from the ethnic groups and are pulled from those holding the regional presidential and speakers' positions, which are mainly male-dominated. This calls for future

change in the aspect of such a situation so that women can join the membership for the standing committees in the HoF.

5. Summary and Conclusion

Gender Mainstreaming (GM), with its goal of Gender Equality, is an issue of growing concern in the world community. Despite the limited improvements made by very few countries, gender inequalities are on the increase in the developing countries, including Ethiopia. Presence of women/females in the parliament around the world has already become a reality that is impacting on the social, cultural, political, and economic fabric of the world's nations, including Ethiopia. On the other hand, representation of women and inclusion of their perspectives and experiences into the decision-making processes can result to the solutions that satisfy larger number of the society, which have social benefits, better and more appropriate social, political, legal, and economic solutions for their problems. Economic and social empowerment of women is greatly reliable on the integration of women into the political decision-making process through their involvement in the political and public offices in addition to their mere presence in the parliament. Women can enjoy their political and civil rights through political representation and/or participation in the public life, as ensuring women's political participation is essential to bring legitimacy to government and establish democracy in its real and practical manner which results to validity and trustworthiness of democracy in the country.

The Ethiopian National Policy on Women (1993) was an initiative to gender mainstreaming with the goal of facilitating conditions for equality between women and men. On the other hand, the National Action Plan for gender equality (NAP-GE) is the sole commitment document to putting gender mainstreaming into action in Ethiopia and in its regions across the various policies. The government of Ethiopia has declared its commitment to gender equality and empowerment of women by stipulating the rights of women in its constitution, issuing the women's policy of the country, and revising the Family and Criminal Law. It has also established gender as across-cutting issue through joint-planning sessions between sectorial line ministries and MoWA at the national level. The country has also incorporated gender issues in different national policies, including governance policies. The country had also established NAP-GE and Development Plan, and gender unit structures at the national ministries and regional sector bureaus in 2006 G.C as an incidence to sharpening government's commitment to gender equality. In addition to revising the family and criminal laws in 2004 to address women's rights issues, the Ethiopia's GTP and the Sector Development Plan for Women and Children has broadened the government's specific initiative commitments towards promoting women's social, economic and political empowerment.

On the basis of the fact that political elites are pulled from the highly educated members of the society with some professional backgrounds, structural explanations argue that women need human and financial capital, gained through education and employment or assignment, to be represented in the political offices to influence the political arena and outcomes. Proportional representation systems (descriptive representation) offer greater opportunities of gaining political access for women. Sustainability of economic and social empowerment of women is greatly reliable on women's integration into the political decision-making process through their involvement in the political and public offices. This in turn can allow them to enjoy their political and civil rights through political representation and/or participation in the public life. The goals of (gender) equality, development and peace, cannot be efficiently and effectively attained without the active participation of women and the incorporation of their perspectives at all levels of decision-making bodies in the political democratic processes of the states and governments. In whole, increased participation of women in the decision-making positions can create a new culture and shed new light on the style to exercising power at different levels as women attach great importance to the quality of contact among people and are less individualistic than their counter males, who are much more prone to corruption. Thus, ensuring women's political participation is essential to bring legitimacy to the 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.

Knowing the actual position of Ethiopia with regard to gender equality and/or gender inequality is worthwhile. This enables the policy and decision makers, mainly politicians, as well as country wise researchers and scholars to seek for alternative gender equality policy and/or adjust the existing different gender policy documents into a consolidated one. It also allows them to utilize the appropriate gender equality frameworks (approaches, models) for future effective gender mainstreaming implementation towards its goal of gender equality and women's empowerment. Based on the findings from data analysis, interpretation, and discussion made in section three, the following summary and conclusion is drawn:

1. The study revealed that there is a sound increase in the number/percentages of women parliamentarians in the single house worldwide, as the percentages had increased by 3.9%, within seven years, to 19.7% in 2012. However, women remain (6.3% while men are 93.7% in 2012) far behind men in heading the states and governments of the different world sates, putting the 30% of the 1995 Beijing Platform for

- Action (BPA) and the 2010 BPA+5 update for 50/50 (equal) representation under question.
2. The study indicated that there had been an incremental change or increase in the number or percentages of women in the presiding officers of parliament in eight years in the world. This is a promising change to women's political empowerment/representation regarding women presiding officers of parliaments globally. The percentages had increased from 8.3% to 15.1% (an increase by 6.8%) within eight years, from 2005 to 2012 G.C worldwide.
 3. Though there was no evidence to whether there had been a woman minister or a deputy minister in the years from 1995 to 2004 G.C in the Ethiopian government system, globally, Ethiopia was categorized in the last ranking world countries in the past seven years of its governance since 2005 to 2012. The study confirmed that the country had comparatively been in a devastating situation in representing women in the ministerial and/or public and political decision making positions at the national level. This was evidenced by 5.9% (1/17), 9.5% (2/21), 7.4% (2/27), and 9.7 (3/31) of the country in 2005, 2008, 2010, and 2012 respectively that positioned it against the 30% of BPA and the 2010 BPA+5 update for 50:50 (equal) representation. Generally, this shows the existence of the lack of clearly established political (gender) quotas, either in the form of voluntary political party quotas or stipulated in the constitution, for the representation of women in the ministerial and/or public and political decision making positions at the national and the rest levels in the country.
 4. The study had shown that Ethiopia was found to be in the "red ranking category" with 21.9% (116/529) of women's parliamentary representation from the Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries approaching to fall "below the standard" in 2008. It was also found in the same ranking countries with 21.9% (116/529) of women parliament members in 2010 for equal (50:50) representation. But, Ethiopia had made a progress to its previous position by adding 36 more women parliamentarians in the House of Peoples' Representatives (HoPR) in 2012 with 27.8% (152/547). This is accredited to being a great frog-leap as the women's parliamentary representation percentages is approaching the 30% of BPA as well as the 2010 BPA+5 update for 50:50 equal representation.
 5. The study had identified that Ethiopian women's executive representation is found to be lagging behind and repelling women from joining executive positions. While the country's women's parliamentary representation percentages had placed the country in 12th, 14th, and 8th positions from the 15 top ranking SSA countries in 2008 (21.9%), 2010 (21.9%), and 2012 (27.8%), Ethiopia out of track among 15 SSA countries in 2008, 2010, and 2012 respectively in the women's executive representation. This was so because the country's executive representation of women was very insignificant, i.e. below 10% for three consecutive years, 2008, 2010, and 2012.
 6. It is very clear from the study that Ethiopia did not join the "middle rank" in terms of the women's ministerial or executive representation from the Eastern African countries in 2008, 2010, and 2012 respectively. Rather, it had slipped from the third-last ranking in 2008 to the second-last ranking countries in 2010, and had again regained the third-last rank from the eastern African countries in the three consecutive years.
 7. Generally, there had been a "wider gender gap" in the representations of women in the ministerial positions than the national parliamentary representation of women in Ethiopia. Even though there had been a continuous progress in the representation of women in the national parliament in the country since the 2nd till the 4th terms of elections, Ethiopian government had politically assigned only very few women in the ministerial positions and the percentages of women ministers had been below 10% since 2005 up to 2012. Thus, such position of the country's women's representation in the ministerial and/or public and political decision making positions clearly shows the existence of certain critical constraints and challenges in representing women in the various ministerial and/or public and political decision making positions at national, regional as well as local levels in the country.
 8. The study had found that Ethiopia lacks a relatively proportional representation in national parliamentary representation of women. Though Ethiopia is a member of the countries that abide with a number of international agreements, conventions, treaties, and conference agreements (like that of the 30% BPA (1995) and the Beijing+5 (50/50) agreements) for advocating gender equality and women's empowerment, some regional state governments have repeatedly been violating such agreements and laws. For instance, from the total 152 parliamentary seats for women, 98.0% (149/152) was contributed by the EPRDF regions and Addis Ababa city administrative council; while the remaining 2.0% (3/152) was covered by the emerging regions of B/Gumuz and Afar. However, Gambella, Ethiopian Somali, and Harari regional states, and Dire Dawa administrative council shared nothing, excluding women from being represented in the national parliament since the 1st term up to the 4th term election periods.
 9. There had also been a remarkable progress in the composition of women in the national parliamentary standing committees and higher officials in the four election terms. Cumulatively, women possessed 20.4% (154/754) in the parliamentary standing committees in the past four election terms

since 1995 through 2010. Similarly, women also shared 35.7% (5/14) of the higher officials in the house of peoples' representatives in the past four election sessions. This is a remarkable progress, as it had exceeded 30% of the BPA, and approaching to 50:50 representations. Uniquely, the two seats of the speakers of the house of peoples' representatives had been equally shared by the two sexes (M and F) since the 2nd term up to the 4th term of 2010.

10. The study had also disclosed that women's representation in the House of Federation (HoF) at the national level relatively lacks proportional regional shares in both 3rd and 4th election terms. The shares of this representation come from only the four EPRDF regions without the remaining five regions, mainly the four emerging regions and the Harari region. Thus, for such reason, there have never been any women from these regions in the two standing committees of the FDRE HoF in the third and fourth sessions of the 2005 and 2010.

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