Women and Ethiopian politics: Political leaders’ attitude and views on women’s effectiveness

Wubante Ayalew Dessie

Abstract: In the assertion of democracy, good governance, and development, there needs to be a fair and equitable representation of all members of the community in the political process of the country. Besides, women’s involvement in political leadership is imperative for the prevalence of democracy and good governance in the country. Accordingly, women’s participation in the legislative and executive leadership of the country can be determined by the attitudes and views of the society in general and political leaders in particular. The political leaders as the members of the society may not have different attitudes toward women’s involvement in the political leadership process of the particular country. This study was conducted for measuring the attitude of men and women political leaders toward women’s effectiveness in elected, appointed, and policy-making positions of government bodies. Accordingly, this study used independent sample t-test and chi-square test to measure the attitude of political leaders toward women’s participation and effectiveness in Ethiopian political leadership. It is found out that there was statistically a significant difference of attitude of political leaders toward the importance of women’s participation in elected and policy-making positions at

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author, Wubante Ayalew Dessie (PhD), conceived and designed the research paper. The whole research process including data collection, analysis and report writing had been carried out by the author alone. The research interest of the author encompasses gender, politics, leadership, governance, conflict management and other related issues. Now, the author is doing several researches on gender, politics, leadership and conflict management in collaboration with other researchers. This research paper was conducted to measure the attitude of top government official towards the significance of women’s participation in elected, appointed and policy making positions. Hence, the result of the study will be very useful to design national projects for empowering women politicians and leaders of the country. Meanwhile, the author approved the final version of the manuscript and agrees to be held accountable for the contents therein.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Women’s involvement in political leadership is imperative for the prevalence of democracy and good governance in the country. Besides, women’s participation in the legislative and executive leadership of the country can be determined by the attitudes and views of the society in general and political leaders in particular. It is an undeniable fact that the public including political leaders manifest unfavorable view and perception toward women’s effectiveness and appropriateness in the political leadership process of the country. This undesirable attitude was emanated from the presence of gender role that reserved productive and community roles including political leadership for men and reproductive and other domestic tasks for women. These emanate from the patriarchal political socialization and political culture that favor men’s involvement and domination in the productive activities including politics and leadership. The Ethiopian popular culture perpetuates women’s traditional roles as a house maker instead of being prominent political leader. Thus, women need to be properly represented in the political leadership process of government bodies.
p = 0.000, which is less than 0.05 of significant level. Comparatively, women political leaders have favorable attitude toward the relevance or importance of women’s participation in elected and policy-making positions than their counterparts. These emanate from the patriarchal political socialization and political culture that favor men’s involvement and domination in the productive activities including politics and leadership. Thus, the concerned government bodies should work on men in general and political leaders in particular so as to modify their attitude in the way that favors women’s participation and successfullness in the political leadership process of government bodies.

**Subjects:** Political Behavior and Participation; Government; Gender Studies - Soc Sci

**Keywords:** Politics; attitude; political leader and political leadership

1. Introduction

In the assertion of democracy, good governance, and development, there needs to be a fair and equitable representation of all members of the community. It is unthinkable to achieve development objectives of the country without full involvement of men and women members of the community at large. In line with this, Sablewongel depicts that women constitute half of humanity rather than being a small minority as a group. Other than incorporating the views, perspectives, and needs of women in the political aspect of the country, it is so difficult to think and speak about democracy, good governance, and development. But, circumstances portray that half of the members of the community have been ignored and could not be treated equitably and fairly. In this regard, one can ask the societies’ perception and understanding of the essence of democracy, good governance, and democracy (Seblewongel, 2005).

In relation to these, the gender norms of the society affect the way women participation in the political leadership process is perceived and responded in the given political system. It also determines women’s opportunity to get political leadership positions of government bodies. The stereotypical view regarding reserving leadership as a male domain severely hampers women’s involvement and effectiveness in the legislative and executive decision-making process (Muray, 2014).

Besides, women’s participation in the legislative and executive leadership of the country can be determined by the attitudes and views of the society in general and political leaders in particular. The political leaders as the member of the society may not have different attitudes toward women’s involvement in the political leadership process of the particular country. The society’s attitude about women as apolitical and public leaders greatly influences women’s participation and effectiveness in the decision-making process of government bodies.

It is an undeniable fact that the public including political leaders manifest unfavorable view and perception toward women’s effectiveness and appropriateness in the political leadership process of the country. This undesirable attitude was emanated from the presence of gender role that reserved productive and community roles including political leadership for men and reproductive and other domestic tasks for women. Besides, there is some improvement in this regard as a result of different international, regional, national, and local efforts to bring gender equality in social, economic, and political sectors of the country.

Ethiopia has been experiencing this state of affairs. The political leaders and the public at large have had unfavorable attitude toward women’s capability to lead and administer tasks in government bodies of Ethiopia despite the presence of few figurative women who had positive impact in Ethiopian politics. The people of Ethiopia considered women as a housewife and best suited in doing child care, cleaning, fetching, and caring of elders and children, and other domestic activities. Deduced from those facts mentioned above, women have been marginalized and neglected from
the top political decision-making process of the government bodies of the country. In this regard, the attitude and views of political leaders toward women’s involvement in political leadership matter. As to Meseret, the member of the parliament as the formulator of different policies and strategies on social, political, and economic affairs of the country, their attitude toward women’s participation in political leadership has significant effect on women’s involvement and effectiveness in the political process of the country. The attitude of the members of the parliament as opolitical leaders toward women’s participation and effectiveness is an indicator of whether the laws and legislations established and approved by parliamentarians are women-friendly or biased (Meseret, 2010).

2. Materials and methods
This study has used quantitative research approach by using statistical techniques to measure the attitudes of political leaders toward women’s participation and effectiveness in political leadership process of Ethiopia. Quantitative approach focuses on the generation and analysis of quantitative data through quantitative data collection and analysis techniques (Kothari, 2004).

This study has used primary and secondary sources together. Published journal articles, books, and reports of government were used as a secondary source, whereas questionnaires including open- and close-ended were used as primary sources. In relation to questionnaires, Likert scale questions were utilized so as to measure the attitudes or opinions of men and women political leaders toward women’s effectiveness in legislative and executive leadership. Attitude is one of the most common areas where scales have been developed so as to measure attitudes and opinions. Thus, Likert scale (The Summating Rating) model questionnaire sideways a seven-point scale or fixed alternative terminologies (strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, disagree, neutral, somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree) was used in order to measure the attitudes of women and men parliamentarians toward women’s participation in political leadership. The rationale to employ Likert scale format is due to the fact that “it is an appropriate instrument to measure knowledge, attitude, sentiments, and judgments towards an issue” (Meseret, 2010). Accordingly, the researcher adopted the mathematical formula below for determining the sample size for quantitative data (Meron Haileselassie, 2007).

\[ n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} \]

where \( N \) is the total population, and \( e \) is the error or confidence level. The conventional confidence level of 95% is used to ensure a more accurate result from the sample. Based on this, the error term would be equal to 0.05.

Based on the formula, House of People Representative (547) + House of Federation (153) = 700

Out of the total number of the target population, 255 respondents were selected based on below-mentioned mathematical operation.

\[ n = \frac{700}{1 + 700(0.05)^2} \]

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Accordingly, participants of the study encompass men and women members of the parliament and the council of minister or executive.

Moreover, hypothesis of the study that portrays the significance difference between men’s and women’s attitude toward the significance of women’s participation in appointed, elected, and policy-making positions. \( H_1 \). There is a significant difference in attitude between men and women parliamentarians on the importance of women’s participation in appointed, elected, and policy-making positions. \( H_2 \). There is no significant difference in attitude between men and women parliamentarians on the importance of women’s participation in appointed, elected, and policy-making positions.
Besides, as data analysis techniques, both descriptive and inferential statistics such as percentage, frequency, graphs, mean, standard deviation, independent sample t-test, and chi-square test ($x^2$).

3. Results and discussions
Following materials and methods of the study, the results of statistical tools are demonstrated and discussed here. Accordingly, the demographic characteristics of respondents and its relationship of women political leaders' attitude toward women's participation and effectiveness in political leadership of Ethiopia are discussed and analyzed here.

Part 1: Background Information (Demographic Characteristics) of Respondents

As to the data demonstrated in Table 1, concerning the marital status of the participants of the study, 86.3% of the respondents are married, whereas 9.0% are unmarried, 3.0% are widowed. This shows that respondents are forming and leading their family which is very essential for properly administering other roles given by the society including the political tasks. On the other hand, the education status of respondents reflected that 62.3% of the respondents hold first degree, 26.5% of respondents have second degree, 8.5% holds diploma. This implies that more than half of the respondents of the study have better educational qualification, which is expected for the proper functioning of the government duties even though it depends on the government’s nature and its member’s dedication. Besides, data obtained on the residence of respondents before joining the Ethiopian parliament shows that 74.4% of respondents had resided in urban areas, 7.7% had resided in rural areas, and 12.4% had resided in semi-urban areas.

Likewise, data on the parliament experience of respondents show that 23.5%, 49.6%, 20.1%, and 5.1% of respondents have 1 to 5, 6 to 10, 11–15, and above 16 years of parliament experience, respectively.

Moreover, regarding the reasons of parliamentarians to join the Ethiopian parliament, the data display that 85.0% of respondents were motivated by the government policy, 8.1% for challenging patriarchy (male supremacy in Ethiopian politics, 1.3% to get economic advantage, 2.6% for using their political knowledge, and 1.3% motivated by other reasons).

Having these, the age distribution, sex, and political experience of respondents are demonstrated through graphical representation as follows:
This histogram demonstrates a normal distribution curve and the mean age of the respondents is 2.5, which mean the mean age is between 36–44 and 41–45 with the standard deviation of 1.17. Likewise, as the data demonstrated, 18 (7.7%) respondents were in the age of 25–30 years, 27 (11.5%) of respondents were in the age range of 31–35 years, 55 (23.5%) were in the age range of 36–40 years, 83 (35.5%) were in the age range of 41–45 years, and 47 (20.1%) were above 47 years. This implies that the majority of respondents (23.5% +35.5% = 59%) were in between the age of 36–45.

As it is reflected above, 116 (50.4%) respondents of the study were women members of the parliament, whereas 49.6 (114%) were men. Thus, there is proportional sex representation of respondents.

As to the data demonstrated above on political experience of the respondents who have been working as the member of the parliament reveals that 13 (5.6%), 54 (23.1%), 63 (26.9%), and 100 (41.0%) of respondents have 1 to 5, 6 to 10, 11–15, and above 16 years of political experience, respectively.

Correspondingly, Tables 2 and 3 show respondents level of agreement concerned with women’s participation in political leadership of the country. Levels of agreement are of respondent’s attitude

| Name of the variable                               | Frequency | %  |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------|----|
| (1) Marital status                                 |           |    |
| Married                                            | 202       | 86.3|
| Unmarried                                          | 21        | 9.0 |
| Widowed                                            | 7         | 3.0 |
| Others                                             | 0         | 0   |
| (1) Education status                               |           |    |
| Diploma                                            | 20        | 8.5 |
| First degree                                       | 148       | 62.3|
| Second degree                                      | 62        | 26.5|
| (1) Residence before joining parliament            |           |    |
| Rural                                              | 18        | 7.7 |
| Urban                                              | 174       | 74.4|
| Semi-urban                                         | 29        | 12.4|
| (1) Parliament experience                         |           |    |
| 1–5 years                                          | 55        | 23.5|
| 6–10 years                                         | 116       | 49.6|
| 11–15 years                                        | 47        | 20.1|
| Above 16 years                                     | 12        | 5.1 |
| (1) Reason of entry to the parliament              |           |    |
| Government policy                                  | 199       | 85.0|
| To challenge patriarchy                            | 19        | 8.1 |
| To get economic advantage                          | 3         | 1.3 |
| To use my knowledge                                | 6         | 2.6 |
| Other reasons                                      | 3         | 1.3 |

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toward women and men's participation in the political leadership process of the country. The variable of level of agreement is coded in such a way that Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (D) = 2, Somewhat Disagree (SWD) = 3, Neutral (N) = 4, Somewhat Agree (SWA) = 5, Agree (A) = 6 and Strongly Agree (SA) = 7. Here below the percentage, frequency, mean, and standard deviation of the respondents' level of agreement regarding with each question asked are demonstrated and explained as follows:

Table 2 displays the level of agreement (attitude) of respondents toward women's and men's participation and effectiveness in political leadership. Accordingly, it is good to see one variable regarding the issue that women consider political problems different from men and respondents level of agreement (attitude) with the mean = 3.7 and SD = 1.948. This level of agreement is in between somewhat disagreeing and neutral. This implies that most of political leaders have somewhat favorable opinion toward equal participation of men and women in political leadership. The political leaders have neutral attitude toward the issue that women are best suited for some political positions unlike their counter parts.
Table 2. Part one: level of agreement of respondents concerning with women’s and men’s participation in political leadership

| Variable | Women see political problems differently than men | Women better for political decisions | Men better for political decisions | Women and men Equal active for politics | Women and men Equally qualified for political decisions | Women better for some political decisions |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Level of agreement | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| SD       | 34 | 14.8 | 28 | 12.2 | 42 | 18.3 | 38 | 16.5 | 31 | 13.5 | 27 | 11.7 |
| D        | 39 | 17 | 33 | 14.3 | 39 | 17.0 | 30 | 13.0 | 29 | 12.6 | 28 | 12.2 |
| SWD      | 39 | 17 | 41 | 17.8 | 36 | 15.7 | 30 | 13.0 | 45 | 19.6 | 36 | 15.7 |
| N        | 35 | 15.2 | 45 | 19.6 | 32 | 13.9 | 39 | 17.0 | 38 | 16.5 | 34 | 14.8 |
| SWA      | 28 | 12.2 | 31 | 13.5 | 29 | 12.6 | 30 | 13.0 | 34 | 14.8 | 34 | 14.8 |
| A        | 29 | 12.6 | 27 | 11.7 | 33 | 14.3 | 22 | 9.6 | 30 | 13.0 | 48 | 20.9 |
| SA       | 25 | 10.9 | 25 | 10.9 | 19 | 8.3 | 41 | 17.8 | 23 | 10.0 | 23 | 10.0 |

N = 230  
M = 3.73 3.87 3.62 3.97 3.86 4.11  
SD = 1.948 1.851 1.9 2.0 1.86 1.89  

Note: Sorts coded (1 = Strongly agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Somewhat agree; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat disagree; 6 = Disagree; 7 = Strongly disagree).
Table 3. Part two: level of agreement of respondents concerning with women’s and men’s participation in political leadership

| Variable                        | Men better for some political decisions | Parliament should have equal no of men and women | Executive should have equal no-of men and women | Being Men politician has an advantage or privilege | Women politicians are conservative | There need to be Special budget for women |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Level of agreement              |                                        |                                                 |                                                 |                                                 |                                     |                                         |
| SD                              | 21                                     | 9.1                                             | 15                                              | 6.5                                             | 21                                  | 9.1                                     | 32                                     | 13.9                                   | 31                                   | 13.5                                   | 18                                     | 7.8                                     |
| D                               | 33                                     | 14.3                                            | 21                                              | 9.1                                             | 23                                  | 10.1                                     | 33                                     | 14.3                                   | 33                                   | 14.3                                   | 15                                     | 6.5                                     |
| SWD                             | 32                                     | 13.9                                            | 28                                              | 12.2                                            | 23                                  | 10.1                                     | 33                                     | 14.3                                   | 33                                   | 14.3                                   | 16                                     | 7.0                                     |
| N                               | 48                                     | 20.9                                            | 50                                              | 21.7                                            | 55                                  | 23.9                                     | 33                                     | 14.3                                   | 38                                   | 16.5                                   | 42                                     | 18.3                                    |
| SWA                             | 36                                     | 15.7                                            | 35                                              | 15.2                                            | 32                                  | 13.9                                     | 32                                     | 13.9                                   | 33                                   | 14.3                                   | 32                                     | 13.9                                    |
| A                               | 38                                     | 16.5                                            | 48                                              | 20.9                                            | 48                                  | 20.9                                     | 39                                     | 17.0                                   | 28                                   | 12.2                                   | 49                                     | 21.3                                    |
| SA                              | 22                                     | 9.6                                             | 35                                              | 14.9                                            | 28                                  | 12.2                                     | 28                                     | 12.2                                   | 34                                   | 14.8                                   | 58                                     | 25.2                                    |

N = 230
M = 4.07, 4.5, 4.34, 3.9, 3.9, 4.8
SD = 1.79, 1.76, 1.81, 1.976, 1.976, 1.87

Note: Sors coded (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = somewhat agree; 4 = neutral; 5 = somewhat disagree; 6 = disagree; 7 = strongly disagree).
| Table 4. Descriptive statistics | N   | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---------------------------------|-----|------|----------------|
| Importance of women in appointed position | 230 | 1.73 | .767           |
| Importance of women in elected position | 230 | 1.75 | .769           |
| Importance of women in policymaking | 230 | 1.75 | .849           |
| Valid N (listwise) | 230 |      |                |

Note: the variable categorized and coded as (Very Important = 1, Important = 2, Somewhat Important = 3 and Not Important = 4)

Note: For the details see the above demonstrated Table

Table 3 shows the respondents level of agreement (attitude) toward women’s and men’s political leadership. Here, it is good to see only one variable that is respondents level of agreement and the need of special budget for women politicians and leaders for empowerment purpose (M = 4.8 SD = 1.87). This means that respondents of the study somewhat agree with the need of special budget for women politicians and leaders that can be used for empowerment purpose. The data imply that respondents have almost neutral attitude toward the equality of men and women in parliament and executive and the need of special budget for women politicians. This indicates that political leaders of Ethiopian parliament have unfavorable attitude toward women’s political leadership but comparatively women have favorable attitude than men. Note: for the details, see the above-demonstrated Table 3.

4. Participant’s attitude toward the political behavior of women parliamentarians in Ethiopia

There seems a divergence of attitude or opinion about women’s political behavior that could be manifested in Ethiopian political governance. In relation to this, based on Table 2, respondents of the study responded concerned with the conservativeness of women politicians that strongly disagree = 31 (13.5%), disagree = 33 (14.3), somewhat disagree = 33 (14.3), neutral = 38 (16.5%), somewhat agree = 33 (14.3%), agree = 28 (12.2%), and strongly agree = 34 (14.8%), mean = 3.9 standard deviation = 1.9. This implies that respondents level of agreement was in between somewhat disagree and neutral toward the idea that women political leaders including parliamentarians are conservative than men.

On the other hand, both men and women interviewees of the study disclosing that women politicians are a bit conservative and bureaucratic than do men politicians and parliamentarians. They are sticking on to rules, regulations, and programs even for the very silly issues. They cannot do things with simple manner instead devote their time and resources by piercing on procedures as a result of their conservativeness. Ethiopian women politicians are not generous rather they are so conservative in which they see and do issues with bureaucratic manner. They are sticking on the party rules and disciplines instead of doing day and night for representing and fulfilling the interest of women member of the community.

Similarly, concerning to Ethiopian women politicians “it is possible to say that women parliamentarians do not have the will to support the argument made against them that they are not in the parliament to represent women and gender issues rather are devoted for mere party affiliation. They are more conservative and inclined to social and family issues in the parliament meetings and other activities” (Meseret, 2010).

Thus, from the above results, it can be concluded with a caution that women political leaders are more conservative, bureaucratic, and less autocratic than men political leaders.
Table 5. Comparison of sex of respondents (political leaders) and their attitude toward women’s participation in appointed political positions

| Sex               | N   | Mean | Standard deviation |
|-------------------|-----|------|--------------------|
| Appointed positions |     |      |                    |
| Female            | 116 | 2.02 | .791               |
| Male              | 114 | 1.45 | .625               |

Levine’s test for variances 

| F     | Sig  | T    | Df   | Sig (2 tailed) | Mean difference | 95%Confidence interval |
|-------|------|------|------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Equal variances assumed | 1.646 | .201 | 6.054 | 228 | .000 | .570 | .384 | .755 |
| Equal variances not assumed | 6.066 | 5.527 | 218.0 | 0.094 | .000 | .385 | .755 |

Part two: The Relationship between Respondents’ Demographic Characteristics and their Attitude toward Women’s Participation and effectiveness in Political Leadership

Women’s involvement in political decision-making is imperative for the prevalence of democracy and good governance in the country. However, an attitude toward women’s participation is unfavorable that decisive decision-making positions are not given and believed to be given to women. As to people’s attitude, women’s participation in decision-making is not very relevant because women are culturally believed to be care-takers at home, and that their position is not in public decision-making, and that they cannot take good decision. Views and attitudes of the people can influence it very much (Ahmed, 2013).

Besides, people’s attitude including political leaders is the determinant factor for the enhancement of women’s participation in the political decision-making process of the government bodies. The traditional and socially constructed values of the society affect their attitude towards women’s

Table 6. Comparison of sex of respondents and their attitude toward women’s participation in elected political positions

| Sex   | N   | Mean | Standard deviation |
|-------|-----|------|--------------------|
| Elected |     |      |                    |
| Female | 116 | 2.01 | .829               |
| Male   | 114 | 1.48 | .598               |

Levine’s test for variances 

| F     | Sig  | T    | Df   | Sig (2 tailed) | Mean difference | 95%Confidence interval |
|-------|------|------|------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Equal variances assumed | 5.234 | 0.023 | 5.512 | 228 | .000 | .528 | .338 | .714 |
| Equal variances not assumed | 5.527 | 5.209 | .000 | .526 | .338 | .714 |
effectiveness in productive activity including politics and leadership since that value reserve reproductive and other domestic roles for women members of the society.

Ethiopian women cannot escape from this scenario that women experience discrimination and marginalization from productive activities for a long period of time despite some improvements recently in this regard. This emanates from the attitude that women could not be effective in leadership, which requires masculine traits of the society such as courage, decision-making skills, rationality, and other skills, which had been constructed by the society as masculine characteristics.

Having these, it is good to see respondents’ attitude toward women’s importance in appointed, elected, and policy-making positions of the country.

Table 4 shows that respondents of the study both men and women political leaders depicted the importance of women in appointed, elected, and policy-making positions with the mean of 1.73, 1.75, 1.75, and standard deviation of .767, .769, and .849, respectively. This implies that women’s presence in those positions is in between very important and important.

Following this, the comparison of sex of respondents (Female and Male political leaders) and their attitude toward women’s participation in appointed, elected, and policy-making positions of the country through independent sample T test explained as follows:

Table 5 demonstrates that assuming equal variances, there is no significant difference of attitude between women and men toward women’s effectiveness and importance in appointed political positions at p = 0.291, T = 6.054, mean (F = 2.02, M = 1.45), SD (F = .791, M = .625), N (F = 116, M = 114). But, the mean of women is higher than men that women are more likely to say women’s participation and availability is important with mean of 2.02, whereas men political leaders are likely to say women’s participation is somewhat important with mean of 1.45. Thus, women have favorable attitude toward the importance women’s participation in appointed political positions compared to that of men political leaders.

| Sex       | N   | Mean | Standard deviation |
|-----------|-----|------|--------------------|
| Policy making |     |      |                    |
| Female    | 116 | 2.04 | .879               |
| Male      | 114 | 1.46 | .706               |

| Levine’s test for variances | T test of equality of means |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| F                           | Sig | T       | Df | Mean difference | 95%Confidence interval |
| Equal variances assumed     | 3.90 | 0.049  | 5.580 | 228 | .000 | .587 | .380 | .794 |
| Equal variances not assumed | 5.590 | 219.3 | .000 | .587 | .380 | .794 |
### Table 8. The relationship between women’s participation in parliament debates and political leaders’ attitude toward it

| Sex          | Level of women’s participation in parliament debate | Total |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|
|              | Female | Male |       |       |       |
|              | A. Sometimes | 26 | 47 | 73 |       |
|              | B. Always | 86 | 65 | 151 |       |
|              | C. Never | 1 | 0 | 1 |       |
|              | D. Others | 3 | 2 | 5 |       |
|              | Total | 116 | 114 | 230 |       |

Chi-square(\(x^2\)) = 10.145  
P = 0.017

### Table 9. The relationship between educational status of respondents and their attitude toward women’s active and influential role in the parliament committees

| Educational status of respondents | Attitude towards women’s active and influential role in the parliament committee | Total |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
|                                   | Yes | No |       |       |       |
| A. Diploma                        | 4 | 16 | 20 |       |       |
| B. First degree                   | 64 | 34 | 148 |       |       |
| C. Second and above               | 13 | 49 | 62 |       |       |
| Total                             | 81 | 149 | 230 |       |       |

Chi-square(\(x^2\)) = 11.727  
P = 0.003

Correspondingly, women interviewees and focus group discussants portray that women can be effective in appointed political decision-making positions and they believe that in appointed positions of executive and legislative leadership, women are needed since they are more wise, cooperative than their counter parts. They can effectively handle the political decision-making process. Unlike this, men interviewees of the study explain that women should not be placed in that top decision-making positions due to the fact that they are submissive and not decision-maker compared to that of men politicians. As to them, top appointed political positions need to be controlled by men with one or two women for fulfilling simply women’s presence instead of allowing them to have say and influence in top political decision-making positions of the country (Meseret, 2010).

Hence, comparatively, women political leaders have encouraging attitude toward women's importance and effectiveness in appointed political positions of government bodies of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia(FDRE).
Table 10. The relationship between educational status of respondents and their attitude toward men’s support of women’s views and ideas in the parliament meetings and debates

| Educational status of respondents | Attitude towards men’s support of women’s views and ideas | Total |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------|
|                                   | Yes | No | I don’t know |
| A. Diploma                        | 4   | 15 | 1           | 20  |
| B. First degree                   | 58  | 90 | 1           | 149 |
| C. Second and above               | 16  | 46 | 0           | 62  |
| Total                             | 78  | 150| 2           | 230 |

Chi-square($\chi^2$) = 15.541
P = 0.004

Table 6 displays that equal variances assumed that there is significant difference of attitude between women and men toward women’s effectiveness and importance in elected political positions at $p = 0.023$, $T = 5.512$, mean (F = 2.01, M = 1.48), SD (F = .829, M = .598), N (F = 116, M = 114). This shows that the mean of women is higher than men and implies that women are more likely to say women’s participation and availability in elected political leadership positions is important with mean of 2.01, whereas men political leaders are likely to say that the importance of women’s participation is in between important and somewhat important with mean of 1.48. Thus, women have favorable attitude toward the importance of women’s participation in elected political positions compared to that of men political leaders.

Like that of women's importance and effectiveness in appointed positions, women interviewees have positive attitude toward women's importance and effectiveness in elected political positions of the government bodies of the country. Women political leaders need to see equal representation of men and women in elected political leadership positions for realizing democracy and good governance in the country. Women's presence has very much significance in each and every decision-making process as they are wise and humble. This character helps the smooth functioning of the decision-making process in particular and the political system in general. Unlike men political leaders, women politicians and leaders believes that it is unthinkable to establish democratic governance without appropriate representation of women in the elected political positions of the government bodies. Women's importance and effectiveness in elected political positions are unquestionable.

Consequently, women political leaders have positive attitude toward women’s importance and effectiveness in the elected political positions of the government bodies of Ethiopia compared to that of their counterparts those who believe that women’s availability does not have much more importance as long as men political leaders are there.

Table 7 shows that equal variances assumed that there is statistically significant difference of attitude between women and men toward women's importance and effectiveness in policy-making political positions at $p = 0.049$, $T = 5.580$, mean (F = 2.04, M = 1.46), SD (F = .879, M = .706), N (F = 116, M = 114) Table 8 and 10. This shows that the mean of women is higher than men and implies that women are more likely to say women's participation and availability is important with mean of 2.01, whereas men political leaders are likely to say that the importance of women’s participation is in between important and somewhat important with mean of 1.46. Thus,
women have favorable attitude towards the importance of women's participation in appointed political positions compared to that of men political leaders.

Consistent to these, participants of the study depict that women need to be equally represented in policy-making positions of the government bodies of the country. Women's presence has an importance for incorporating and articulating women's issues, needs, and perspectives in the policy-making process and policy documents. Women's availability can make policy documents to be gender sensitive and responsive, which are very crucial for the promotion of women's rights and achievement of gender equality in the country. Like that of appointed and elected positions, in policy-making positions, women political leaders have encouraging attitude toward women's effectiveness in policy-making positions of the government of the country.

Thus, women political leaders those who have participated as interviewees of the study believes that women's presence in policy-making positions is very decisive than others to include essential issues of women in the policy-making process and its documents compared to that of men political leaders. Whenever women are available in those positions, there is probability to have gender-sensitive and responsive social, economic, cultural, and political policy documents.

Consistent with these three consecutive independent sample T-test tables concerning to men's and women's attitude toward women's importance and effectiveness in political leadership positions such as in appointed, elected and policy-making positions, the study in USA by Macdonough found out that women have favorable attitude than men regarding with the suitability of women as apolitical leader. Women have positive attitude toward women's participation and suitability in political leadership than men respondents (Mcdonough, 2009). Likewise, the study conducted in USA by Filla and Larimer depicted that Women participants of the study views women serving in appointed, elected, and policy-making domains as significantly more important than men. These differences are particularly noteworthy in the state of Iowa, where differences are highly significant at \( p < .001 \) (Filla & Larimer, 2011).

Contrary to these three independent T-test tables of sex of respondents, there were no statistically significant differences on respondent's age, education level, marital status, residence before joining the parliament, political experience of respondents, experience of parliamentarians in the parliament and their attitude toward women's importance and effectiveness in appointed, elected, and policy-making political bodies of Ethiopian government.

Chi-square (\( \chi^2 \)) result displayed above explains that there is statistically significant relationship between the sex of respondents and their attitude toward women's participation in parliament meetings and debates at \( p = 0.017 \), \( \chi^2 = 10.145 \) where 26 female and 47 male respondents believes that, sometimes, women actively participate in the parliament debates and meetings, 86 females and 65 males believe that always women actively participate in the parliament debates and meetings, one female respondent portrays that women never actively participate in parliament debates. Thus, comparatively speaking, women have favorable attitude toward women's participation in parliament debates and meetings. This is in line with the research hypothesis that women political leaders have favorable attitude toward women's participation in political leadership of Ethiopia compared to that of their counter parts.

Similarly, men political leaders those who have participated in interviews of the study explain that most of the time, women parliamentarians are silent and remain silent. They are not active participant in parliament meetings and debates. They simply attend it instead of entertaining crucial agendas as a result of strong party discipline, which forced them not to raise issues other than party issues. They symbolically presented there mostly despite their attempt to participate in some of the parliament debates. Converse to this, women participants of the study argue that they participated in the parliament meetings and debates actively if and only if it requires their involvement.

Therefore, men political leaders have unfavorable attitude toward the usefulness of women's active involvement in the parliament debates and other activities. Likewise, as to researcher's
observation of live parliament debates and meetings and attendance through Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation compiled parliament debates and meetings, women political leaders were not active participant in parliament debates, questioning-answering, and discussions. They rarely raise their hand to ask questions and their participation is not proportional to men’s participation in parliament debates, questioning-answering and discussions.

Chi-square ($x^2$) result displayed above explains that statistically there is significant relationship between education status of respondents and their attitude toward women’s active and influential role in the parliament committee at $p = 0.003$, $x^2 = 11.727$. Accordingly, respondents those who have diploma, first degree and second degree said no with frequency of 16, 84, and 49 and yes with frequency of 4, 64, and 13 respondents, respectively. Respondents those who have second degree have unfavorable attitude than first degree than diploma toward women’s influential and active role in the parliament committee.

Hence, comparatively, higher education status is associated with unfavorable attitude toward women’s role in the parliament committee. Educational status of respondents has an effect on their attitude toward women’s participation and influence in parliament committee. In relation to this, the study conducted in Ethiopia by Meseret explains that women’s participation in the parliamentarians committee with a diverse area of focus is means of empowerment. Women parliamentarians have better access to join committees than male parliamentarians. However, women’s active role and influence are questionable (Meseret, 2010).

Likewise, interviewees from opposition parties supported the idea that women parliamentarians committee members have a right to participate in different standing committees of the parliament but they have no influence and they get committee headship, which is related with their traditional role given by the society. These limit them to have active and influential role in the parliament committees. The parliament standing committees have great role for the promotion and advancement of women’s rights and gender equality in policy and practice despite Ethiopian women parliamentarians’ little influence and role in the committees.

Chi-square ($x^2$) result shows that statistically there is significant relationship between education status of respondents and their attitude toward men’s support of women’s views and ideas in the parliament at $p = 0.004$, $x^2 = 15.541$. Accordingly, respondents those who have diploma, first degree and second degree said no with frequency of 15,90,46 and yes with frequency of 4, 58 and 16 respondents respectively.

Respondents those who hold first degree have unfavorable attitude than second degree than diploma toward men’s support of women’s views and ideas. Consequently, educational status of respondents has an effect on their attitude toward men’s support of women’s views and ideas in the parliament meetings and debates.

Contrary to these two-consecutive chi-square ($x^2$ Tables), the study conducted in USA by Macdonagh, “as education increases, so, too, does the ratio of people supporting women as political leaders” (Macdonagh, 2009).

Thus, the context of Ethiopia is differing from USA where there is democracy and good governance practices unlike Ethiopia. This may affect the attitude of educated respondents toward women’s involvement in parliament activities.

5. Conclusion and implications

5.1. Conclusion

Based on the results of independent sample T-test, it is found out that there is statistically a significant difference of attitude of political leaders toward the importance of women’s
participation in elected and policy-making positions at \( p = 0.000 \), which is less than 0.05 of significant level. In this context, significant differences appear between men and women political leaders attitude towards the importance of women's participation in political leadership positions.

Comparatively, women political leaders have favorable attitude toward the relevance or importance of women's participation in appointed, elected and policy making positions than their counter parts. This is in line with the hypothesis of the study that portrays the significance difference between men's and women's attitude toward the significance of women's participation in appointed, elected and policy making positions. Here, \( H_3 \) is accepted with rejection of \( H_0 \).

In addition to these, chi-square (\( x^2 \)) result implies that there is significant relationship between the sex of respondents and their attitude toward women's participation in parliament meetings and debates at \( p = 0.017, x^2 = 10.145 \) where comparatively speaking women have favorable attitude toward women's participation in parliament debates and meetings. This is also in line with the research hypothesis that women political leaders have favorable attitude toward women's participation in political leadership of Ethiopia compare to that of their counter parts.

Another chi-square (\( x^2 \)) result shows that there is statistically significant relationship between education status of respondents and their Attitude towards women's active and influential role in the parliament committee at \( p = 0.003, x^2 = 11.727 \). Respondents those who have second degree have unfavorable attitude than first degree than diploma towards women's influential and active role in the parliament committee. Higher education status is associated with unfavorable attitude toward women's role in the parliament committee. This is similar with the hypothesis that there is a significant relation between demographic characteristics of respondents and their attitude toward women's participation in political leadership of the country.

However, there were no statistically significant differences on respondent age, marital status, and residence before joining the parliament, political experience of respondents, experience of parliamentarians in the parliament and their attitude towards women's importance and effectiveness in political leadership of Ethiopian government.

### 5.2. Implications
The study findings imply that men political leaders do have unfavorable attitude towards women's participation and effectiveness in the political leadership process. Relatively, women political leaders in legislative and executive bodies have positive attitude toward women's participation in the political leadership of Ethiopian government bodies. These emanate from the patriarchal political socialization and political culture that favors men's involvement and domination in the productive activities including politics and leadership. The Ethiopian popular culture perpetuates women's traditional roles as a housemaker instead of being prominent political leader. This resulted from the patriarchal attitude of the community that considers men as decision maker and effective in productive activities including politics and leadership. This in turn shows women to be dependent and subordinate on men member of the community and finally resulting in women's low level of political status. Women in Ethiopia have been disadvantaged and marginalized from economic, social, and political system in the enjoyment of accessing and controlling opportunities and decision-making process despite some improvement recently in this system.

Thus, the concerned government bodies should work on men in general and political leaders in particular so as to modify their attitude in the way that favors women's participation and success fullness in the political leadership process of government bodies.
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