

**FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN ETHIOPIAN SCHOOLS
TEN YEARS AGO**

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ABSTRACT

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Living in Finland for the past eleven years has helped me to see the perspective of women's leadership compared to my experience in Ethiopia. Finland is a small nation and is able to concord female leadership and believe in female leadership. Finnish women are very strong to rework on their lives and keep repositioning themselves in society until they have achieved their goals. I believe that with passion and focused minds Ethiopian women can also. Generally, in Ethiopia female leadership is a recent phenomenon. Despite that, women have played significant roles in contributing for education, politics, diplomacy, and power, since Ethiopia was considered as a nation three thousand years ago. Ethiopian women's impact has been deterred by political and religious male leaders mainly because of the lack of education and of the fear among male leaders. In addition, the very few educational opportunities for women have left Ethiopia with a high number of illiterate women. Furthermore, the highly educated women's silence, the smaller number of women as educational leaders, specifically female school principals interest me to find out why there are so few female leaders in educational organisations in Ethiopia?

This thesis is beyond female school leadership; it is a study of the past female leadership experience and the present training of female leaders in school leadership. The data collected ten years ago in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia but, most recent research work are sahwing the relevance of my data to present situation. I studied the current situation of female school leadership progress from grassroot level to see the difference in between 2011 and now 2023. I considered it necessary to study girls' and boys' equity and equality in Ethiopia as a possible cause for the small number of female school leaders in Ethiopia. Based on my findings, the enrollment of girls to primary, secondary, and tertiary education, and the small number of women in higher education can be seen as reasons for why female leadership is very limited in educational organizations in Ethiopia. Women have contributed equally to men in Ethiopia and can contribute to the progress of the nation. Women have equal capacity as men in different fields.

Keywords: leadership, women, education, school organizations, culture, Ethiopia

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1. INTRODUCTION

There have always been female leaders behind most of Ethiopian historical facts and truths: queens, warriors, soldiers, teachers, doctors, and many exceptional women have always existed (Zewdi ,1993; Almayahu et al.2012;). However, Ethiopian women are mostly working behind the scenes and for many centuries they have been restricted from education and school leadership positions (Dessie, 2021; Eresso, 2021).

Educational leadership and the history of women in Ethiopia are mostly written by men. The reason for this can be male leadership, which is incorporated with non-acceptance of female leaders, competing in the forefront areas for leadership positions. Worldwide, female leaders are experiencing a sense of tokenism, vulnerability, and precariousness. These sentiments are present elements of social ecology. Silently, women can be omitted as a political leadership exercise by a privileged group of great men who define power, authority, and knowledge. (Klenke, 2004).

Ethiopian female leadership is a new research topic. It is discussed by few rather than the majority and by women themselves. (Brehane-Selassie, 1991) Female leaders are naturally confident in their leadership abilities. In addition, they are more work oriented, but globally female leaders are encountering pushback from male leaders. (Klenke, 2004). I believe this is the time the leadership of women in Ethiopia should be investigated and I have decided to take part in the research world to find out why are educational organizations so few women principals.

Naturally, emotionally, and academically uplifting female leaders in their dawdling is not only benefiting themselves, it is a change of their families, the villages, the communities, and the whole nation. (Eshete et al. 1991). To find out the depth of the story of why are educational organizations so few women principals in Ethiopia, In 2011 summer I had interviewed five people and a group of women to answer my questions through face-to-face interviews in

Addis Ababa and Holota. I employed qualitative research methods because of their flexibility.

According to Alemayehu and Jon (2012), most Ethiopian women work behind locked doors due to the cultural and social nature of the traditional leadership led by men. Especially in the rural areas and in families with many children, girls and women are not encouraged to excel academically. As a result, they are less fortunate to decide for themselves. UNESCO (2002) study shows that the main factors affecting girls' education are the economic and social unfavourable conditions in urban and rural areas of Ethiopia. This is also true for local researchers from the Ministry of Education Ethiopia. (MOE, 2021, p 11-14).

Six decades ago, Finland, the now world-famous class study environment, openly narrated the story of its past educational hindrances. These are not much different from Ethiopian school leadership, male centred educational supports, and differences of educational opportunities in the city and rural areas.

Finland, a country of less than six million people lived and experienced the unfavourable conditions of school-age children, specifically girls before the current school structure. The school was always there but not in such a well-structured manner. (Pellika et al.2019) Finland had not only challenged its citizens for a better life standard through education but also concerning and giving equal opportunities for men and women (Holli et al. 2003). I have lived, observed, and tested the practicality and determination and resilience for educational successes in today's Finland. The country attracts thousands of international students every year and becomes a home for many nationalities. Its success story began from educational changes throughout the nation by strong educational leaders and policy makers. Currently, in Finland only research-based education is accepted. This starts from early childhood education and continues to university in practical training and assessment that are based on scientific facts and constitute the truth for academic adventures.

Finland and Ethiopia share the same structural educational system. Both countries can have great experiences in the field of education and educational

leadership. To narrow the gap of the differences on leadership and on teachers' education, both countries can exchange knowledge on research-based education and on the autonomy of teachers with educational collaborations. Through international relations in education, business, and diplomacy, they can strengthen the relationships.

Ethiopian educational leadership requires more collective knowledge from different regions, from national universities' researchers, and from the diaspora scholars' collaborations. Some of the scientific reasons behind are not concretely coherently documented to get the chronological order of today's Ethiopian educational leadership obstacles or of women in school leadership positions. These we can easily find in Finland's search engines. Ethiopian historical educational data lacks the inclusive data that assessed all the parts of the country equally. (Gebeyehu et al. 2021).

1.1. The aim of the study and the research questions

The study on women and leadership in Ethiopia is not yet fully adopted as an academic culture to narrate the full picture of the past 10 years and the current women's and girls' educational, emotional and academic culture at large. But from 2020 there are achievements in recognizing the female school leadership, female leadership which is in content progress. Bridget, (2021) Ethiopia is achieved the gender parity in ministerial level and become top in number from all African nations. but in the regional and town level female school leadership and female leadership requires more work from the grassroots level.

It was in 1931 when the first school for girls was established by Empress Menen in an attempt to practise equality in education. (Alemayehu et al. 2012). There was a strong belief that sending girls to school made them to be strong and educated women who can disobey their husbands. On the other hand, economic problems, school distance, and marriage affect girls' and women's education at large. (Roba, 2021). Despite all the challenges, women's and girls' need for education is increasing. Female educational leaders, especially in

primary schools. (MOE, 2021). Initiatives from national and international educational activists, educators, political and educational leaders, including the current Ethiopian president Sahle - work Zewde are stressing the importance of women's and girls' education. (Birchi, 2000; Melka et al.2022).

The general aim of this thesis is on women's and girls' education, school leadership and educational leadership. This research aims to encourage male teachers and superintendents to work with female co-workers in the same area and to keep the research data in a proper archive system for future research work. And it continues to support and encourage a research-based women's education system in all school levels and to ensure equal rights for female teachers' and similar respect for the value of their expertise as male teachers have' (Wondimagegnehu, (1991).

“In Finland, Teaching is a highly respected job” stated Sahlberg who also expresses his view on collaborative systemic work through educational achievements. “Teachers' capacity to teach in classrooms and to work collaboratively in professional communities has been systematically built through academic teacher education”. Sahlberg continued, “male and female teachers have critical situations for attracting the most able young people to recruit for teaching positions. Teacher's work is an independent and respected profession, rather than just a technical implementation of externally mandated standards and tests. Teachers' strong competence and preparedness creates the prerequisite for the professional autonomy that makes teaching a valued career in Finland.”Sahlberg 2010, p71,2015, p100.

I believe that women's educational and cultural exchanges can be encouraged in rural and urban areas of Ethiopia with research-based cluster education, career ladder education, and degree programs to enhance research-based well-organized education that can be transferred to the next generations to change women's and girls' lives, and the life of the whole nation.

Throughout the whole thesis, I am determinedly focused on the eradication of illiteracy in Ethiopia. This specifically applies to men being illiterate about women's equal rights, equity, and equality. The statistics in UNESCO (2008, pp. 17 -20) report for Education for all in a changing world focuses on how

sustained economic growth and poverty reduction result in more government and household resources potentially available for education. It stresses on the benefits of developing parents' education in supporting girls to go to school projects in a nation like Ethiopia. Manscow et al. (2008) express the importance of social inclusion that focuses on equal access to all individuals in social institutions. Based on their report, educating women highly supports families and the whole society. Educated women are not consuming their children's labours at home as they have the knowhow of the advantage of education. (UNESCO, 2008; Ilie et al .2016)"Higher living standards mean parents in developing and transition countries are less dependent on their children's labour, more inclined to have fewer children and better able to invest in their children, especially daughters, by sending them to school and complying with compulsory-school laws".

Female and school leadership is my mission, a vision to study to understand and support and encourage women's education, women's and girls' educational capacity in different levels, and to encourage and support female educational leaders. I have collected the first data on the issue of women and leadership, education for all goals implementations, female principals and superintendent's career ladder and acceptance issues in Addis Ababa and its surrounding area.

I conducted a qualitative research method as it highly involves with human behaviour and characteristics. This method is naturally flexible to direct human related research questions. Tracy, (2010). **Why are educational organizations have so few women principals?** as the main research question (see page 78). All the interview questions evolved and involved leadership, female leadership, and girls' education with the global motto Education for all by 2015. Female school leadership in Ethiopia in 2011 in the schools in Addis Ababa and its surrounding area, the barriers of female school leadership, the reason behind the cultural, emotional, economical, personal, and professional competence problem and hindrances of female leaders in the capital Addis Ababa and its surrounding area discusses through the general frame of this study.

One must always remember; Ethiopia is a country where cultural barriers are extremely rooted in the society that divides male and female responsibilities. As the nation has more than eighty-six ethnic groups and languages, the background of each tribal group affects women's responsibility in their own strong traditional perspective. It is important to note that Ethiopian women are expected to be extremely hard workers and capable people.

Ethiopian cultural atlas 2022; Roba,2021, emphasizes on the divide in gender roles of tasks and “complementary relations in labour”. The women task and her labour mostelly is seen as insignficant in traditional thinking, Roba’s scientific article is as fallows, “While men are the primary income earners, their wives are expected to take part in just as much work at home. Some argue that while boys get the hardest (physically) household tasks, girls have the more time-consuming ones.” Roba continued, the time taking jobs at home that are as such not conciderd such as “food preparation can take hours due to This difference means that some women or girls may have less time to attend school or concentrate on their career, unless the family has a servant”.

To find out why and what is the reason behind Ethiopian women not participating in the leadership position (Dessie, 2021) it was important to remind and understand the culture and values of the Ethiopian people that affect female leadership in schools, in politics, or in the decision-making process of the Government body. With the main question why are educational organizations have so few women principals in Ethiopia, the aim of this study is to create awareness in all school levels and support women and girls through education. This also helps male leaders unequivocally to accept female leadership and to support women to the next levels of leadership positions. The research questions are also targeted to understand the general culture of female women leadership in school organization in 2011.

In the school leadership in Ethiopia and in the enrollment of the primary school part, I tried to emphasise on the importance of women’s and girls’ education enrolment, specifically on the school age children in urban and rural

areas of Ethiopia with the statistical figure report of Education for all goal (UNESCO, 2008) report. In addition, the interview questions' answers and transcriptions, the scientific data and the Finnish women's and men's equity and equality support the results of my studies.

1.2. The significance of the study of female leadership in schools in Ethiopia

This study has significance to bring a change to educated women who are muted and bounded by their own daily activities the reasons for which can be political, cultural or lack of enough attention or lack of initiation, appreciation but, the value of society cannot be measured without taking into consideration women's and girls' equality in education and participation (Roba, 2021).

Women can play a significant role in education and educational leadership. In general, the female population exceeds, which implies that women should be the main beneficiaries of good education. Berhane-Selassie (1991) noted that no society can ignore women's view in preparing them for the rapidly changing world. It is therefore the responsibility of educated women and policy makers to advance women and girls through education.

There have not been many studies on female leadership in Ethiopia that are research-based and open for public use through the internet or published books to identify the phenomenon of female leadership and its situation, and women's educational study achievements in general, although there are many women leaders' untold stories existing (Erosso, 2021; Pankhurst, 2009)

Meron Erosso in her scientific article on notable Ethiopian women and on the women's movement from different historical eras could be part of schoolbooks as they bring women's endurance; leadership ability and wisdom all to be easily presented for study purposes. I assume my study can be a sight for many researchers. University college, elementary and high schools' students could use the stories as a learning tool, too, for everyone to know and keep discussing the importance of female leadership in everyday life situations.

However, my belief is more concerned about bringing some change to the lives of millions of women's education and to have more schools in every corner of the country to support young women's and girls' education by cooperating with local and international educators. The other point is that this study is also to help other young researchers at the national or international level who are interested in understanding about the status and education of Ethiopian female leadership.

My thesis is not gender absorbed ignoring men's achievements in supporting women. The main significance will be focused on equality and equity to bring better school organizations' leadership between male and female genders. Finally, this study will develop and initiate the few female leaders in schools, and women who are teaching and studying in the higher educational institutions in Ethiopia. Besides, the aim I am anticipating, this study will impact the policy makers and educational experts in Ethiopia and beyond. I believe that this study might also support the nation in bringing some awareness for female leadership in education when submitted to where it could serve better, expressing my concern for the area of leadership and management in schools and higher education institutions.

1.3. General school systems in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is one of the oldest countries in the world with about 3000 years as a nation state. Ethiopia has its own tradition, leadership, traditional education system since 330 A.D. The education system is based on the Monastic University. Higher-level education has been given through churches. Teaching has consisted of theology, philosophy, competition, history, pottery, and music. Many of such school systems are functioning in Ethiopia still today. (Baheru, 2002).

The education system that has imposed tradition is much more focused on male students than on female ones. (Burgess, 2013) Especially at the latter part of the 18th century (Pankhurst, 2009), and at the beginning of the 19th century the Ethiopian Government, mixed up with church rules and

regulations, has had a tradition that has been more focussed on male leadership. (Duressa et al.2021). Even though Ethiopia as a nation is proud with the culture and heritages, the Ethiopian current formal education is adopted from foreign education systems because of diplomacy, business, religion, and other interests, especially, England, France and Arabia have had and still have their own stamps in today's Ethiopian language and education system (Zewdie, 2012).

Beside this, national researchers writing on Ethiopian educational historical data started only in the 1950s (Gebeyhu et al.2021). For example, church buildings, such as Lalibela, (Britannica, (2020);FERNYHOUGH et al. (2002) places where the scholars of church education trained, kept training, and graduated acts as a testimony of the 12th and 13th century civilization of the church education system in Ethiopia. (Zewde, 1993) The church education system is continually supporting many locals to read and write especially in the rural part of Ethiopia that constitute isolated places for religious pilgrimage and prayers (Grumu, 2019).

We cannot deny that church education has contributed for the people of Ethiopian culture, alphabet, and treasured values to be reserved as a national pride. (Hilesillasie, 1972; Aklilu, 2006) Ethiopia is also the only African nation to have her own alphabet. This makes Ethiopia to be part of the only 18 countries in the world having their own alphabet (Ullendorff, 1951).

The Ethiopian education system has passed through many changes since modern education was introduced to Ethiopia in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. (Aklilu, 2010; Teshager et al. 2020) Basically in the Feudal era where kings and the elite family had better education, the system was like those of western nations (Pankurst, 1977).

From 1974 to 1991 the military regime took over the country. Education became more like a tool for the political agenda, and teaching was based on the Marxist-Leninist philosophy. For the Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front (PDRF), education was dominated by revolutionary democracy. The system was trying to mix up all ideologies from the west, east and the USA ending up with a new education system (Eresso, 2021; & Kiros,

1985. However, the value of indigenous education remains less spoken and has brought lots of new divisions in the entire school systems. Currently the Ethiopian school system has the following structure as presented in Figure 1 (MOE, 1921) [Ministry of Education \(Ethiopia\)](#)

Education	School/Level	Grades	Age	Years	Notes
Primary	Elementary		5–10	8	Divided into two 4-year cycles
Secondary	Junior Secondary			2	Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate (EGSLCE) awarded since 2001
Secondary	Senior Secondary		13–16	2	Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate (ESLC) awarded until 2003, Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Examination (EHEEE) since 2003.
Vocational	(TVET) Level III Diploma			3	
Tertiary	Bachelor of Education			3–4	4 years before 1994, 3 years after 1994
Tertiary	Bachelor of Arts/Science			3–4	
Tertiary	Master			1–3	
Tertiary	Doctorate			3–7	PhD

Figure 1. Ethiopian Education System (MOE, 1921)



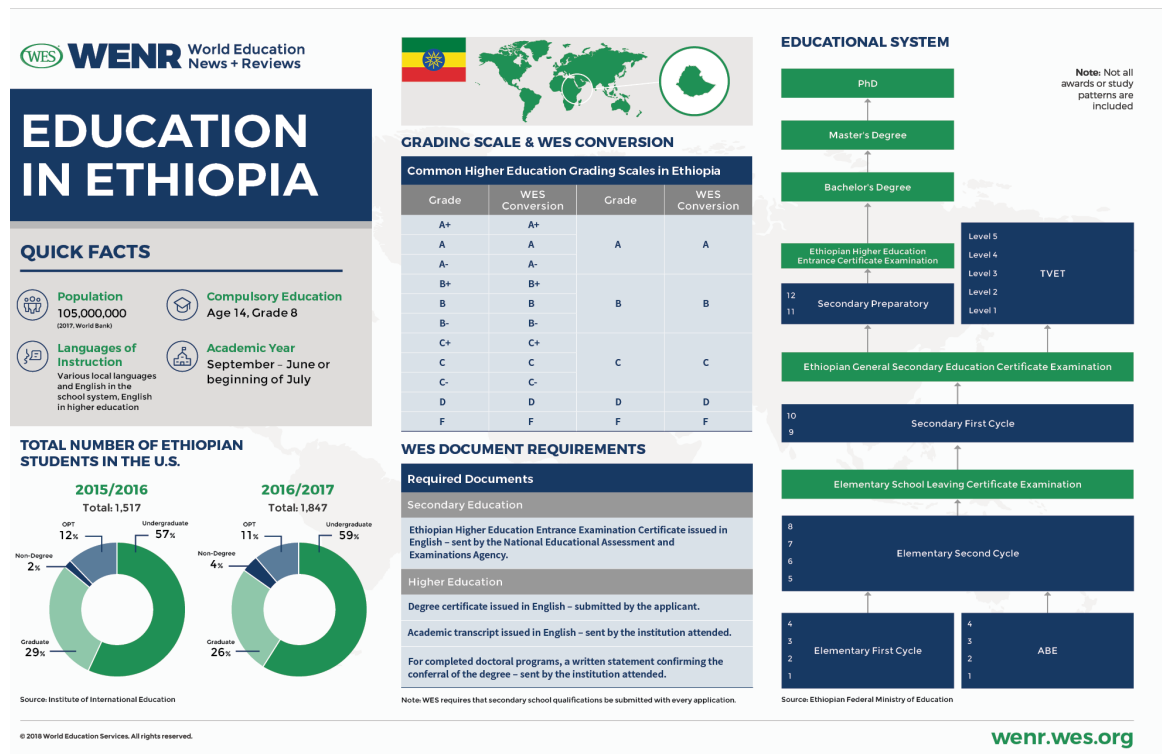


Figure 2. Education in Ethiopia (Stefan.2018.)

“The Ethiopian school system consists of eight years of elementary education, divided into two cycles of four years, and four years of secondary education, divided into two stages of two years (4+4+2+2). Education is technically compulsory for all children until grade eight. According to government statistics from 2011, 20 percent of children drop out as early as grade two in the area that are affected by natural and humanitarian problems.” (Education in Ethiopia, 2018; MOE, 2020).

Ethiopia has a much similar educational structure as the Finnish education structure (see Figure 1 and 2) with the huge gap of educational development directions. I believe that the meaning of education is to eradicate young people’s illiteracy, joblessness, and to develop creativity. I believe by sharing educational resources and human resources such as intellectual capital, developing schools and colleges, exchanging ideas, training, both countries can benefit on their journey of developing education to the betterment of human beings. (MOE, Ethiopia 2020; MOE Finland, 2022.)”

1.4 Finnish Education System

The Finnish education system is systematically planned to make education for all in their respective towns and villages. The Finnish education system integrated academic and non-academic skills in the schools. Home economics, hand crafts, music, and physical education have a great place in people's hearts. Throughout Finland's schools the non-academic skills are strictly taught for all children and give special attention for those who have special interest.

Educators are collaboratively working with parents hand in hand to build up the child's mind through science and education.

The students grew appreciating their own handcrafts, food, goods, designs, fabrics, materials, and languages. This is the most powerful success story of Finnish education more than the Pisa results. Children have access to any study materials in their own mother tongue so, even though English is taught and appreciated in Finland's schools, libraries are filled with Finnish literature, stories, educational materials, and research.

- This does not mean that Finnish education is perfect in everything but, continually research based education is encouraged from Early childhood training to university level education.

The Finnish education system has the following basic structure which is like the Ethiopian education system. The difference for me is the application, the way of teaching, school supplies, school buildings, teachers' education, social support, tax payment all are contributing through a strong integrated system, to support Finnish schools. The current Finnish educational system is copied from the Ministry of Education (2023) to help my study and clearly narrate the Finnish educational system and is follows.

- [“early childhood education and care](#) which is provided for children before the compulsory education begins, (at the age of seven normally)
- [pre-primary education](#) which is provided for children in the year preceding the beginning of compulsory education,

- nine-year [of primary and lower secondary education](#) (comprehensive school), which is compulsory
- [upper secondary education](#), which is either general upper secondary education or vocational education and training, and
- [higher education](#) provided by universities and universities of applied sciences.
- Furthermore, [adult education](#) is available at all levels”.

Education system in Finland

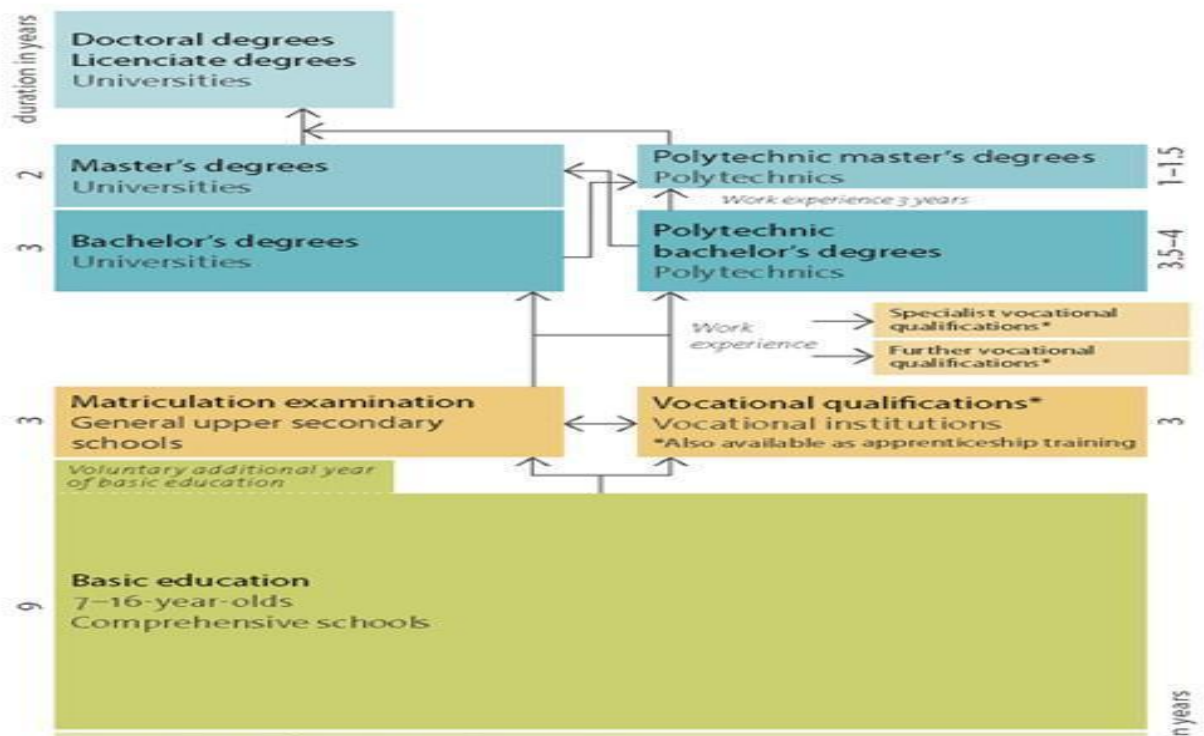


Figure 3. Finnish Education system (Minister of education Finland, 2023.)

1.5 CURRENT ISSUES IN SCHOOL EDUCATION

Despite all the good educational structure in Ethiopia, challenges on the implementations of better classroom pedagogies, classroom facilities, and the educational attractive atmosphere for young women and girls are awaiting. Limited educational opportunities challenge young women to focus on their studies. Women are often observed consumed by supporting the families and extended families and not being able to focus on academic progress (MOE, 2021). Most family members do not observe or encourage women to the next level of education, or they separate women from men to find jobs, take positions in the society, such as being leaders of local community gatherings like in Eder “(Eder is an informal social institution where people cooperate in case of emergency situations like death and marriage)” (Gobaw,2015;Ali,et al.,2020). Most leaders are men. Boys and men work outside, while girls are forced to stay home and helping, her mothers. (Roba, 2021)

Another key factor in Ethiopia is the language of education. Even though specifically studying about the language of education is not the focal point of this research, for introducing the many sides of hindrances on educational achievements and lack of uniform educational system, I comment that the language of education can be one of the highlights of today’s Ethiopian education and educational challenges. (Mebratu, 2015)

After the long rules of Church civilization in 1900 Emperor Menelik II’s decision to make English to be considered as a communicative language has had an impact in today’s education system to be partially in English. In the higher education all subjects except Amharic (the national language) are to be taught in English (Teshome, 2019). This was a significant turnover for today’s education to be partially dependent on foreign languages and on supplementary books for finalizing the required studies from Junior high school to the university studies to be conducted in English.

Many foreign education and educational leadership ideas have been influenced by foreign ideology and educational values (Akiliu, 2010). “Because of the influence of Great Britain from the 19th century onward, and

because of the presence and influence of America in the twentieth century, English has become the second most important language of Ethiopia. Both Amharic, the national language, and English are the languages of business, medicine, and education.”

MOE (2013) in its initiative of 2013 worked towards training all the primary schools to be administered by female teachers and superintendents. At the time of my interviews, from the plan of capacitating 576 female teachers into school leadership positions through training, only about 178 were in leadership positions. However, the plan has been to achieve more numbers every year through various levels of degree programs.

Currently the Ethiopian Government is focusing on the country’s general growth in all sectors that are included in education and educational leadership. The Government plan to move the citizens into a middle-class income country is encouraging for the general growth of the population overall. Even so, the new normal has its own hindrances (MOE, 2021).

The boom of the new universities and new schools, mobile schools, cluster schools have also been increasing in the past 15 years in the capital Addis Ababa and in the fourteen regions. The regional educational bureaus are collaborating to normalize the new school structure mainly given in the regional cities and towns by their own local languages, specifically in primary school levels.

The truest level of the Ministry of Education and the regional bureaus, the universities, and the colleges to deliver the good news of education to the learners need true accountability. In Ethiopia, the quality of the teacher’s college, university, and the schools are on progress that the experts and the school leaders have agreed within.

When we look at Finnish universities and colleges and the whole education system, there is a rhythm that is linked and integrated and that complements itself not only in planning but also in the enactment. Educational leadership is shared to everyone on the quality of education that the educational experts have agreed on. Pulkkinen et al, expresses the culture of a kind of leadership in the Finnish schools, “Shared leadership is a strong trend in Finnish school

management and called as the saviour of schoolwork” despite the strong teachers’ autonomy mostly bounded by trust and accountability. School leadership is based on trust to improve the nation. (Pulkkinen,et al., 2015).

My research is contributing to an alternative education system. My suggestions might help educational organizations to be successful together. I equally share this noble idea with Aklilu who was the first official Addis Ababa university dean “thinking on a national level rather than on individual differences (Aklilu, 2010).”

Ethiopia has also opened doors for national and foreign educational investors, from preschool to university levels. (Such as the Unity University College). Most private educational institutions are still benefiting society that could afford to pay for the service. This study is also applying some alternatives so that the educational expansion could be better off to all citizens in alternative applications for educational pedagogies of Ethiopian contexts. This also includes the strong teachers’ training and educational training in private and governmental universities focused on quality educational services to all everywhere (Abebe, 2014).

The number of researchers and the budget for researchers in education and educational leadership areas can highly support the current educational obstacles to finding uniform information better than authoring the past stories. I mean, we need chronological order of Ethiopian educational improvements. More than 100 million people are not sharing the wealth of the natural resources equally. Ethiopia needs a more educated workforce who has a heart and a zeal for bringing a better outcome to the citizens without negative political intervention. The freedom of teachers’ and the principals’ autonomy, and parents’ and social involvement in all educational levels are considered the needs of education that the population is in need-of.

In conclusion, experts believe and agree that Ethiopia needs a more educated workforce who could transfer knowledge to urban and rural schools according to the cultural values and norms. We need more research on male and female responsibilities on sharing educational leadership among educational leaders in Ethiopia and wherever this study is necessary to be

implemented. Focusing on women's and girls' education without despairing the importance of men and young boys' education, this research paper is supporting and serving as a document to develop my dreams and thoughts on education and female school leadership.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Integration of School Leadership and Holistic Approach

Ethiopia is the second largest nation in sub-Saharan Africa with a population of 100 million. (Semela, 2011) Its economy is steadily growing with the ambition of reaching the population to a middle-class society by 2025. ("World Bank", 2013) The nation is also working towards expanding good education and leadership to all in their respective villages and towns. (Yesak et al. 2022)

School leadership in Ethiopia varies from school to school because of the multitype of schools' systems in the whole nation. There is no one type of school leading structure even though all must get their respective licences from the Ministry of Education. [Education Quality Assurance Sector](#) (MOE 2023). School leadership in Ethiopia can be challenged due to the changes of the emergence of political agenda that alter their immediate work priorities. (Tekleselassie et al, 2019). Girls education can be impacted or affected by the kind of schools they are in and the principal's responsibility. Here my main point is the principal needs time to see his people and their needs (Yimer, 2017) the reality is true to support girls education and bring forward the female principles and educational leaders, school leaders must have enough time because, there are problems that need social justice advocacy, gender equality, wellbeing of the school community, proper shelter, clothing, water, sanitary rooms, and facilities, food to all school-age children (Roba, 2021; Tekleselassie et al. 2019).

According to Kahssay et al. (2020) nutritional food had a great significance specifically in school people specially in the early age and young adolescence. Roba, 2022, stress on the issues of absenteeism, helping parents at home, work in the farmland are main factors for girls' education obstacles. Though, the boys are also equally affected including the school community at large and the society principals task is dominated to work holistically than only academic matters, Grumu, 2019.

In this study, comparing Finland and Ethiopia can be in question at times because of the big gap of the population and geographical location and again I see the weather condition of Finland as one factor that supports my comparison of the two nations. When we talk about food security, Finnish schools are well equipped with full kitchen supplies in order. Each municipality has the responsibility to feed, to take care of the children's needs through the organized system of the nation. (Tikkanen; Urho, 2009) The school support is normally trained in Finland. "People in Finland are proud of the country's long history of providing free school meals", a strong tradition on exchanging goods between parents, and cheap and easy to use materials are also found easily to help the community at large. (Katri et al. 2019), "Finnish people believe that a good lunch is more than nutrition. It is something that gives pleasure, relaxes, refreshes, maintains the ability to work and helps children to grow healthy". Katri et al, proudly expresses the connection of good school meal and education "A good school meal is seen as an investment in the future. In addition to full, nutritious meals, school feeding provides pupils with food related education. A meal can be used as a holistic pedagogical tool: to share information about national and international food cultures, proper nutrition, good manners, and a sustainable way of life". Katri et al. 2019, p.7.

Pellikka et al. (2019), explained how the budgets follow from the society through taxation. Each municipality has full responsibility to take care of the school community, and school leaders have the responsibility in facilitating the budget to their schools and taking part in leading the school. Finland's school leaders and school leadership agree and believe in the connection of healthy meals and good leadership. The good school also comes with food security to the school community.

According to Taipale, 2015, in Finland school principals are taken as one part of the school administrators who are doing their own tasks compared to most Ethiopia school leaders where a school leader is mentor and a person with a great deal of responsibility that includes management. (Gurum, 2019). According to Alava et al. (2013), the qualities of good school principals include to support people equally in a fundamental way

why the sensible and integrated approach of school the principal is vital. Halttunen et al. (2014) explain the four qualities of good principals on developing teachers' involvement in the schools. Are as follows: A, Individualized support/consideration, B, emotional understanding and support C, intellectual stimulation, and D, modelling all in a practical way in school daily activities. Good principals also assess or watch the personal lives of the teachers and the school community routines as needed. They also recognize remarkable events to help and maintain personal relationships with the school community.

According to Pulkkinen et al. (2015), Finnish educators work with trust-based accomplishment in the teaching and learning process. Teachers, superintendents are working towards providing the best to their people. That helps the school principal to believe in teachers' daily activities. The trust-based education system highly supports the Finnish outstanding success of educational achievements in the world.

Ethiopian school principal education level and career ladders are also planned systematically in the current Ministry of Education plan. Nevertheless, the work demanding keeping upgrading the services that the school community needs is vital. According to the current education Minister, the national thinking perspective is encouraged, and the minister's office is working towards reaching the whole nation with good education, economy, digitalization, school meals, and full school sanitary services. (Nega ,2021)"

Educational Leadership from the traditional education point of view is exhibited through the behaviours of formulating and implementing the educational activities. In Ethiopian families, communal members encourage the leadership of the informal education. The informal education can be at home, in the village, through different local charitable activities, which are involved with responsibility. Society develops the skills under adult supervision. (Grum, 2019).

The general school leadership in Ethiopia has existed since the first official school introduced by King Menelik the II, but school leadership development

has shifted more towards western school leadership, as the teachers, the advisers and the school leaders are mostly foreigners. (Grum, 2019).

In conclusion, the attempt of the current school leadership at large is focused on modern, global, and computerised technology-aided school leadership that can run fast and reach all, even to the remotest areas through better educational leadership for better Ethiopia. The work is wide, but Ethiopia is surely growing towards producing experts in school leadership.

2.1. Ethiopia a Historical Nation

For the first time at the beginning of the 19th century modern education introduced by Emperor Menelik II [Emperor Menelik II](#) and the first school “Ecole Imperial Menelik II” [Menelik II School](#) opened in October 1908 under the guidance of Hanna Salib and several Coptic teachers from Egypt welcomed to Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Education system started its exodus of modern education by adopting other cultural rules and regulations. (Teshome, 2019).

I assume that the story of Ethiopia is full of patriotism and cultural adoration besides modern or traditional education. It is always fascinating how people were communicating for diplomacy purposes between two nations. At times, my personal admiration took me back to the beginning of everything in Ethiopia, which reminded me of the Ethiopian Enock who was baptized in the desert. The holy book/the Bible may be the best narrator of the beginning. [Acts 8:26-40 ESV - Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch](#) Well, he is dead and gone long ago, though my heart and thoughts are thinking how Enock did it then, diplomacy, the agriculture, business, and education.

The Ethiopian musician Yared ["Saint Yared Poems > My poetic side"](#) who is the father of Ethiopian church music (Ge'ez: ቅዱስ ያራድ; 25 April 505 – 20 May 571) melody that is used in Ethiopia and international music learning contexts, one can tell that there was some sort of rules and pedagogy the church elite had agreed. The danger of short information on such historical evidence scares me to write more facts, but any researcher can recognize and assume that the pedagogical evidence would tell us details of how they do it then. (Ram, 1986).

The Queen of Sheba might give us a clue of diplomacy and how she did it then while she was looking for greater wisdom and decided to travel to Israel to meet the wise and the richest King Solomon. (Ram, 1986). Some dynastic stories are taken from the Bible, and the very concrete information about the Ethiopian nation is evidence in today's modern Bible. [1 Kings 10 NIV - The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon](#) (1King, 10, 1 -12; 2 Chronicles 9,1 - 13) Everything in Ethiopia has been impacted by religious rituals and by the Church and queens and kings in all administrative areas including education and women and education at large. (Pankhurst, 2009)

Church education has lasted three thousand years and beyond in Ethiopia which is why pedagogical facts, clues, the alphabets, the wading, the morning, the cultural assets and educational prospective all have still concentrated with values that represent Ethiopia. I also assume that the freedom of the country does not come under the rule of any colony. Patriotism, kindness, and helping one another all are part of the education system, and the people of Ethiopia are practising them in the middle of any demanding situation. Religious fathers in any religion have had a voice to be heard and have believed in creating the unwritten but real pedagogy to teach all in their own ways. In conclusion, the historical facts, and stories, the current and the past political, educational cultural reflections have brought us the gap between the two genders that still affect Ethiopian children and around the world because of which education is a big topic and comprises the girls' and boys' educational variations. (Grum, 2019).

The 2010 edition of the Global Education Digest focuses on gender and education to mark the 15th anniversary of the fourth world conference on women... It presents the latest available data to analyse the national progress and pitfalls in offering every child and young person equal access to education regardless of their sex. Globally, girls are more likely to never enter primary school than boys. In south and west Asia, only about eighty-seven girls start primary school for every one hundred boys, according to UIS (UNESCO Institute statistical data 2022, The situation is not much better in sub-Saharan Africa, where about ninety-three girls begin their primary education for every

hundred boys, according to the regional average. The following statistical figure from the UNESCO 2008 report explains the education variation between the boys, girls, and women.

2.3. Girls' and boys' educational variations in Ethiopia

In the last two and half decades there have been lots of changes to support girls' education and narrow the variation in the gender gap in Ethiopia. Educators agreed both genders need good education and safe care especially at an early primary education level the child's mind develops and grows to know and find new things Nasser, 2016; Tafere et al.2022.

Education for all in Ethiopia has a greater mission due to the need of education is not only one part, but it must also address the needs of the family, the girls and boys, and the situation at large. Impacted, affected by conflict, and unwanted marriages, large families, remotest areas educational infrastructures all have played their own part in girls' education.

The current educational policy has calmed there was and still is a school everywhere,

2.3.1.Enrolment of primary education

The enrollment of primary education according to UNESCO report for Education for one Goal: - Making Education for all a reality seventy-two million children, most of the girls do not go to primary school. This is more than all the children in school in Europe and North America. Over half of the out -of-school children are in Africa. 759 million adults, most of them women, cannot read or write. The UN estimates that business as usual would leave fifty-six million children still waiting at the school gates in 2010. Women, boys, and girls are still waiting to get a place in primary education. (UNICEF, 2008)

The lack of educational opportunity affects young girls and women in Africa. However, "the lack of education is not only for girls ". In Ethiopia about three million children are unable to attend primary schools during the time this

study was conducted. And as a result, the current situation is not much improved. (UNESCO, 2008)

Early marriage prevents young girls from being sent to school which leads to gender disparity among students as well as among teachers (UNESCO, 2008). The 2008 statistics by (UNESCO,2008 present the percentage of children in school in relation to Gross Enrolment ratios (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratios (NER). The GER is the number of the pupils enrolled in each given level of education regardless of age expressed as a percentage of the population in the theoretical age group for that level of education. The NER is the number of pupils in the theoretical age group who are enrolled expressed as a percentage of the same population.

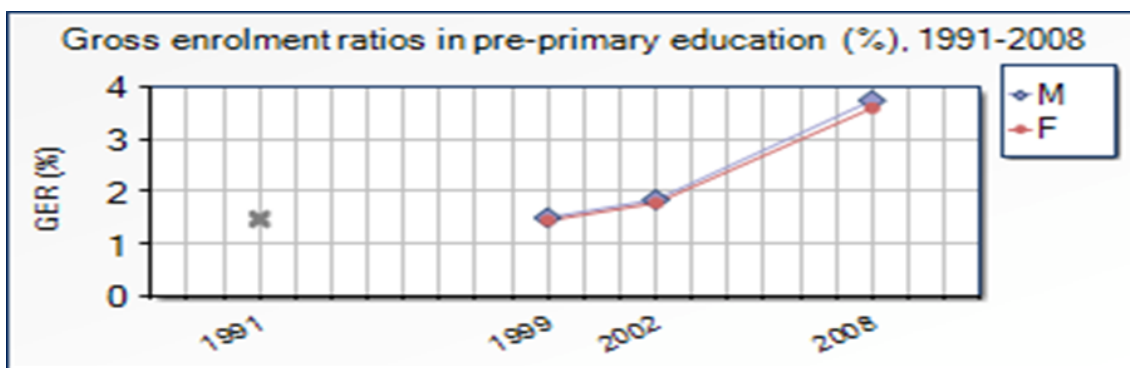


Figure 4. Gross enrolment ratios in pre-primary education (UNESCO, 2008)p.1

According to the statistics, the gross enrolment of the pre-primary education from 1991 -2008 has a big gap to pre-primary students' enrolment. Especially in 1991 and in 1999 there were no increments of female students nor male students. Between 1999 and 2002, the progress of female students increased only by 2%, which shows that the number of female students had increased from that of the previous years. According to the statistics, the gross enrolment of the pre-primary education from 1991- 2008 identified the huge gap of chances of children's enrolment in pre-primary education between 1991 and 1999. The statistics also showed the extremely low percentage of female students. Between 1999 and 2002 the progress of female students increased by

2%, which shows that the pre-primary female students' number increased from the previous year. In the following 6 years between 2002 – 2008, the progress seems slow for the female pre- primary enrolments since the economic and social conditions were not favourable for most female students' education, especially for children from low-income families. The pre-primary level hasn't increased as such in general. (Roba, 2021)

2.3.2. Enrolment in secondary education

Boys have greater access than girls to secondary education in 38% of the countries (UNESCO, 2008). The opposite is true in 29% of the countries. Yet as it is the case at the primary level, once girls gain access to secondary education, they tend to complete their studies more often than boys.

Disparity in gender education is equally marked in tertiary education in all regions of the world. The only countries to achieve parity at this education level are Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Hong Kong SAR of China, Mexico, Swaziland, and Switzerland. In countries, such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Guinea, and Niger – where the GDP per capita is below PPP\$ 3,000 – there are fewer than thirty-five female tertiary students for every one hundred male students. On the other hand, in wealthy countries, female students clearly outnumber male as tertiary students.

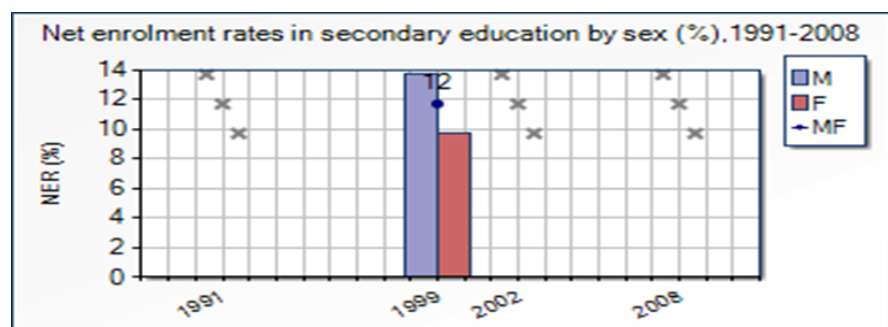


Figure 5. Net enrolment in secondary education by sex (UNESCO, 2008) p.2

The table on UNESCO's report elaborates the desperation of education between boys and girls not only in Ethiopia but around the world: how girls' education is highly under a risk, especially in developing countries like Ethiopia where the "GDP per capita is below PPP\$3,000 "and where there are "thirty-five female tertiary students for every one hundred male students". On the other hand, girls in developed countries are achieving greater educational achievements than boys. This is common for girls in developing countries who have the opportunity to excel in education, too.

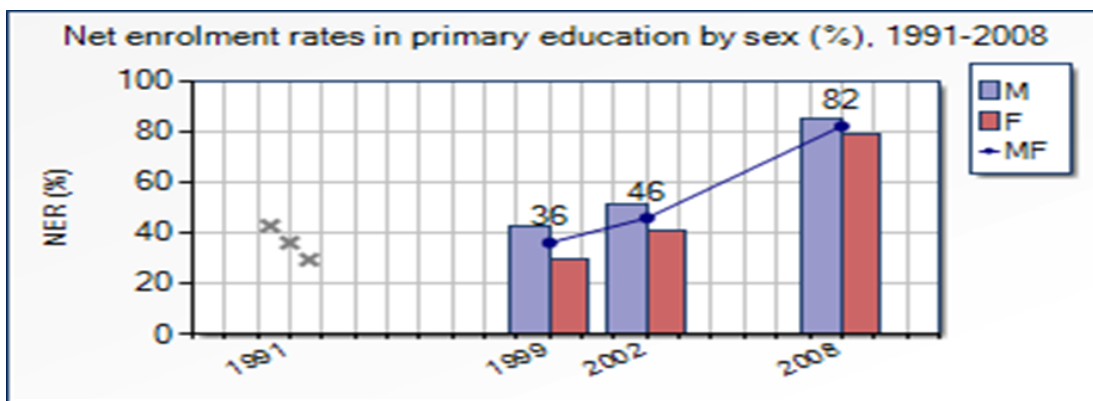


Figure 6. Net enrolment in primary education by sex (UNESCO, 2008)p.1

The general primary school net enrolment is always in progress year by year in general according to the statistical figure UNESCO 2020. But, the enrolment of primary school female students, Figure 6, shows the enrolment of primary school female students which indicates the gap in between boys and girls education differences between the years 1991- 2008. Though the education of female primary school students reaches 79% of girls and 85% of boys, which is only a 6% difference, the UNESCO research indicates Ethiopia is one of the countries which cannot fulfil the 2015 education for all goals because of the female students less enrolment in the primary schools and the high illiteracy number of literacy rate of women and young girls through the nation especially in rural areas. Opertti et al. (2009).

When we look at the secondary enrolment, the gap is narrowing between female and male students. According to the statistical graph, female students are still dragging behind male students between the years 1991 – 2008.

2.3.3. Enrolment to tertiary education

The tertiary enrolment, which is only 4% of the population at tertiary age, shows that female students need to be supported more to overcome the lack of educational achievements to assure women's and girls' wellbeing in society. The following graph shows the changes between years 1991 – 2008 of the Gross enrolment ratios in tertiary education by sex.

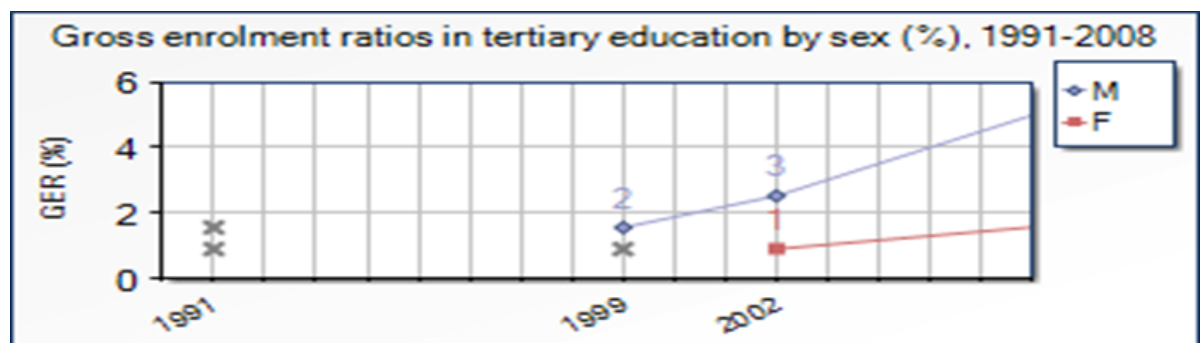


Figure 7. Gross enrolment ratios in tertiary education by sex (UNESCO, 2008)p.2

According to the UNESCO report (2008), The Ethiopian government to achieve the Education for all goal by 2015 can be difficult. However, the report also emphasizes that, the Ethiopian education in general needs more work especially on the leadership part of local school organizations. The following statistical figure (Figure 8) presents the percentage of primary school children who have completed a full course on primary education. It shows the huge gap between male and female students.

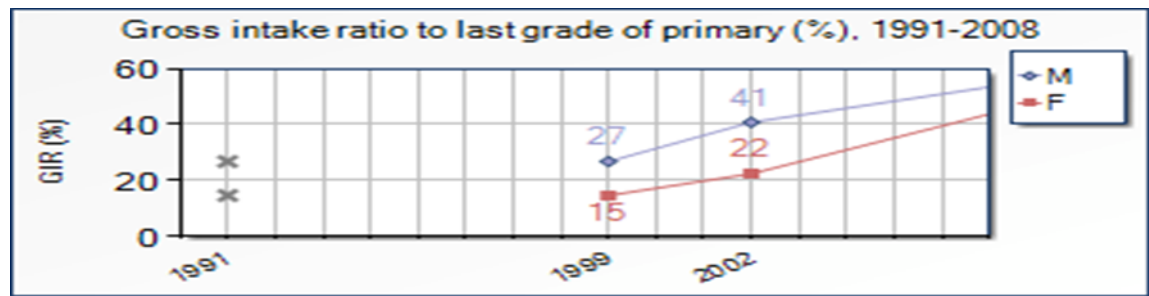


Figure 8. Gross intake ratio to last grade of primary education (UNESCO, 2008)p.2

The explanatory points for Figure 8 are taken from UNESCO researchers. As shown in the above figure the progress and compilation of primary education in a year 2008 and the enrollment of girls and and boys' gap is clearly transcribed as follows: -

- School life expectancy ISCED 1-6 (years) 8.5
- Percentage of repeaters, primary (%) 5
- Survival rate to grade 5 (%) 46
- Gross intake rate to last grade of primary (%) 52
- Primary to secondary transition rate (%) 85

The UNESCO (2008) report about Ethiopian education states that “the structure of the Ethiopian education system encompasses formal and informal Education. Non-formal education covers wide areas of training both for the primary-school-age children as well as for adults who have either dropped out and/or beginners.”

For this reason, The UNESCO report indicates that the Ethiopian education is viewed as “open-ended in terms of a training programme, and, to some extent, in terms of institutional arrangement. Though the Ministry of Education is expected to play a leading role, other ministries also get involved depending on the field of training and target of trainees. (MOE ,1994, p.18) The formal programme has further been divided into kindergarten, general, technical-vocational, and tertiary education programs.”

In this formal and informal education system, mostly the young girls who are lucky to attend school can attend the formal education system in the rural

areas rather than in the urban areas. The infrastructure of school differences from the urban to rural areas has its own contribution to the poor outcome of girls' education at the elementary level which gives a base for the continuation of high school, colleges, and universities.

Girls mostly are not allowed to attend schools in rural areas. To excel in education in rural areas for a woman is considered as a privilege in most cases. Even though the UNESCO report expresses the general education system, the Ethiopian education system is highly differing not only from rural areas to urban areas but also within the same city. This allows having the class society to be benefited more, or in the other words the more the people have money the better education they acquire.

I am not opposed to class society sending its children to the best schools. It is important to understand women's and young girls' situation, Because the majority of the society seems far apart from better education achievements. This is one of my areas of study now and in the future. Why is there the difference?

However, the formal education system is developed year after year through the support of governmental and non-governmental organizations in urban and rural areas, which I think is one way of eliminating the literacy rate of girls and women throughout the nation. In fact, the needs of education are more highly demanded in rural areas than in urban areas though we still have several children who need help through education and basic needs in urban areas. The education for all goal extension programme clearly indicated the higher need of the initiative, which was only addressed partially in 2002, (Goldstein, 2004).

The economic situation of the country is another fact that is related with development issues and education. Women's educational level means security for them, for their families, and for the nation. As economic issues are another factor, we need more budget for educational organizations in Ethiopia in general. Education is the only solution for achieving the phenomenon of female school leadership in Ethiopia. I suggest educationalists and leaders work with the national progressive plan (P15) so that it can better support the societal

educational states as a whole, if we all want to see equity and equality between the male and female genders and better educational infrastructures.

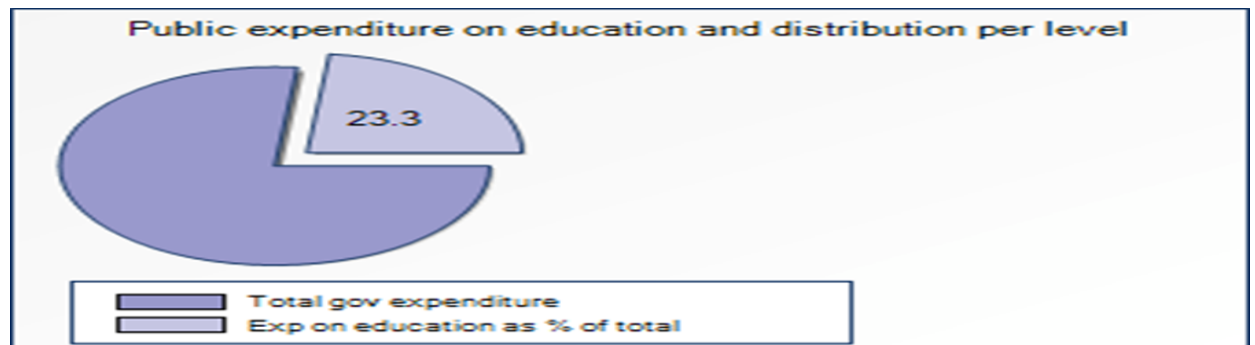


Figure 9. The budget of Ethiopian government for education in 2008. (UNESCO, 2008)p.3

2.3.4. Women in the higher education

Ethiopia has outstanding female students at the University level who are professors, doctors, researchers, journalists, teachers, principals, judges, and currently the president as well as increasing numbers of female parliament representatives. The wisdom, the kind heartedness, the patience, the natural gift supports female leaders to utilize their potential in higher education.

While female responsibility and position is gradually drawing, there are facts and realities how the young generation can be affected (Roba, 2022) In Ethiopia, the enrollment of women in education is low compared to their male counterparts. Mola et al.(2014) . Ayalew (2000) confirms the attitude of a society that gives more value to men than women and includes various traditional sayings that suggest that a woman's place is in the home and that women are dependent on men. These are some of the major factors that hinder women from mainstream education.

The fact that the Education system is mostly free in general government schools is still benefiting boys more than girls due to female general responsibility especially in the homestead area. The confidence from the parents' side is narrower to send their girls to school, especially, in the country schools where the infrastructures are not safe for female students. Parents are

emotionally forced to fear the traditions, cultural perspectives, and let marriages. So, female students are forced to quit their studies before the matriculation examination, or from high school or even from elementary grades.

There are always outstanding female students who conquer all the odds and are examples to many young girls in Ethiopia. Personally, I see it from the perspective of the lack of infrastructure that the girls are not fully participating in the school system. For example, dormitories are not safe for female students, especially for students who come from far country houses.

Motivation and aspiration are other key factors that need to be addressed to see educated women in higher education. Ethiopian University students and professors may need to take time to visit kindergartens, primary and high schools to initiate the young generation. Inspired students can see the future better even in the middle of challenging situations.

Motivation in general is mostly affected by parents, villagers, relatives, and the surrounding. Female students are not always confident enough to continue school because the environment is not favourable for active educational aspiration. In spite of all this, the education for all goal (EFG) plan will continue supporting primary education (Wils, A,2015) The infrastructure of the school itself and the resources that consist of the teacher and of the aid materials can be seen as one case to deliver best education in certain areas. Ethiopian schools need more libraries and local research centers that can impact and affect female education success.

The education policy makers need to revise their strategic plans to increase the number of educated young women by comparing other countries' experiences to benefit the national needs. The literacy rate of the population is classified in the UNESCO ,(2008) report as follows 29.8% of adults and 44.6% of youth are literate (see Figure 10).

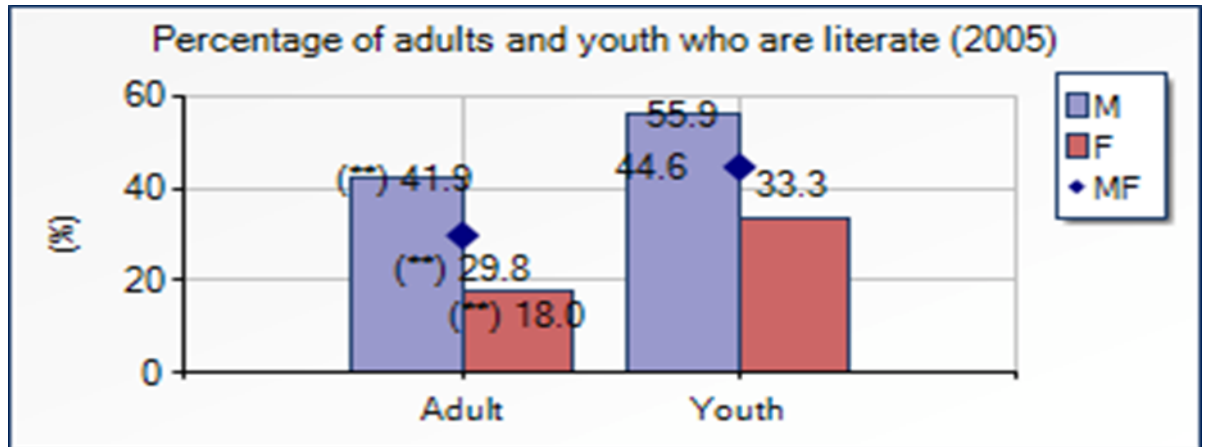


Figure 10. Percentage of adults and youth who are literate (UNESCO, 2007)p.3

Table 1. The literacy rate of the adult and youth from 1994 to 2008. (UNESCO, 2008)p.3

Literacy rates		1994	2005	2008 Regional average
Adult (15+) %	MF	27.0	(**) 29.8	61.9
	M	36.0	(**) 41.9	70.7
	F	18.5	(**) 18.0	53.4
Youth (15 – 24)%	MF	33.6	44.6	71.2
	M	39.3	55.9	76.0
	F	28.1	33.3	66.4

2.3.5. Women of Ethiopia

Women, who know what the meaning of leadership is, are important. There are good indicators that women can be leaders, if society and the concerned government body secure their needs. This is very much dependent

on women's strength and on their strong decisions to pass through the challenges in male dominant society. (Bali, 2009). For the advancement of women, women must connect with each other and help each other on a one-to-one basis. Networking is not only for educated women; it is for any woman who needs change in her and her family life. Especially development workers and the few international organisations and institutions are highly appreciated and support and help women initiatives and uplift their educational and economical states.

Understanding women's general view in society, Ethiopian women are achieving big responsibilities every day for their families. This leads most women who are clever enough to achieve higher education to remain to carry most household responsibilities and to follow men's decisions year after year. Attitudes can be formed at any age and are reinforced by prevailing traditions and societal processes (Bali, 2009).

The leadership of women in most rural and urban areas are reflected in women's how much or how long women persistently follow her mission as a leader, female leadership as research topic is a new phenomenon to be spoken about loudly and discussed. For most men who are in power, female leadership or women's general development are not part of their training. Because of this, the in-service training or professional development specifically for female leadership, equity, and equality can contribute to the learning of male leaders, educators, and other civilian workers. (Kanervio et al.2014).

To clarify the importance of women's education and excel into leadership positions, men who are in power need to get better awareness of women's education. I believe my research will bring some change through time that might impact policy makers.

The culture in Ethiopia itself is dominating women's achievements knowingly and unknowingly. Mostly this is observed in rural areas. (Beshaw & Lasser, 2012) The most outstanding reason behind this is the few numbers of schools in rural areas, the few or no libraries, magazines and advocacy on women's education, leadership, and development issues. We still need to work hard to address the need for education and expand more schools in urban and

rural areas. Mostly, urban areas of Ethiopia have better infrastructures than rural areas. The Governmental, private, and non-Governmental schools are serving community needs through education better in urban areas than in rural areas in most cases.

The living standard of women is the other factor for a woman not to excel to leadership positions, that is, especially women with their own families observing themselves struggling within themselves and with the surroundings to find their own dreams. The young girl whom I met at the vocational training centre in Addis Ababa shared her thoughts. "My brother supported my studies. I was asked to help my mom which led me to remain a wife, a mother and uneducated. But I was dreaming to be a teacher." These kinds of stories reflect the importance of girls' and women's education to be encouraged and supported by not only the concerned government body but the whole society.

There have been few studies concerning women in Ethiopia during this research question was conducted but many observers have commented on the physical hardship that many illiterate Ethiopian women experience which is found in most research papers and articles such as traveling by foot long distances to fetch water, collecting firewood, working at home long hours, good wives, good mothers (Roba, 2021). Ethiopian cultural perspective and implications are tied in its respective prospects that at times stumble even highly educated women to focus on the norms of the culture rather than herself. I believe all women are equal and have a gift to share with others the recent female ministers and parliament representatives can be a good example that gives hope and light to all uneducated and yet brave women in their respective places. Schools here and there can change and bring change to Ethiopia. (Etagegne 2019).

Ethiopian culture concerning women and young girls by itself needs a separate research center not only a research work words such as good wives and mothers in general is deeper than the word. Because, young girls and women are not enough encouraged to grow intellectually to have a better family planning and a better environment, specifically in rural areas having many children is considered as wealth. As education is the door and the only

reason for Ethiopian women to advance and excel her potential to the leadership positions or for the choices she wants to make in life, policy makers need to develop their understanding of the importance of these society members in elevating their potential.

My emphasis is on the importance of women's leadership to the nation and to educational organizations, which is an assurance for the economic, social, and educational states of the nation. The nation's economic situation can only be improved when girls' education and women's participation in educational organizations are secured. The huge differences between urban and rural women's situations are a huge barrier for policymakers to equalize the living standards through education. Securing jobs and business, creating jobs, and continuing family planning teachings are all interrelated in the Ethiopian case.

The fact that most women themselves are muted and silenced in most of the situations means that they must speak. The freedom of speech for the right of women is not restricted for illiterate women. Whether women are educated or not, all that matters is how she was brought up to speak up boldly. This is a fact in Ethiopia because women are mostly told to be calm and quiet because they are simply women. (Ayalew, 2000; Pankhurst, 1968).

The huge cultural barrier for underestimating women can be changed only through education, advocacies, and improved curriculum from the primary education system to higher education. The ignorant behaviour of men in general, and the less attention from the political leaders and different political and religious activists make women's educational standards to be underprivileged.

The female leadership dissection through research and focussing on previous studies in the area will be a bell for the Ethiopian educated women and men who are currently in leadership positions. The different political ideology, hunger of power, selfishness, and lack of knowledge in leadership are some of the reasons why we need continued advocacy about the need for equal educational opportunities to all citizens. All higher educational centers and in all working areas, Ethiopia needs in-service training including all leaders and

followers too.(Kanervio et al.2014)“In the absence of talented and gifted leadership, we cannot see successful schools and teachers training colleges, better educational leadership organizations, and other civil working environments.”

Observing about the current leadership states in Ethiopia, I find out that the biggest conflict is the lack of understanding of the leadership concept and ethics. For me leading means being committed and participating in bringing the change through education in women’s, girls, men and boys’ lives, and leading them to the decision-making positions for themselves as well as for any organization they work for.

As one of the leadership qualities, women need to be models to their male followers. The circumstances might or might not be as the leaders anticipated, but persistently a leader should show the ability to stand for the goal he or she believes in and needs to initiate the followers to make the uncomfortable situation into a better situation. In general, the best practice of leadership can be only achieved when a leader submitted to what she/he believes in. Leadership and responsiveness in educational organizations need to develop highly, more than ever before in Ethiopia.

The political and academic disagreement concerning women is also another issue in Ethiopia. The female teachers in university are silent in their surroundings when it comes to the changes in educational organizations. Few women who are concerned but dominated by the male leadership swallow by male leaders decisions. Those women who need external force and encouragement for their initiation must be encouraged by the Ministry of Education gender office.

Thinking and seeing ahead of this research work, what should be done to improve the leadership position of women in higher educational institutions, my question is what is the best mechanism to bring the expected achievement in education into women’s lives? The synergy of the bright women’s movement for the better women’s educational achievements should be encouraged by the government officials through in-service training for educated women and men

equally. For men who grew up in Ethiopian custom it is a huge challenge to accept or obey women's leadership easily. (Ethiopian culture, 2015).

The capital city of Ethiopia Addis Ababa is considered as the capital of Africa because of the head office of the African Union, United Nations, European Union, World Bank, and other international and local organizations located there. I consider these organizations to have a big advantage for many young women in Ethiopia. If the link between those organizations and the initiative for young women's education and leadership training is well organized by the concerned government body, the outcome of the education system can be in a better level from urban to rural areas.

Events like the African Development Forum (ADF) which is organized by the United Nations at the economic commission of Africa (ECA) for all African young people, need to reconsider the Ethiopian young generation at large. As the program held in Addis Ababa. I believe Especially young women who are in higher education must can encouraged to give speeches, to organize events, to speak about their own future and about the idea of all being able to help girls to move forward to see their future and dreams.

3. FEMALE AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Challenges of Women Leadership and Education

Ethiopian women, who combine worldliness, politics and religion, are seen repeatedly in the history of the nation (Pankrest, 2009). Nevertheless, we cannot deny these women are exceptional leaders, gifted and talented. Still many women are waiting for their untold stories by researchers.

Usually, the Ethiopian political changes and challenges, meetings are led by men as a result women leaders with capacity, charisma and a gift slideback from any leadership position. The school leadership is not different from this. Two decades ago I witnessed from grade one to twelve never experienced the female school leadership. I always had male school leaders. Also rememberd and realised the kinds of leadership characters I had observed as a school girl. This is a very common sight for most Ethiopian schools even today. The fact is there are qualified female leaders who can serve in the school leadership position. Studies from (AFIDP,2016) shaws that statistically “90% of the organisation are led by men”To improve the number, the McKinsey 2016,2019 study shaws that the “Sub-Saharan Africa could add an additional 12 percent to its annual GDP(an estimated \$300 billion) in 2025 if this is true and the gender gapis closed in between male and female, the plan is to invest most of the amount on advancing women to the leadership positions, vocational works. According to the Micknecey study and plan the jobs will be equally shared for women and most women would have opportunities for training and advancing leadership and school leadership skills.

The study is also classified the main plan that can equip , improve and advance female leadership in sub saharan African nations “education, family planning, maternal health, financial inclusion, digital inclusion, and assistance with unpaid care.”

The political changes, challenges, small and big meetings, any kind of leadership position is taken control by male leaders. Statically 90% of

organizations are led by men. (AFIDP, 2016). According to a McKinsey,(2016, 2019)study, “Sub-Saharan Africa could add an additional 12 percent to its annual GDP (an estimated \$300 billion) in 2025, if the gender gap was closed between men and women. Much of this would come from advancing gender equality into the workforce. This is closely tied to tackling gender gaps in society more broadly, by improving access to services in six areas: education, family planning, maternal health, financial inclusion, digital inclusion, and assistance with unpaid care.”

Since the early 1970’s with the rebirth of women's rights movements, national and international attention has focused on women (Eshete, 1991). The declaration of the United Nations for Women brought a statement not only for Government representatives and female leaders in Ethiopia. It was about the importance of women in every aspect of life, to improve women's education, economic situation, social status, and political participation (Gurum, 2018).

After the Ethiopian kings’ regime disappeared in 1974, the movement of female leadership was always within a few female leaders who are the members of the leading party, or they must be authentic to do the job required and still are mostly aligned with the leading party. As equity and equality is unbalanced most women remain with many challenges and changes in the daily life situation. According to the USAID, (2022) reports local women remain illiterate, especially mothers who are housewives don’t often read or write.

Ethiopian female leaders are not often found in Ethiopian school books. As schoolbooks are the primary source of information for students and teachers, female leaders should be included in Ethiopian school books. In the general culture many stories and knowledge transfer as oral stories from one generation to generation. Textbooks are also a core component to the Sustainable Development Goal to ensure girls’ and boys’ equity and equality in attending schools and for any human rights. (Woldetsadik & Raysarkar, 2017). We need to strengthen the folk tales that are also written in books for future generations of leaders. This methodology of recording writing must be encouraged and supported by the Ministry of Education. I assume these can

initiate future leaders, policy makers, school directors, better teachers, story tellers on women and leadership.

According to Eshete,(1991) who herself is the one of the first women and leadership advocates in Addis Ababa University, "Female leadership in Ethiopia from 1976 the national democratic revolution numbers of women affairs units were established in government offices. The Ministry of Labour and Social affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health" and currently, female parliament representatives, the Ethiopian current president Mrs. Sahle-Work Zewde, the current Addis Ababa (the capital of Ethiopia) mayor Mrs. Adanech Abebe, the federal supreme court judge of Ethiopia Mrs. Meza Ashenafi are a few female leaders to be included in school books. (UN Ethiopia, 2018).

The UN Women Ethiopia initiative is led by president Sahle-Work Zewde. Her plan is in the next 10 years to reach 50% of Ethiopian leaders to be women. This vision and initiative is also equally shared and highly supported by the prime minister Ahmed and his cabinet in their resolution of 2018. The woman/female issue in Ethiopia is as complex as in any place in the world. The initiatives require educated society contribution to the education sector at all levels. (UN, 2018).

Women in Leadership positions around the world face personal and professional obstacles, which identify them individually with their unique experiences. The experiences shape the female leaders and strengthen their social, cultural, and academic interactions with the people they lead, and their leadership experiences each time when they make a decision in a new case. (Sakshi, 2021)

From my experiences the development of Ethiopian women is an issue of human rights. The current situation of Ethiopian women with the population of 100 million people where the majority are women and girls is such that many locals have not equally had the opportunity for basic education. Poverty, literacy, health issues, infrastructure problems, early marriage, big families are a few of the challenges of Ethiopian women.

Another issue in Ethiopia is the lack of an archive system about female leaders in the past and present. Wise female leaders in the past and present era historical, chronological order off data including many local women achievements as a form off written books on Ethiopian women remain a research work for now and the future is a work for this generation. Limited informative historical data, the contribution of Ethiopian queens' and leaders' wives' roles in politics, diplomacy, bringing peace and security is a history of Ethiopia forever. Puankerst,(2009)So, archives can narrate our women leadership history and suggest the current respective office will take action with the contribution of the society.

Finally, I would like to appreciate the current initiative on female leadership in Ethiopia. Women need real leaders to push women to the next level. Awol Allo, a lecturer in the UK, appreciated the Prime Minister Ahmed for his Ethiopian Parliament speech: "Our women ministers will disprove the old aphorism that women can't lead." Contrary to this old aphorism, "he argued, women can help fight corruption, reduce inefficiency, and bring accountability and fairness to government - and that is leadership." (Allo, 2018).

4. RESEARCH IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Education, management, school, girls, and women's educational achievements are a study of a lifetime concept, but, truly without any mistake, it would not be possible to understand, shift or reorganise the research questions to adopt with the context of each interviewee level without the flexible behaviour of the qualitative research methodology. Humans are the primary data-gathering instrument. "The qualitative researcher prefers to rely on human powers of observation rather than on measurement instruments such as paper-and pencil tests." Borg et al,1989,p385).Qualitative method is efficient and flexible with human participatory data gathering than any instruments. The method is sufficient to adapt with complex situation as it evolves, and value to identify biases that result from the interactions and value differences between the instrument and the subject. More than all, the human observer in qualitative method is the primary data gatherer and is enough to transcribe the data.(Borg et al ,1989).

During the interviewee time, the illustration can be verbal with actions or graphics but readable and understandable (Tracy, 2010) Throughout my fieldwork for finding the answers to my questions I agreed with Tracy's argument, "We should never insist on reaching agreement beforehand on the criteria to which all arguments, reasoning, and conclusions lead us". This was evident in my phenomenon of female leadership in Ethiopian schools. There were unknown questions to my interviewees that I thought could be answered as soon as I asked, but I found it critical for my interviewees and had to use several illustrations with actions and examples to make my questions understood by my interviewees.

Because of the flexibility of the qualitative research methodology, researchers who work with qualitative research, agreed on several complicated

issues that challenge the development of research questions found easily transcribed in QRM. (Guba et al, 2005)"However, applying traditional criteria like generalizability, objectivity, and reliability to qualitative research is illegitimate as these support and strengthen female school leadership in Ethiopian schools from the first concept to the last chapter of the whole thesis. Qualitative research methodology also supports all my interviewer's questions to move from the original plan to upgrade some of the research questions to be understood according to the concept of the current situation during this research."Qualitative research simultaneously avoids the policy consent to a public atmosphere that favours broad qualitative studies"(Borg et al, 1989).

The tradition of qualitative research in my research questions involved and evolved around women's and girls' educational empowerment and participation in various levels such as primary education, secondary education, tertiary education, higher education, leadership, and school leadership.

Education, management, school, girls, and women's educational achievements are a study of a lifetime concept but, truly without any mistake it would not be possible to understand, shift or reorganise the research questions to adopt with the context of each interviewee level without the flexible behaviour of the qualitative research methodology. Halttunen (2012) in her class lectures and articles emphasises and classifies the qualities and nature of qualitative methods. She emphasises qualitative research that is bound by "credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as explanations to the quality of research." Qualitative approaches also differ in their attitudes towards the use of members and other types of quantifications. Allwood agreed, "A qualitative research method has a variety of ways of usage, and a researcher can only use the methods for the specific reason that is needed to fulfil the need of the research." (Allwood, 2011)

4.2 Research participants

My respondents in Ethiopia were all Ethiopians who were principals, education experts, students, and student teachers and local women. I searched to find out factors that affect women's position to move to the level of a leadership position by interviewing six participants in face-to-face conversations in Addis Ababa. Two participants were experts from the Ministry of Education (MOE), another two were experts from Addis Ababa Education Bureau (AAEB), one student was from Cotobe Teachers Training College (also a student representative for Addis Ababa CTTC) and finally I had ten local women from Holota Mendegudina province (35 km out of the capital Addis Ababa).

4.3 Data collection

Collecting data for a research purpose is rewarding and eye opening to finding a new world. It was a whole new experience from Finland to Ethiopia as an Ethiopian looking at my research questions and finding the answer I was looking for myself in a mirror. Nevertheless, the plan of the data collection was interrupted because of my interviewees' busy schedule and also because of the time limitation from my side, flexibility was necessary. My interviewees' busy schedules were due to their responsibility in their offices. Finding the right interviewees through their representatives were the main reasons that the process took more time than the original plan. The actual interviews were fully managed within a convenient and inconvenient atmosphere for the interviewees.

Five days passed only by distributing my research permit. My interviewees promised to call me on the date that was convenient to them, but the situation was opposite. Four of my interviewees did not keep the time that they had promised to call back because of their work responsibilities. The situation entirely needed patience and flexibility from my side. In most of my interview cases, I had to make three to four telephone calls including knocking at their office doors until they allocated the right time for the interview.

Each day was very new to collect my data and to travel from one direction to the other in the capital Addis Ababa traffic jam, and running after the time allocation to meet the right interviewees was a real experience. Even though the places were familiar, engaging myself in such research work was new and unknown, so my time was binding me, as I had to return to Finland.

The general time usage concept was also another challenge, though most of my interviewees were punctual. I must mention how my three days passed in looking for one of my interviewees to meet through their representatives, which was complicated in respect of both timetables and energy.

How my respondents understood my questions differed according to their knowledge, especially for the first question why it is difficult for policy makers to achieve the education for all goals in 2015. In some cases, I had to explain what the 2015 goal is to my interviewees. Otherwise, they were interested in responding to my questions.

I also had a case where I had to translate my interview questions in Amharic (the national language of Ethiopia) and explain the purpose of the study and why I was interested in the phenomenon of female school leadership in Ethiopia. It was also interesting to hear and see the interviewees' ways of transcribing the questions that had similarities and differences in some cases. The time range of each interview was depending on my interviewee's situation. I used 90 minutes for three interviews and 1 hour and 30 minutes for the four other interviews.

I planned to interview 10 people to collect my data, but I ended up interviewing only 6 people in total. Nevertheless, the plan was to do all my interviews in the capital Addis Ababa. The change of plan was mandatory to gather sufficient information on women, leadership, education, cultural and school infrastructures for girls and boys.

Change of a plan

A nongovernmental organization which was working on eradicating poverty through education and skill training opened a pre-school in the area for school age children. The story behind the area and the general societal living standard interested me in completing my interviews in the missing four other

individuals to my interview. These local women were desperately in need of change through education in their areas.

The three missing interviews were two school principals, one student teacher and a lawyers' association representative. The lawyers' association agency was highly active and well known for me two years before the interview was made. Their social support against any form of violence on women's and girls' lives had a good impact in my perspective. But for a reason that was not clear enough to my knowledge, their agency and their contact details completely vanished from the location that I used to know.

Finding this agency took me three full days because, in Addis Ababa during this interview, we did not have a name for all roads easily or find the information. We have a tradition of knowing places by heart. Information on changing addresses was not available through the internet in those days.

I thank my younger sister Nardos who collaborated in finding the new location of the office even though I couldn't succeed to get the time of interviewing from a busy lawyer, psychologist and economist who were taking care of their clients.

The reason behind the location was hidden was the fact that in the new Government law for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), like Female lawyers' associations, NGOs are not allowed to work on women's advocacy in general. The organization was struggling to get enough funds and enough supporters to support their activities. The time I made this interview they were depending on people's gifts rather than on a constant income that is allocated for supporting their great contribution to women's and girls' lives in general. The real situation would have required a separate study and enough time. Even though our short meeting did not support my research as planned, I thank them for the brief time that we spent in their office.

I also had a case where I had to wait for three hours in an old van to meet one of my interviewees. This process of making such an interview was a pleasant experience that taught me that collecting data needs more time and systematic planning especially when the data collection is implemented in another continent or other country.

I also had a case where I had to do the interview at the Jupiter International Hotel lobby because my interviewee shared the office with his colleagues, and the office was not convenient for making an interview.

The other journey was to the Kotebe Teachers' College which is in the eastern part of the city roughly 15 km from the centre of the capital. To meet the right person within a day I went back and forth three times. The chemistry student, who represented the students' views in the campus, was an energetic and powerful young man. His confidence and zeal for educational quality was inspiring. In spite of his busy schedule he sacrificed his study time to make the interview in his small office that needed to be improved in every direction to initiate and encourage student teachers in all levels.

The interview with Addis Ababa education bureau and with the Ministry of Education officials also had its own challenge due to their engagements to different meetings and to other activities. I was forced to change the time schedule three to four times but, as they all were willing and happy to share their views to my research questions, the interview went smoothly. In addition to this, it was a learning experience meeting real experts and spending a suitable time to share my phenomenon of why there are so few female school leaders in educational organizations?

In conclusion, my data was accepted by my advisers to continue the prescribing of the data process in qualitative data method analyses. The interviews were made through face-to-face interviews with the help of a record machine.

4.4 Data analysis

Data analysis is a process to go through the data that was collected through different forms and methods. For example, they can be tape recordings, observational recordings, and interview protocols. They also can be texts or numerical files. The safety of the data involves trust to protect the data that is only used for the specific study to serve as evidence and strengthen the concept and the idea of the researcher is searching for. (Mike ,2019)

The data is saved in a document that is collected carefully and must be organised with the same families of responses to the research questions. After listening carefully to each respondent's response for every question, the first-hand transcription process will follow. The data analysis has various stages and for every data phase with full respect to the result of the data, the collected data efficiently and effectively must be stored into different storages for further studies and referencing purposes. (Taherdoost, 2021)

In my case, the transcription of the data that was carefully collated was efficiently transcribed by qualitative research methodology methods. By grouping and collectively gathering the idea to support and strengthen my findings, the piece-by-piece data transcription collection work was taken care of with sensitive and careful measures. The similar ideas must be recollected to one file to narrow the broader concepts and make them readable to the readers. The data collection security is for the people who gave their consent. The researcher's confidence plays a great role in this. With careful data grouping and transcription processes, clear ideas can emerge that can support the targeted research questions and findings. Understanding the research idea and concept grows at large during the process. Personally, my data transcription processes were, collecting the data, dispatching the collected data into three separate places, and listening to each interviewee's response, respectively. Respective similar responses must have a name, or a category. The name and the category must respectively be marked throughout the transcription process. However, it is important to remind and further listening and looking back the whole process. "Full engagement with the setting and a clear expression of the events, technical improvisations, high attention is important" (Taherdoost, 2021)

To continue with the research interview responses, I used grouping methods and classified the respondents' voices carefully and divided their responses as follows. Group 1 was the experts' group from the Ministry of Education and Addis Ababa Education Bureau. (Group 1, Experts) Group 2 was the student teacher at the Cotobe Teachers College Addis Ababa, (Group 2 Collage). Group 3 was the group of women from Mendegudina village (Holota) 35 km out of Addis Ababa (Group 3 Village).

The next part was listening to the interview responses repeatedly. I had memorised my interviewees' responses by listening to the tapes several times. The ways and methods that one researcher can transcribe the data might be different from mine; everybody has their own ways to transcribe the data in their convenient way to identify similar responses. Overall, the transcription work is someone's idea to his or her research questions/findings. It is also a time that the researcher feels something is found that has been unsolved for some years. But again the answer is not yet found, it is only the idea collected. That is why the data collection and implementation work is extremely sensitive and fully attached with the researcher. "The nature of qualitative research by itself and the qualitative researchers who have abandoned naive beliefs about striving for absolute and objective truth in research, continue to adhere to the scientific model and to develop increasingly sophisticated statistical techniques to measure social phenomena." Frechtling, (2002) There were complicated ideas from the understanding point of view of my respondents. For example, group 1 Expert had similar understanding to my interview questions. They further led me to understand my studies about female leadership, and school leadership, schools, principals' responsibilities, future short-term and long-term plans of educational leadership and general school leadership areas.

The challenge I had come across transcribing the data was listening back and forth. My idea, reality, wishes, and the future had been interrupted in my mind from the perspective of the broader ideas of my interview questions.

the data, I mostly focused on the human side of the method to support and build-up my research through the fieldwork interview. I was also focused on the individual perspective of how they understood and answered my questions, I also distinguished why they answered the question in certain ways during the moment we met to the end of the interview. The last part I attentively observed the people themselves, their backgrounds and how deeply they understood my interview questions. People's perspectives matter and in my case who they were and how they responded and where they lived, all had to be analyzed.

5. FINDINGS

My research that is focussed on school leadership and women's participation involves and evolves in the main research question why there are so few female leaders in educational organisations? The idea of this main question was a challenge for group3 village young and middle-aged women who gathered in a local humanitarian organisation to share their opinions. The group2 college respondent had a different perspective on the issue. Group 2 college related it to policy making and school leadership specifically from the responsibility he shared with others and leading others. His perspective focused on the future of education and school leadership. Group 1 experts saw the research questions according to their responsibility, the general plan and implementation at national and city level, and the success plus the challenge of the education system collectively, in Addis Ababa and its surrounding area.

The female school leadership research had ten questions. The data was analysed and transcribed with the help of qualitative research methodology from the point of social, historical, and human contexts, because qualitative research methodology can be used for various concepts and ideas of distinct types of research contexts. For example, sometimes the methods can search for regularities and patterns in the data while the other type of qualitative methods primarily interpret the meaning and actions. The transcription of the research questions followed the following structures. For each question, collectively and individually unique responses were documented as presented next.

1. Why is it difficult for the policy makers to achieve education for all goals in 2015?

The group1 experts shared their own ideas and implementation in their respective responsibilities. According to one of the experts, he was concerned about the Addis Ababa case because, according to him, "the implementation is 50% in between boys and girls". This is an expansion of education. The original towns and provinces are less in percentage as it indicates 35%. The expert

continued saying that the percentage affects the national plan and especially regional areas”.

Collectively group1 experts agreed and worked to advocate “For the aim of the Education for all goal achievement we need more trained manpower who can effectively work in the field of expanding education to all school age children”. One of the experts stressed good teachers and good pedagogy to achieve the goal Nevertheless the expert was concerned about suburban schools and children out of school “due to the parents’ economic problems rather than the lack of school compounds in the area.” He continued and elaborated the critical and challenging situation of young children’s lives telling that” it is estimated that about 100,000 street children are awaiting helping hands in the capital; most of those young children are smuggled from their homes and family relations in search of better job opportunities.”

Group1 experts focused on the educational budget and leadership: “the goal can be achieved if the budget for education is raised and if we work on educational management and leadership.” The experts also believed and wished for more collaborative research work on education for all goals with different national and intranational educational researchers. During this research, different international researchers had been involved to gather the information according to one of the experts.

Another expert who was working on gender development issues in the Addis Ababa education bureau focused on women’s and girl’s current situation saying that “the goal to be achieved the current women’s and girl’s situation is in question without forgotten the literacy and health related problems of men with hand in hand with the increasing number of violence, HIV AIDS, and economical problems in most of rural areas as well as urban areas.” The expert believed that the goal could be achieved if the economic and social wellbeing of women and girls were protected.

Group3 village, two women who had a high school education were aware of the importance of the goal but, as they themselves were in problems, they gave their own family as a good example. The women had eight and nine families, the number of children and their income were not balanced to further

their studies nor to help other family members. They emphasized that they need to be included in the mission of Education for all goal out of 10 women 8 of them are not aware of the educational for all goal.

Group2 college called for a national education movement that could help and eradicate the literacy rate. "The initiative is not about the world perspective; it is about each Ethiopian citizen in the middle of poverty and hardships we need to know and learn how to help and address educational issues within us." One of the experts added that the political situation and the understanding of education can impact the achievement but that "in the case of Addis Ababa, we have already achieved profound changes, in expansion of schools from 200 to 300 primary and secondary schools within the past five years" (2005 -2010). The expert added that 1005 primary schools, 168 secondary schools, and 64 preparatory schools had been implemented. Three of the experts agreed that in the Addis Ababa area partially the goal was already achieved: 50% of boys and girls were equally participating in the schools.

Another expert, who had good experience in different departments in the MOE had the following views to share. As a newly appointed director to the science and mathematics teacher training institute in Ethiopia, he/she stressed the diverse problems that were hindrances for children to attend schools. This is related to group3, village women's respondents. "It is not only achieved through education for all goal movement". On the other hand, for Ethiopia to become a middle-income country and for poverty to be eradicated, education goals to be achieved, every citizen and international cooperation is expected to work together and share their ideas.

Expert and college respondents agreed that national hindrances are not easily understood by international researchers or supporters because of the needs of society during this research. . All groups expressed their concern on children who are not coming to school.

One of the experts also explained the achievement in the province towns and villages where there was no car or other means of transportation. The MOE had managed to open schools but the children were not coming to school because most children were participating in farms or had to go to the market.

Strategies were implemented gradually to attract children to school and to support parents, too, with " school meal programs to all school children in the regional and capital level" group one experts told.

In conclusion, all group members were focussing on the importance of education, education for all goal, budget, better infrastructure, holistic services in the schools, school lunch, big families, which can affect the current achievement of education for all goal, but which are possible to achieve with continued national, regional and international collaborations. One of the group one expert concluded his message as follows, "we have planned for nomads, moving schools by paying better salary to teachers. Mostly our problem is not the lack of experts, it is the budget of the ministry of education at the national level. Finally, I would say that the synergy of national and international researchers, intellectual community with collaboration and beneficial academic knowledge exchange programmes including bilateral programs the picture of education in Ethiopia gradually will challenge for the betterment of the whole society.

2.What, to your view, is the relevance of school principals in achieving the education for all goals, if any?

In group 1, one of the experts who directly worked with school directors stated that "continues training. Especially building the quality of leadership focussed on assertiveness and other community participants can support to achieve the goal" According to the expert, in their weekly meetings they were capacitating the participants who could work with respective schools. Their quarterly report was focussed on elevating the thinking level of the principles: "We are pushing to give more space for girls', women's education in general and individual school cases". Group 2 and group 3 agreed with the better outcome of principals and school people in all possible means.

3.What is your contribution in your profession to the education reform in Ethiopia/our nation?

Collectively group1 experts agreed working on girls' education and empowerment and eradicating the cultural barriers to create a fertile mind to

the young generations. According to their response, “we are working on unhealthy cultural practices in all schools through advocacy and awareness, especially on girls’ education”. The experts also had similar views on curriculum development, specifically about gender sensitive issues that need research-based education expansions to create a comfortable environment for all learners equally. Group3 had their own opinions to support their environment to send their children to school and to be part of any changes that can support schools and themselves. On the other hand, the group2 respondent agreed with the experts’ ideas and additionally he was taking part through advocacy and supporting the student teachers in the teachers’ training college where his office needed more equipped material and financial resources.

4.What is your view of the necessity and visibility of education in Ethiopia?

The expert, college, and village groups believed in participatory educational movements throughout the nation. “Developing a nation requires all society’s participation”

“We are developing a country,” said one of the experts who had responsibility in facilitating school expansion and working on curriculum development. The expert group was of the opinion that “to solve our problem we need education and education is vital and our respective offices encouraged that in hence of improving our lifestyle we need to improve our education system.” .

5.Why are educational organizations have so few women principals?

All the respondents had focussed on cultural issues as women in general are not encouraged enough to speak up or to take more responsibility. This affects female teachers not to appreciate their own achievements or to look for the next level or to take part in leadership and school principalship. “They are not encouraged to speak up boldly on the relevant issues that also impact them and the future generation “noted group 2 college.

“Training is facilitated through different programs but, as the development is on progress the urban areas’ female teachers take more advantage.” According to one of the experts, Addis Ababa city administration is divided into 10 sub cities. There are 164 female principals in cluster education, and there are 103 cluster resource centres. Among these, there are 20.9% female supervisors; this means 129 female supervisors. The expert continued, “each cluster centre has 5 to 7 satellite schools and out of them male and female supervisors equally get support”. The experts added that there was also a plan to capacitate 576 females’ teachers into leadership programs.” This initiative is significant to capacitate more female leaders to take part in a greater number”. According to our face-to-face conversation, the experts were working bringing female teachers to several types of leadership responsibilities in the school areas.

6. Why would female principals bring a change to access of girls to education and education outcomes?

Female principals have internal zeal for change, and they have a naturally caring character that can attract many female students to follow their footsteps. This caring character is repeatedly mentioned through our face-to-face conversation especially with group 1 experts. One of the experts who was working closely in advocacy and initiating female principles and leaders said that “the coming generation especially girls, through tutorial programs, experience sharing, peer education, most female principles have strong decision-making abilities because of their own background they show their gift fully”. The difference between female and male principal was visible. For example promoting girls’ education and other activities are not yet done by male principals but mostly implemented by female principals.

Group 2 college agreed with female strong leadership abilities while group 3 mentioned that female leaders can bring better change because of the natural gift of symptomatic behaviour of female leaders. Group 1 experts added that “since we have started to have more female leaders, the demand for distance education has increased. Female and male leadership have played a great role, and female principles are more powerful to change in most tough decisions in their responsibilities to change and challenge us and the learners”. Another

expert appreciated and added about the distance learning the postal services' availability and better services and accessibility throughout the nation which helps many female students and leaders to connect with each other.

7. Why would male principals bring a change for girls to access education and for their education outcomes?

In Ethiopia, generally male principals have a low awareness about improving girls' education. They also see girls as their own children or as sympathetic human beings. But the reality is true "when it comes to creating a better atmosphere to encourage female students and female school principals to have better results" noted one group 1 expert.

"Female principals care, understand, teach and are models to schoolgirls. "Male principals have been seen as good leaders but the awareness on how to treat and support girls' and boys' students must be a continuous conversation.

The expert who directly worked with principals appreciated many good male principals who initiated girls but the impact was always greater when female principal spoke and acted. All the group agreed with women's natural caring character, the culture, and the patience, the character of female principals as a metaphor.

8. Do you think female principals are as important as male principals in the educational reform in Ethiopia? If yes, please elaborate. If not, please elaborate.

My research questions number 6 and 7 had been mixed up with number 8 to my respondents village group 3 and collage group 2. but, surprisingly the expert group 1 understood the identity and differences of the three research questions number 6,7 and 8. The expert groups are from the ministry of education bureau who agreed and work for female and male principals equality in the schools. The experts' answer had similarity for the two above questions too. One of the female experts thought that female principals can do better in their activities in the school areas. "The expert I am myself, I am making many educational reforms with my co-workers, especially through our management council. In our weekly meeting, I speak about the quality of education, and we have a lot of interesting and important agenda. It is also important, and "I am

their horse mouth." All experts had similar ideas on the female and male principals' activities while all of them agreed that it is the MOE agenda that everyone is working towards improving and capacitating educational leadership training to both genders. Most female principals came from uncomfortable backgrounds, so they were ready to change and break the odd rules of female principals male principals needed more awareness. Group 2 college wished to see more female principals in the college areas who could be models for female future teachers.

9.What is school in your mind? /Please define school.

The education experts have different definitions that can help for further research work. The first expert respondent said "school is everything for me, it shapes our mind, it develops character.". Group 3 village regarded the school as a palace where knowledge can be transferred and implemented to shape the human mind. For group 2 t school was a place for change and to challenge the human mind.

10.What is your wish to your community in order for it to enhance women's opportunities?

All my interviewees had several wishes on how to change the community and enhance female leadership, and lifestyle changes. Ideas had been keeping flowing from all of them due to the female general situation in the country. The expert who was working directly and indirectly started her wishes for our women in the following words "if our government, the constitution, women affairs policy implement changed the talking to walking, women could be in a better position". Her view was more on leadership and capacitating women to the next level through education.

Media, programs on gender issues, exemplary women from all sorts of lifestyle participatory programs, "not only through education but other activities, too" can change and contribute to increase female opportunities.

One of the experts explained that "all over the world women participation is still low. There is still a lot to do not only in Ethiopia, it is a world-wide problem." Another expert and group 2 agreed that if we all supported women's

and girls' education beyond the agenda, the change would come slowly but certainly.

One of the respondents was directly working on the initiative in the Addis Ababa area. He was a coordinator of a teachers' development program and had responsibilities to follow-up the research and development activities of the teacher's education. According to his explanation, only in Addis Ababa there are 1005 elementary schools, 168 secondary schools and 64 preparatory schools. This number of schools include the private, religious, public, and governmental schools.

There are girls who are still school age children and are not attending school. Mostly this problem is challenged by the economy or the natural and geographical location of the area. A good example can be the village women I had interviewed who needed education on how to generate income to support the family and themselves. Staying for three days in the area helped me to understand the real problem of lack of education not only for every school age child but for the parents as well.

More power is given in empowering female principals in primary school levels to train them better and to help them to understand and accept their autonomy. The culture that was accepted for generations has not brought much of a difference on women's status specially in achieving the goal that we need more female principals to primary schools including female teachers and men. School-age children who have never been in the school need lots of love and care and women can

The three educational experts shared the view that educational implementation and pedagogy must be observed because there are schools all over the country. The economic problem is not allowing the students to come to school. We need to work on helping the parents to send the school children to school. We need to work with collaboration.

The biggest enemy in this case is economic problems and too few trained teachers. The economic problem is the problem of the principals. The educational budget at the country level must be increased.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Ethiopia has never had a lack of female leaders since the beginning of Ethiopian history. Rather Ethiopia lacks male leaders who take a risk to uplift women's leadership and accept women's natural strength (Assfaw, personal communication June, 2011). Working on women's leadership as the core agenda, Bekele, an expert in teachers' education development, agrees and believes women's education is also job security, better education, better life and income to herself, her family, and the nation's economy.

Tefera.2011, Despite these, in the 21st century in Ethiopia, leaders have gone through strong challenges to move women to the forefront leadership positions and this remains as a test for today's Ethiopian leadership. Female and school leadership in an educational organization as a topic or a special phenomenon opens experts' eyes especially in the MOE in Addis Ababa. Mainly it is not that they do not know about the case, rather it is all about understanding the limited opportunity for female principals and thinking of the long road ahead of us in Ethiopian female leadership.

Female leadership's static figure from a UNESCO report (2008) in Ethiopia is low beyond expected, while the MOE is currently working on female school leadership. Sefraye gender expert in education bureau, Many women supporting programs are implemented and discussion about women is ongoing: "our problem is implementing." (Sefraye,, 2011).

Sefraye believes that school leadership should involve both genders, that shows, equity and equality. She adds, the media can play a great role with women supporting entertainment; women focussed programmes must be encouraged.

A quality of good school principals Alava et al.(2013) is to support its people equally in a fundamental way. A sensible and integrated approach of the school principal is vital. Tadele (2011), an education expert concerned about "the school principals' responsibilities, argues and agrees with the Finnish way of principal that can motivate and attract the school community can help society through its people. The literacy rate and the female teachers' career ladder, the female school leadership, the female and young girls educational

level in Ethiopia is a task for educational expertise with big responsibility and accountability. The career ladder achievements that are divided in three parts, teachers, principals, and supervisors encourage female and male teachers and future leaders.

Halttunen et al.(2014) explain the four qualities of good principals for developing teachers' involvement in schools: A, Individualized support/consideration, B, emotional understanding and support C, intellectual stimulation and D, modeling all in a practical way in school daily activities. Good principals also assess or watch the personal lives of the teachers and the school community routines as needed. They also recognize remarkable events to help and maintain personal relationships with the school community.

In Ethiopia, women are encouraged by the Ministry of Education through the career ladder program, which is divided into three parts: teachers, principals, and superintendents. The MOE experts believe that female leaders have the capacity to handle educational responsibilities as superintendents and educational leaders equally to male educational leaders as long as the policy makers and the implementation committee work hand in hand for the betterment of female school leaders, all teachers, and learners. Mrs. Sefraye, as expert of gender in the city level education bureau, mentioned two important jobs that have two separate ways: policy making and implementation good school leadership means implementation. The two ways must work effectively to fulfil the needs of female school leadership in Ethiopia. "All over the world women's participation is too low. She mentioned as an example G20 meetings participants out of 95% are male with only 2 or 3 women participants. She believes this issue is affecting all women around the world. The degree can differ but still there is some sort of tokenism.Klenke,(2004)

Tadele, who have a wide knowledge and experience in the field of education and implementation argues,that female leaders in our elementary schools, junior high schools and high schools are not a common scene. But the MOE is planning towards all elementary schools' principals and teachers to excel to the next level of the career ladder qualification. For example, "if any

female teachers applied for the next level of degree program or if she is qualified for the career ladder, she will be accepted”Tadele,(2011).

My Interviews in 2011, with Ethiopian educational policy makers and experts were interested in discussing the education for all goal and female school leadership. Current school issues are also focussed on scientific ideas and knowledge that gave me insights about Ethiopian education hopes and dreams. The stage that still left me with worry is the archive system that is fully involved around strong educational chains, and restrictions. I fully agree with the country's rules and regulation of archive systems but, Ethiopia can do more and can do better for people to understand their own educational history with electronic and hard copy documents.

Educators, diaspora community, international researchers all can contribute for this noble idea and archives of Ethiopian female and male stories which is the world heritage. The national researchers like Meron, Semela and Tessema and many more can contribute this to be a reality. Ethiopia has an told story with old and natural civilization that must be seen and narrated in all meanness and forms that the world can refresh from Ethiopia. The intact and unheard-of educational transcriptions are awaiting female and male educators. Research work development and cooperation is vital Ethiopia to have archive Library.

According to Assfaw,2011 the education expert, schools are everywhere but we need to work on equal opportunities for girls and boys from urban to rural areas. The teaching system and the quality of education are always in a big gap between the schools due to the outcome of the students’ achievement for the continuation of the next level of academic career. His opinion focuses on training more female teachers by working hand in hand with private and governmental teachers training institutions.

All the educational experts and the conversation we had created a vision into my mind about implementing the teachers college for the young women who have only graduated from high school and yet understand about the importance of education in their villages.

The comments from educational experts in their respective fields, Tefera, Tadele, and Sefraye from the Ministry of Education and the Addis Ababa education bureau is a lifetime lesson. I may be able to interview the same people to see where we are in our archive systems and implementing to see about the educational ideas experts have in their mind in our next meeting.

In conclusion of this part, I would like to mention the village women's needs and worries about their future, school for themselves and their children. Educational leadership, school leadership, school management all can help and support the vision and mission of my life through this finding.

Education that changes Finland can change Ethiopia where the younger generations are bigger in number. Ethiopia needs educational collaboration with Finnish schools and policy makers. Both countries can benefit in exchanging knowledge and ideas in improving better education in their dwellings according to their interest.

Finally, my wishes and ambitions, my vision and mission working on my paper is for this purpose which I believe you all take part in. However, my belief is more concerned about bringing some change to the lives of millions of women's education and to have more schools in every corner of the country to support young women's and girls' education by cooperating with local and international educators. The other point is that this study is also to help other young researchers at the national or international level who are interested in understanding about the status and education of Ethiopian female leadership.

7. Ethical solutions

Ethical protocols that are agreed by the law were employed to fully following the rules and regulations for the data collection. The protocol form from the Institution of Educational Leadership was signed and sealed and given to me with a post and letters to show to my participants.

In the fieldwork in the capital Addis Ababa, I followed and respected my interview schedules to collect the necessary data. The interviewees had agreed to the interviews by signing for my consents. Sensitive issues were omitted with no relevance to this data collection process. The human feelings was much involved in most of the interview as my goal was and is towards a service focussed education for the community.

8. Evaluation of the study

The idea and the aim of the whole thesis plan was based on real experiences, evaluated work experiences and findings that combined to support this study through open-ended interview questions. I employed qualitative methodology that can help to change and systematically ask the questions to find answers or ideas to the research questions. (LeGreco et al. ,2009).

I also assume that this study will be examined after 10 years of implementation of this idea and findings as Ethiopia has multisystem/multidisciplinary educational approaches from kindergarten, daycare centers to university level of education, I believe women leaders' wisdom can solve the complicated and saturated system to be in their own format for continued educational progress and research implementation. Support to teachers and superintendents, educational leaders' follow and initiate the growth of their professional life from primary education to tertiary education. Expanding the in-service training more than ever before is a responsibility of all society who are concerned about Education.

Practically the aim of this study can be implemented in a systematic approach of well-trained educational leaders', educating students as one part of their study or can be implanted as a topic of equality and equity to girls and women education in all schools including all school peoples. National and international researchers , educators can also take part through exchange study programs, seminars and farther more cooperation to implement equal education to all humanity everywhere in this study case the cooperation might be focussed and strength female school leaders and female educators.

9. Topics for further research and practical applications

Female leadership in Ethiopian schools is one of the topics Ethiopia is currently focused on and advocates in all the sectors. Specifically at the current leadership, women are encouraged, take part, keep participating in various leadership positions in the capital Addis Ababa there is hope regional towns and provinces will follow the steps.

The prime minister's office in Addis Ababa often observes having as an important educational agenda to support female leadership, girls' and boys' equity and equality, implementing schools, with the first lady initiatives for improving schools. The Ethiopian president Sahlwork-Zwede's initiatives for improving female leadership and community development in various sectors is also encouraging. All are active, and participatory activities from the capital Addis Ababa to provincial towns and cities take place. Girls, women, and female leadership is a topic to all ministerial offices in the current government.

The female school leadership research work in Ethiopian schools shares the idea to further implement school projects and work with international educators towards global education achievements. There are limitations that global ideas might not always be employed as planned. But, with mutual understanding, bilateral educational agreements can be encouraged through research-based education to support female and male educational achievements. Finland and Ethiopia can work together in various research work from kindergarten to university level.

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Appendix 2 Interview questions

1. Why is it difficult for the policy makers to achieve education for all goals in 2015?
2. What, to your view, is the relevance of school principals in achieving the education for all goals, if any?
3. What is your contribution in your profession to the education reform in Ethiopia/our nation?
4. What is your view of the necessity and visibility of education in Ethiopia?
5. Why are educational organizations have so few women principals?
6. Why would female principals bring a change to access of girls to education and education outcomes?
7. Why would male principals bring a change for girls to access education and for their education outcomes?
8. Do you think female principals are as important as male principals in the educational reform in Ethiopia? If yes, please elaborate. If not, please elaborate.
9. What is school in your mind? /Please define school.
10. What is your wish to your community in order for it to enhance women's opportunities?