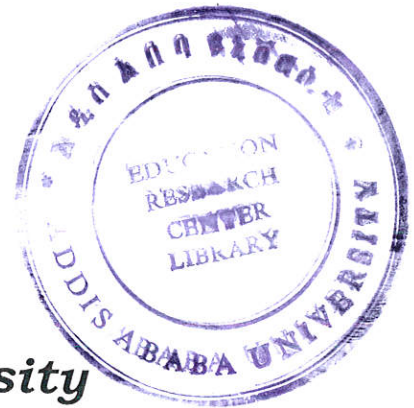


**A STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FEMALE
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM AT JIMMA
UNIVERSITY- EDUCATION FACULTY**

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Addis Ababa
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Program at Jimma University-Education Faculty**

*A Thesis Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of Master of Arts in
Curriculum and Instruction*



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List of Acronyms

AAU	Addis Ababa University
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
JU	Jimma University
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOIC	Ministry of Information and Culture
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
PDRE	Peoples Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
IICBA	International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa
ESLCE	Ethiopian School Leaving Certificate Examination
GPA	Grade Point Average
CBTP	Community Based Training Program

Abstract

Education is perhaps the single essential measure to ensure sustainable economic development, democratic participation and peace building. Higher education specifically has a great potential in the country's over all development since it is the level at which candidates gain society based knowledge and develop skills and attitudes to shape the coming generation. However, gender inequality has been among the major overwhelmingly prevailing problems at tertiary education. In cognizant of this prevalent gender gap, the Ethiopian government education policy (1994) affirmed the commitment of the government to establish an education system that facilitates and encourages the equal participation of both boys and girls. Thus, to this end, the Ministry of Education put the affirmative action policy, which allows girls to be admitted in higher education institutions with a lower GPA by 0.2 than their male counter parts. Besides, higher education institutions are mandated to design affirmative action strategies with in the framework of the policy to ameliorate campus based impediments.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to see the effectiveness of the program at Jimma University- Education faculty. Accordingly, descriptive survey method was used. To collect reliable data, questionnaire, interview and document analysis were employed as instruments. Various sets of questions were prepared for 190 female students and 70 instructors. Two experts from gender office were also participated in the research by providing information through interview. The result revealed that though an improvement has been under way the program was not effective as intended. Primarily, female students didn't get sufficient orientation regarding the importance of the program. In addition, the numbers of female students and female instructors who have been supposed to be role models were few. Moreover, the attitude of female students towards the program and themselves negatively affected the success of the program. Other academic and non-academic problems such as poor academic performance at lower levels, economic constraints and socio cultural factors exacerbate the situation at the faculty and became beyond the capacity of the program. As a result, female students' participation at the faculty remained below the males.

Finally, the study suggested that to promote gender equity in education, a concerted effort should be made by all stakeholders at the faculty in collaboration with other support providers.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Studies on development indicate women have been victims of inequity at various time in myriads of socioeconomic and political sectors. The basic causes are not predominantly biological difference but gender bias and alleged attitudes emanated from economic, social, political, religious and educational practices of the society. Of these inequalities educational inequality is the most profound and blatant one. This is because it is a gateway to bring sustainable development in the life of individual woman and a nation at large. Supporting this idea, Neave (cited in Seyoum 1996) claims: "There is no inequality more intolerable than inequality in educational opportunity".

Thus, as various research results reveal, educational inequality is common in developing countries especially in Africa and depicted at all levels of education. Moreover, the severity increases as the level of education moves up and resulted in blatant inequality. Therefore, at tertiary level, the gap between male and female students becomes so vivid and it reaches the apex of in equality on education ladder.

This argument is further witnessed and revealed in IICBA's report presented by Chung F. (2001). According to the report, in most African Universities and colleges, there are fewer female students than the male ones. This is not only an equity issue but also a developmental one, as the low participation of women in development and leadership roles constitutes a serious draw back to development.

Further, Almaz's work entitled "Achieving Gender Equity in African Universities" (2001), Clearly shows how females' education has pernicious features in most African Universities. These features are primarily characterized

by low enrollment rate, high attrition, poor academic performance, and under representation in academic staff of Women's as compared to men (Ibid).

In addition, women, in predominant numbers, pursue academic study in traditionally "feminine" disciplines such as the social sciences, humanities, and the arts and are significantly under-represented in the traditionally "male" disciplines of mathematics, science, technology and businesses (Almaz, 2001). For example, at Addis Ababa University, Undergraduate female enrolment in the Institute of Language Studies and the faculty of science in 1999/2000 academic year were 19.1% and 7.1% respectively (Ibid).

Much of the root causes of these disparities are the reflections of the fundamental problems and constraints prevalent at societal, institutional and classroom levels. These may include such as harmful traditional practices, gender unfriendly in learning at institutional and classroom levels, in hospitable environment for learning and gender stereotyping in curriculum and textbooks. However, female students can be successful in contributing for the welfare of the society so long as they get an opportunity (Almaz, 2001).

Therefore, concurrent to the wide recognition of the critical role women play in sustainable human development, it is crucial to understand the vital importance of women's participation in higher education both for the advancement of women in society in general, and for enhancing the contribution of universities in particular.

In order that higher learning institutions should be in a position to fulfill their mission of the local people and world community, they need to adopt and implement deliberate policies to address social and gender imbalance at all levels with in the institutions.

In line with this, the government has been taking various affirmative action programs to eliminate discriminations against women. As stated in the

constitution, in the Ethiopian case for instance, the purpose of such action is to give especial attention to women so as to enable them compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in social, economic and political life as well as in public and private institution (Constitution of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Article 35: 3, 1995).

Since 1992, the Ministry of Education through providing female students special admission to higher education institutions has implemented affirmative action. The admission requirement for female students is lower than that of male students by 0.2. (Meron, 1998). Besides, annual orientation program for all first year students, female-only tutorials, special counseling, academic guidance and special material support for female students are some of the institution based affirmative action programs. This provision shows that affirmative action and equal opportunity policies in university admission are positive and crucial step toward closing gender gap in higher education. The researcher believes that such policies are an effective means for promoting equal access of education to female students at all levels. In addition, they help to create opportunities for female to study and enter to non-traditional fields stated previously for they are untouchable for them in most cases.

It is true that to some extent affirmative action program has increased the enrolment of female students in higher education institutions. Nevertheless, it seems the endeavor is on scaling up the number than exerting an effort on creating hospitable environment in higher education institutions to enhance female students retention and achievement rate.

It is with this premise that the research intends to find out types of female affirmative action provided so far with their effects on female students' performance. Besides, it tries to discern the major impediments facing the program in an effort to minimize the greater manifestations of gender inequalities with possible implications.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

According to education statistics of annual abstract from Ministry of Education of 1999, during the academic year 1996/97, among the students enrolled in higher education institutions for under graduate degree program, only 13.2% were female. Moreover, the attrition rate of female students is far more than the male ones and this further adulterated the previous chronic problems of access inequality. For the last few years female students were able to join universities and colleges with a GPA that is 0.2 less than male students were. Furthermore, to increase the opportunity of female students to join departments of their choice at under graduate level, 20% of the seats in all departments were allowed for them (Almaz, 2001) so that female students can compete with male student for the remaining 80%. However, after the implementation of the new Education and Training Policy (TGE, 1994), the treatment discontinued. Rather, it is the mandate of institutions to satisfy their female students' choice.

In spite of the attempts made to increase the number of female students in a significant figure, it could not be possible still to attain the goal, i.e. gender equity in education (Emebet, 2004). Nevertheless, there are other campus based affirmative action programs in different higher learning institutions. For example, at Jimma University (JU), one of the typical tertiary level institution in Ethiopia, because of the high attrition rate of female students during the first semester before 1998, A study initiated for the introduction of affirmative action in 1998 (Kassahun et.al 2006). The program has been assumed to entertain special annual orientation program for all first year female students. Female-only tutorials in at most four subjects chosen by the students during their first academic year, guidance and counseling by a female counselor on a one to one basis, peer counseling and support by second year female students, academic guidance by second-year role model female students, and all first year females undertaking assertiveness training were other forms of orientation. The results of this initiative have been encouraging, with attrition rates reducing from 24%

to 11% over two years (Ibid). But, there are not broad-based data regarding wider gender issues at JU. Therefore, persistent educational equity for the target group is said to be effective if and only if strategies and methodologies providing equal opportunity of learning are promising. These by its turn provide a potential for successful achievement. Thus, unless the access to higher learning education produces sustainable achievement, any form of affirmative action program is worthless and such elusive situations call for the critical analysis of various contextual, institutional, classroom instructional and individual factors promoted in the form of intervention. Thus, the study attempts to answer the following basic questions:

1. What are the main constraints that female students face in accessing and completing education at the faculty?
2. Is the affirmative action program effective in enhancing participation of female students at the faculty?
3. Which intervention measures and options appear most promising to promote gender equity education at the faculty?
4. What is the attitude of female students towards the Affirmative Action Program?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of education is to produce all rounded citizens thereby to reduce poverty and stimulate economic and social development especially in developing countries. To reach such a noble destination, providing equal educational opportunities for different social groups comes in the front line. Thus, the major objective of this research is to ascertain the worthiness of female affirmative action program implemented at Jimma University (JU) - Education faculty towards promoting gender equity in education. Besides, the study tries to meet the following specific objectives. These are:

- To identify the basic reasons behind female students' attitude towards female affirmative action program.
- To look in to the types of supports provided under the auspices of gender

office at the institution.

- To find out the major factors affecting female students' academic performance.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Various subtle educational plans and policies in many African countries fail to meet the intended objectives due to multidimensional reasons. Ethiopia is not an exception. As scholars and government assessment results reveal the major problems are attributed to:

- 1 Inadequate resources in terms of human, material and financial provision.
- 2 Lack of coordination and communication among policy designers and practitioners.
- 3 Officials' unwillingness to consider educators' research works.
- 4 Lack of knowledge and understanding in amalgamating various world's scientific and technological advancement and
- 5 Absence of timely monitor and evaluation trends and others (Tekeste, 1991, and Seyoum, 1996).

In spite of the fact, this study is believed to be important to officials, policy makers, university instructors, donors, parents, students and other pressure groups. All stakeholders can see themselves through the research result for future adjustment in areas of their career. It can also help to make a comparative analysis with other countries' educational experience, which paves the way for better conceptualization of the country's affirmative action programs with the contemporary societal affairs. Moreover, the research may encourage others to conduct further research on the issue since it is a sensitive one especially in developing countries.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

The scope of the study was delimited to examine only the situation of educational intervention in promoting gender equity in education at Jimma

University- Education Faculty excluding others. This is for two main reasons. The first one is the faculty has more than ten departments and it would be possible to see the issue of gender equity at education faculty level. Secondly, if other faculties were part of the study, it would be difficult to manage all the data and even if that were the case, the study would have been superficial.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

A couple of factors impeded the study not to be successful as aimed and presented in the proposal. These are:

1. In availability of female students' list admitted to the faculty through affirmative action program since 1997 E.C.
2. The interviewees were not willing to be tape-recorded and as a result, the researcher was forced to analyze information secured through note taking.

1.7. Organization of the Paper

With the exception of the peripheries, this thesis has five chapters. The first chapter deals with the over all elements of the paper. It has a back ground, which scratches over some points regarding the title. Besides, statement of the problem, significance of the study, research questions, and objectives of the study, limitations and de-limitations of the study were included in this chapter. The second chapter covers the literature part where relevant related literature is assessed. It also portrays the direction of the study with in the framework of the research questions. The third chapter concerned with and tried to answer the following questions:

- 1 from where the data collected?
- 2 Who were the subjects?
- 3 What types of instruments were used?
- 4 What methodology and procedures were employed?
- 5 What statistical methods were used for the analysis?

The fourth chapter is where the whole data is presented, discussed, analyzed and interpreted in accordance with the results gained from the data source. The

final chapter presents the summary, conclusions and implications of the study. Generally, this chapter provides a comprehensive result of the whole paper.

1.8. Operational Definition of Related Terms

Access: Enrolment of students.

Affirmative action- Positive steps designed to eliminate existing and continuing discrimination, to remedy lingering effects of past and present discrimination based on sex at different levels of education to promote educational equity.

Attrition rate: Unintended out put from the education system in the form of dismissal, dropouts and withdrawal.

Discrimination: Unfair treatment of individuals or groups based on sex.

Effectiveness: The capability of producing positive effect or change.

Gender equality: Equal valuing of the similarities and differences of male and female and their roles they play.

Gender equity: Fairness of treatment of male and female, according to their respective needs.

High self-esteem: Accepting one self as worthy with out conditions or reservations.

Higher education: Post secondary institutions that offer degrees or equivalents.

Low self-esteem: Being unable to realistically acknowledge one's strengths and limitations.

Retention: Length of time spent at the learning environment.

Self-esteem: One's perception of one's qualities or feelings and thoughts about one self.

Sex: The biological difference between male and female which are universal and determined at birth.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Dealing with the issue of gender equity in education has been considered as one of the most important agenda across the world. It knocks the doors of both developing and developed nations. To promote equity education, various intervention measures have been taken and still are under way. However, before devoting a lot of time on the measures to be taken, the basic concept of equity education should be over viewed. This helps to identify the major problems ascribed to female education and remedies to be suggested. Thus, below, some domestic realities are assessed. These are the historical development of education and its nature in relation to the inequalities prevailed across gender in Ethiopia.

2.1. Historical Overview of Education in Ethiopia

Before the introduction of modern formal education in Ethiopia, traditional education played a paramount role in the country. In those days, education was led by institutions like church and mosque where their mere objective was to propagate religious doctrine (Tekeste, 1990). In both institutions, education was accessible only for males and females were subordinated in every aspect. This patriarchy resulted in the exclusion of women and advocated their inferiority to men (Alemtsehai, 1995).

Sendu(1957) further confirmed the nature of traditional education in her article published in "Ethiopian observer". According to her, the only available education for women prior to modern formal education was learning to read and write and to memorize the Psalms of David in Geez (Sendu 1957). She goes on explaining such kind of education was not for all female, but for elite members of the society. It was considered as a prestigious achievement in academic status for women (Ibid).

It was in the beginning of the 20th that modern education came in to being as a

result of internal and external influence. However, prior to that, attempts were made by missionaries to introduce modern education (Tsigie, 1991). Due to the pressures, in 1906, Emperor Menelik pronounced his proclamation for both sexes aged six and above to attend school (Atsede and Kebede, 1988). Consequently, in 1908, the 1st modern school opened against the backdrops. Nevertheless, modern education progressed very slowly and cautiously and only fifteen (15) more schools were opened till 1936. These schools were basically serving to teach foreign languages for diplomatic purposes. On the contrary, there was a resistance from the clergy and aristocracy because there was a fear that it could serve as a vehicle for the penetration of alien religion as well as for the introduction of sinister ideas to rock the Status quo (Seyoum, 1996).

During the Italian occupation, modern education was disrupted and the few existing schools were closed down and a few educated Ethiopians were executed. In general, Italian education was aimed at providing education that makes Ethiopians mere servant of their interest to be loyal and innocent.

After Italy left the country, schools began mushrooming in some urban areas and the government becomes cognizant of the inadequacy of teaching only foreign languages. Besides, various positions highly demanded trained manpower in art and science (Alemtsehai, 1995). As a result, the government forced to design new education system to satisfy the market. Nevertheless, the newly designed education system couldn't do that. Primarily, it was producing white-collar top management officials and administrators who were against any form of manual work and craftsmanship (Alemtsehai, 1995). Thus, technical and vocational schools couldn't get recognition. Here, it seems the system exacerbated the deficiency and led to serious chaos in education sector.

With respect to tertiary level education, modern higher education began with the founding of the University College of Addis Ababa on March 20, 1950 (Tesfu 1996; Tsigie 1991). The University College had less than 1,000 students and

less than 50 teachers in the late 1950s. Besides, the teachers were foreigners. In 1960s, the college of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts, College of Engineering in Addis Ababa Institute of Building Technology, Gonder Public Health College, Theology College of Holy Trinity, Kotebe College of teacher Education, and the Polytechnic Institute at BahirDar were opened. In 1961, most Colleges in the country were reorganized under the Haile Sellassie I University. Latter with the beginning of a Socialist Revolution in 1974, the name of the University was changed to Addis Ababa University (Ibid). At a moment there are about twenty-one Universities including the newly established universities.

2.2. A Glimpse at Gender Inequity in Ethiopian Education

The Ethiopian Education system has never been in a position to provide education in an equitable manner. There was a discrepancy in providing equal educational opportunity. The basis for this was assumed to be geographical location, social class, sex, religion, etc. For example, during the traditional religious education, women were victims of discrimination because of their sex beyond the disparity based on their social status. The way Seyoum (1986) puts it clearly confirms the idea. "Access to church education had almost exclusively reserved for men in the past" (p,8). Thus, females were marginalized from participation in religious education and deprived the opportunity to be educated. As a result, when the 1st modern education opened in 1908 all of the students were male (Ayalew, 1993; Pankhrust, 1967).

In response to the inequalities of females' participation when compared to their male counterparts, the 1st modern school (empress Mennen) for girls founded in 1931 (Sendu 1957). Yet, with in the following four years only 80 students were enrolled (Atsede and Kebede 1988). Though the school was not successful as expected, it contributed a lot to female education especially to the royal families. In 1950s, however, the number of female students began to increase in public schools (Tekeste 1990). For instance, as Sendu (1957) stated in

1955/56 enrollment of girls reached 33, 686 (p.77). Similarly, in 1965 number of female students at all levels was about 57,070 (Seyoum: 1986).

Despite an increasing trend in female enrollment, educational inequality still persisted on and there is a wide gender gap at all levels of education. For instance, in the year 2002, the rate of adult literacy for women was 34% while it was 49% for men (MOE, 2006: pp 7-9). Moreover, the gross enrollment ratio (GER) by gender shows that the ratio for girls was 51.2% and for boys 71.7%, implying that more girls are out of the school system than boys (Emebet, et al, 2004).

What makes the situation more serious is that the gender inequality in education widens as one goes up higher on educational ladder. For example, in the academic year 2001/02, among the students who managed to join colleges for diploma program, only 24.9% were women. The figure goes down for females in undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs at various higher education institutions. (Ibid)

Recently, gender issues in Ethiopia have got attention, albeit not that significant. Zenebework and Rahel state that in recognition of the historical legacy of inequalities and discriminations suffered by women, the Ethiopian constitution includes affirmative action as a remedial measure. However, before that the government has not devised any measures that would facilitate the equal participation of men and women in economic, social and political lives of the country (Zenebework and Rahel, 2004).

2.3. The Concept of “Equity Education”

The concern of providing equal educational opportunity to all citizens had been promoted as an international leading agenda. It is because of this that the question of equity moved to the center of both academic and public debate on education. Thus, it is crucial to understand the basic concept of equity

education and issues related to it. This helps to untangle myriads of overlapping variables and social processes involved and there by bridges the gap. Below, therefore, attempts will be made to scratch over the conceptual framework of equity education with regard to females' educational inequity in higher education and measures taken to alleviate female students' educational problems through affirmative action programs.

Following the Second World War and the development of a social safety net, the notion of educational equality shifted away from the equal opportunity principle of equal treatment for all, toward the more qualitatively textured concept of substantive equality (McAdie, 1998). A substantive approach to equality from educational perspective is based on an understanding that academic performance and outcomes should be the same across groups of students, but it recognizes that variables such as sex, class, socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity will determine what students need to achieve these goals (American Association of University Women, 1998). Hence, here equity doesn't mean treating everyone the same. Confirming the idea, Secada (1989) in his article "Educational Equity versus Equality of Education: An Alternative conception" poses some interesting and thoughtful new ideas in how education can be fair for all. He makes cogent arguments that "equality" is not synonymous with "equity" and, thus, rather than striving for equality amongst groups of people we should work towards equitable inequalities that reflect the needs and strengths of the various groups. Secada's argument bases on the argument equity through inequality, but if inequality permanently maintained, there is an inherent inequity (or injustice) present either by requiring certain groups to be more qualified for equal positions, or by certain more highly qualified groups and displacing others from reaching their potential.

In conclusion, the above arguments entails that equity is what everybody seeks, however, it is not a quantifiable measure. By looking to equality and understanding the reasons behind inequalities, nations can adjust their

schools, their subjects, their very understanding to create and move toward a world where equality in the aggregate is a true indicator of justice.

There are also other forms of arguments to be considered while dealing with concept of equity education. The arguments stem out from the question “whose interest should education serve at best?” Reactions to this question contributed for the emergence of groups of thinkers promoting different views that resulted in two contradictory positions education for individual interest and education for group interest (Heileman, 1998). These conflicting views are considered as the values reflected in education in the form of excellence and equity (Nelson et al, 1993). The supporters of equity education focus on serving interest of the mass while educational excellence emphasizes on individual benefit. Therefore, generally, in this regard equity in education means fair and just access to educational opportunities.

2.3.1. Indicators of Equity Education

Researches working on gender awareness raising in education reveal that there are three major indicators of education participation (Fagerlind and Saha, 1989) which have their own respective meanings. These are access (Numbers enrolling), retention (length of time spent in the school), and achievement. In most cases, the three components are misunderstood or used in appropriately in education.

Educational access is the initial phase where students are allowed to join a certain education level. It is also considered as a strategy sometimes in determining the number of students to be admitted in educational institutions (Blanshan, 1994). With regard to retention, it deals with how long students stay in the school environment. Mainly it is determined by the school atmosphere whether it is enabling or not. Educational achievement is the third and relatively the most important indicator of equity education. This is because if students couldn't graduate with in the standard requirement, it would be

wastage of human and material resources. It is not only the question of graduating from educational institution, but also how female students are performing equivalently with male students.

2.4. Definition and Nature of Affirmative Action

2.4.1. Definition

There is no universally accepted definition of the term 'affirmative' action since its inception. It has been given several meanings in different countries at various times ranging from "... neutral advertising to ensure equal employment opportunity to mandated active recruitment and preferential hiring where needed to correct an imbalance..." between different groups of the society" (Thomas, 1991).

For instance, in Canada affirmative action has a sense of providing equal opportunity in the workforce and therefore focuses on employment equity (employment equity Act of Canada). Australia also has a similar act specifically for women (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women). On the other hand, at international level, conventions on Racial Discrimination define the term from human rights perspective. To this end, the 1965 convention on Racial Discrimination defines the concept as follows:

"Special measures taken for the sole purpose of securing adequate advancement of certain... groups or individuals requiring such protection... exercise or enjoyment of human rights..."

Generally, though the way countries and organizations conceptualize the term differs, there are fundamental elements raised explicitly and by implication within the definitions. Primarily, discrimination (unfair treatment) is set as a prerequisite. Past, present or future discrimination in an overt or implicit form put as an essential element to define affirmative action. Yet, to justify affirmative action the 'discrimination' shouldn't necessarily be direct and purposefully institutionalized. There may be implicit and systematic discrimination but observed when a certain requirement is applied equally yet

have an adverse effect on some of the groups (Collins, 1992). Moreover, there is also societal discrimination, albeit not institutionalized but results in inequality and disadvantages certain classes of the society such as women and the disabled (Ibid). Therefore, it seems crucial to understand the term 'discrimination' in its broader sense so that the concept of affirmative action will have a wider scope of application.

The second essential element is its temporariness. As the 1965 convention on Racial Discrimination puts, the special measures must be temporary and terminate sometime when the intended objective (equal opportunity) is achieved. Generally, the definitions seem to warrant different degree of measures ranging from mere neutrality at the time of recruitment and hiring to mandated differential treatment. Nonetheless, for the purpose of this thesis, affirmative action is taken as positive steps designed to eliminate existing and continuing discrimination to remedy lingering effects of past discrimination based on sex at different levels of education to promote educational equity.

2.4.2. Nature

To grasp the nature of affirmative action programs, it is helpful at least to deal with the eligible beneficiaries, types and coverage of the program.

Beneficiaries of the Program- As different authors and literatures tried to enumerate, the beneficiaries are individuals or groups who were/are at disadvantage and assumed to deserve preferential treatment. The major factors, which have been taken as a base for the discrimination, are race, color, sex, creed, age, national origin, etc. While minorities are mostly beneficiaries of affirmative action programs, some countries design affirmative action programs for the majority. For example, in Malaysia for the Bumiputras (Malayans) and in South Africa, in the post Apartheid period, for the Black (Faundez, 1994). There are also other various categories of beneficiaries that have been targeted. In India, for instance, residents of a particular locality are beneficiaries of some

programs; In Australian public services, one of the designated groups are people of non-English speaking back ground (Ibid). Thus, there is a tendency to say that targets of affirmative action may differ from country to country depending on the socioeconomic and political atmosphere of a particular nation.

2.4.3. Types of Affirmative Action Programs

Like the beneficiaries, types of the programs to be provided differ in accordance with the nature and problem of the beneficiaries. The common ones are programs, which are ascribed to education, employment, health services, etc. Thus, a few of them are as follows:

i. The Quota System

It is a system of allotting a number of positions for members of the minority groups and doesn't permit the majority to compete for the place. It is said to be most controversial of all types. This is because it excludes members of the majority from the participation in some segment of an educational institution's admission program (Polyvious, 1980).

ii. The Setting of Goals

This type of affirmative action program allows educators and admission officers to take race or ethnic origin in to account (with many other factors). But, it doesn't reserve a number of positions for members of minority groups (Polyvious, 1980). Such a preference is, as O' Nel (1971) described just "tipping the balance in favor of one student rather than another when all other factors are roughly equal." As prominent critics argued, this type of affirmation action program is more preferable than quota. This is because it is more flexible and considered as the mildest form of preference since some choice must be made (between students of roughly equal qualification) and it is technically accurate to classify as a preference the criterion by which the tie is broken (O' Neil 1971).

iii. Other options

As O'Neil (1971) suggested there are also other options between the quota system and the setting of goals such as admitting applicants on the basis of certain qualifications that others do not share. Moreover, admitting students who are below usual standards in a particular area, and supplementing the regular curriculum with offerings designed to remedy the deficiency is taken as an option. Further, as an option, to take barriers elimination measures such as workplace notices and other documentation provided in languages other than the dominant language is helpful to create an opportunity for the disadvantaged (Faundez, 1994:43).

2.4.4. Coverage of the Program

The issue of coverage is as to which sector of the economy is covered by such a program, that is, public or private. Most countries implement affirmative action in the public sector and some implement such programs both in public and the private sector (Faundez, 1994). For example, in India and Malaysia employment preferences are almost exclusively on the public sector. However, in some states of India, the government tries to persuade private employers voluntarily to grant preferential treatment to certain groups. Similarly in Malaysia, the government uses regulatory powers indirectly to increase employment opportunities in the Private sector (Ibid). In other countries like USA, Canada and Australia the programs cover both sectors. Thus, though the sociopolitical nature of the country determines the coverage, the program is not solely limited to public sector; it also extends to private sector.

2.4.5. The International Recognition of the Concept

Since the establishment of UN, the concept has got an international recognition. Thus, in 1947 the UN commission on Human rights established a sub commission on prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities. In 1960 UNESCO convention against discrimination in Education impliedly permitted preferential treatment in some case. For example,

Art 3 (C) reads Not to allow any differences of treatment by the public authorities between nationals, except on the basis of merit or need, in the matter of school fees and the grant of scholarships or other forms of assistance to pupils and necessary permits and facilities for the pursuit of studies in foreign countries; and

Art (D) Not to allow, in any form of assistance granted by the public authorities to educational institutions or preferences based solely on the ground that pupils belong to a particular group.

The words “except” and “solely” in ‘c’ and ‘d’ respectively imply the preferential treatment on the basis of group membership is allowed so long as such group has any merit and need. Since such a merit may incorporate need to remedy past discrimination, it signifies the recognition of affirmative action.

Subsequently, the 1965 convention on Racial Discrimination incorporates under its Art 1 (4), the principles of affirmative action, which raised controversies on individual and group preferences. Thus, the convention insisted on protecting groups as well as individuals and it becomes not only permissible but also mandatory in some circumstances.

Art 2 (2) reads: “states parties shall, when circumstances so warrant, take in the social, economic, cultural and other fields, special and concrete measures to ensure the adequate development and protection of certain racial groups or individuals belonging them the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.” (P. 24).

Another important sign of international recognition of the concept is the 1979 convention on the elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women. Under Art 4 (1) allows temporary special measures aimed at accelerating defacto equality between men and women. Art (3) of the same convention imposes the state parties a duty of adopting affirmative action programs for women to ensure their equality with men.

Therefore, it can be deduced that international law acknowledges policies of affirmative action to be adopted with the aim of remedying some groups for their past discrimination with in the context of particular situations.

2.4.6. Pros and Cons of Affirmative Action

In recent years, affirmative action has been debated more intensely than any other time. Many proponents view affirmative action as a milestone, many opponents see it as a millstone and many others regard it as both or neither. Thus, to understand the underlying evidences, to argue for or against, it is imperative to see the justifications behind their stand.

2.4.6.1. Pros of Affirmative Action

Proponents who argue for affirmative action enumerate a number of justifications about its importance. Among these, some of them are as follows:

i. It is compensatory justice

A compensatory argument focuses on a victim who has been injured and assumes the injury requires some form of redress. According to the supporters of the idea, the individuals or groups who committed and /or contributed to the injury must pay the compensation (Faundez, 1994:4). Their argument goes on; affirmative action measure is taken as a form of reparation to benefit members of a group who have been discriminated on account of their race, gender, ethnic group, etc. The differential treatment is not based on irrelevant characteristics, however, on the fact that members of the group were treated unfairly because of their race, sex, color, etc (with emphasis) (Ibid).

Nevertheless, the idea of compensating for past discrimination criticized at various times. For example, (Rosado, 1997) argues that a mere workable model should be based on individuals rather than the group traits such as race, color, sex, etc. According to him what is needed in society is a shift to a new social, ecological paradigm of interconnectedness and interference (Ibid)

ii) It creates a level- playing field

The justification of this argument is that affirmative action creates conditions of equal opportunity so that all people may compete on the basis of equality. It also argues that affirmative action satisfies some of the present social status and advances welfare. (Polyvious,1980). He further identified some of the points alleged to the argument. These are creating diversity in education and in those professions that require, the exclusive preserve of some dominant groups, redistributing benefits and advantages, protecting and counter balancing past and present discrimination and avoiding social and political conflict (Ibid: 349). Similarly Claton and Crosby argue that individuals do not exist in society on a level of playing field and what affirmative action does is enhancing the rights of all individuals by leveling the field (1992).

2.4.6.2. Cons of Affirmative Action

Like the proponents of affirmative action, people who argue against affirmative action also have their own justifications and the following are some of them.

i. The argument of reverse discrimination

This argument has a sense of objection against affirmative action program since it considers as a dream of trying to cure discrimination with discrimination which, according to them, is in effective (Seabry 1972). The proponents of the argument suggest if every one is to be treated equally, the argument goes, and then no individuals or groups should be given special treatment. On contrary, proponents of affirmative action argue that the most effective way to cure society of exclusionary practices is to make special efforts at inclusion, which is exactly what affirmative action does (Plouse, 2003). The argument goes on; the logic of affirmative action is not different than the logic of treating a nutritional deficiency with vitamin supplements. For a healthy person, high doses of vitamin supplements may be unnecessary or even harmful, but for a person whose system is out of balance, supplements are an efficient way to restore the

body's balance (Ibid:4)

ii. The problem of dropping self- esteem

The assumption here is that affirmative action tries to help those who are hopeless, rather than redress structural inequities. For instance, Thomas So well (1990) has long argued that affirmative action ultimately harms the discriminated by reinforcing the idea in themselves and in society at large that they are social victims. In this light, even when people of color or women reach a goal with out the help of societal policies, their achievement are diminished and discredited (Ibid). Therefore, affirmative action, according to the arguers subjects the beneficiaries to stigmatization and inferiority complex and there by encourages prejudice among those who benefited from previous unfair treatment (Clayton and Crosby 1992, Wilson: 1993).

However, there are people who oppose this idea; a quite vocal proponent of this view is the African American author Shelby Steele. He has suggested unfairly treated can not be repaid for the injustice done, but can be corrupted by society's guilty gestures of repayment. And affirmative action is such a gesture (Steele 1993:9). There is also evidence that affirmative action policies increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment among beneficiaries (Graves and Powell, 1994).

iii. The Problem of favoring Unqualified Candidates over Qualified Candidates

Those who argue against affirmative action believe that the program selects individuals who are none better than others in qualification. Further, "Equality of opportunity" stated George Roche (1974), has been set aside in favor of equality of result, thus denying the whole basis of professional qualification of individual achievement (P.25). Sidney Hook (1971) made a similar point when he said affirmative action had compelled academe to hire unqualified women,

and to discriminate against qualified men (p.43). Thus, the principal issue of those who speak about merit is the dilution of standards in the academy, and how affirmative action has contributed to the weakening of quality.

Iv. The problem of over inclusiveness

Opponents of affirmative action argue that some have either not suffered or have overcome relevant discrimination. However, they claim in the name of groups under the umbrella of ethnic origin, color, sex, etc to deserve preferential treatment (Polyvious, 1980). Therefore, they suggest individuals economic on social status should have an upper hand rather than serving the enabled ones at the cost of the disadvantaged group.

In general, for the writer of this paper, it seems the way people understand the term affirmative action differs from country to country with in various social status. As a result their argument depends in those frame works of social context and they see it from their country's contemporary situation.

2.4.7. Constitutional Recognition and Implementation of Affirmative Action Programs in Ethiopia

To see the necessity of providing affirmative action in a certain nation, it is important to examine what was going in the past. This is because of the fundamental purpose of affirmative action, as presented previously, is to rectify and remedy past discrimination. Then, the question comes 'was there any past discrimination to justify and present affirmative action programmes that derogate from the principle of equality? Thus, examining Ethiopian constitution and past education policies and practices will give us an overall idea about past discrimination made on a certain social groups of society.

2.4.7.1. Constitutional Recognition

The 1931 constitution is said to be a crude experimentation of written constitution. It seems, rather than creating a limited monarchy; the

constitution gave all sovereign power to the emperor and considered 'citizens' mere 'subjects'. Therefore, the constitution had no equal protection clause or right against discrimination. However, the 1955-revised constitution incorporates two important elements, which provide the right to equality and the right against discrimination.

Art 37: No one shall be denied the equal protection of the laws.

Art 38: There shall be no discrimination amongst Ethiopian subjects with respect to the enjoyment of all civil rights.

The constitution seems to have provided an absolute equality right; yet, it neglected certain social groups who were at disadvantage because of historical imbalance made on them. Thus, the constitution cannot be absolute in providing equal opportunity for the discriminated and it limited their potential in enjoying their rights.

In 1987, the PDRE constitution incorporated more important elements regarding affirmative action and seems more detailed than the previous constitutions.

Art 35(1): Ethiopians are equal before the law, irrespective of nationality, sex, religion, occupation, social or other status.

Art 36(1) In the PDRE women and men have equal rights.

(2) The state shall provide women with special support, particularly in education, training and employment so that they may participate in political, economic social and cultural affairs on an equal basis with men.

Explicitly, the general equality right of the articles provided the necessity of affirmative measures so as to support in areas of education, employment and training. It was more advance than the 1955 constitution. But it ignored other disadvantaged groups focusing mainly only on females.

The 1995 FDRE has shown advancement in the recognition of some affirmative measures and special assistance to some section of the society. For instance, Article 25 of the constitution provides a broader and general equal protection clause.

There are also specific rights of equality and non-discrimination. For instance, **Art 38 (1)**: provides that every citizen has the right and opportunity to vote and to be elected with out any discrimination based on race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion. **Art 41(3)** also provides every Ethiopian citizen the right to equal access to publicly funded social services. Yet, these equality rights are not with out qualifications. For example, as an exception to Art 35 (1), which merely repeats what is provided under Art 25, Art 35(3) provided the following:

“In recognition of the history of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in... and affirmative measures...”

In conclusion, the 1995 constitution is far better than the previous ones for it provided opportunities for most of the disadvantaged social groups.

2.4.7.2. Efforts of Affirmative Action Implementation in the Area of Education

To understand the improvements made with regard to affirmative action, it is imperative to see the efforts made so far in areas of education. Accordingly, below the efforts with in there regimes in areas of education are presented.

Pre-1974 Period

The educational policies and practices were the reflections of the then constitution. They were not in line with the interest and needs of various social groups who were victims of inequality. There was no preferential treatment or admission that could favor any disadvantaged groups of the society. Male and female students were treated equally with regard to admission requirements to

higher education institutions even if women have been socially, culturally and educationally disadvantaged group of the society. This shows that the Equal protection clause of the 1955 was provided for numerical equality. Or it seems there was negligence and indifference by the government to the progress of some groups of the society.

However, in 1972 because of the then revolutionary movement, the government admitted and recognized the policy defects. Some measures were also taken to provide equal educational opportunity to backward area and to female students (MOE, 1972). But, the amendments were solely to primary and adult literacy excluding higher learning institutions and secondary schools. Consequently, the enrollment ratio for female students remained below the males.

1974-1991 Period

Until 1988/89 academic years, there were no special admission policies for female students or for students from educationally disadvantaged ethnic groups. Till then, the preferential treatment was only for sightless students. However, in 1988/89, Ministry Of Education adopted a quota system to admit students to higher learning institutions with some points less than the regular diploma and degree admission requirements. According to the system, which had good high school background, those who could get recommendations from their teachers, and those from poor families could be admitted to higher institutions. Here, the system has two faces. First, it can be taken as an affirmative action for it tried to incorporate the poor as targeted group. Yet, it was too much inclusive and had wrongly targeted beneficiaries. It didn't provide an opportunity to other disadvantaged regions, ethnic groups, females, etc.

Rather, students from historically advantageous regions were treated and made to be beneficiaries. Therefore, the quota system had, to some extent, the effect of perpetuating the existing inequalities between different groups of the society, and it worsened the situation

In general, the educational policies and practices were not formulated within the framework of providing equal educational opportunity to the disadvantaged groups.

Post 1991- Period

At present, various policy declarations have emphasized the pros for females, the disabled and students from less developed regions to take participation in different socio economic and political sectors to produce an inclusive and democratic society. In this regard, as cited in (Yelfign, 2002), the National Policy Of Women states the government shall facilitate conditions conducive to the participation of women in decision-making process with regard to community development, social welfare, division of land property, education and basic social services (p.25).

Another policy statement as stated in Yelfign again is the National population Policy Of Ethiopia which says raising the minimum age of marriage for girls from the current lower age limit of 15 years to 18 years (Ibid). This has a great advantage especially in rural Ethiopia where early marriage is the major factor for school dropouts. Above all, the Education and Training Policy (1994) puts the special attention given to women in article 37.7 as follows.

“Special attention will be given to women and to those students who didn’t get educational opportunities in the preparation, distribution and use of educational support input”

This requires as suggested clearly (Yelfign, 2002), making schools available in the community and encouraging girls to go to school and developing gender sensitive educational mass media programs through various audio visual materials in schools have a great contribution (p.28).

On top of these, Higher Education proclamation (FDRE, 2003) state the following regarding special support for females, disabled students and students

who have completed high school education in a developing regions. It runs as follows.

Entry assessment or admission procedures for any female, disabled students, a student who has completed high school education from developing region and who is native of the nationality of such region or a student from the nationality whose participation in higher education is low shall be different from others. They shall, during their stay in institution, get special support; particular of such support shall be determined by the 'Ministry (Article 33:1)

Referring to these and other policy statements, (Habtamu, 2004) argues that adequate awareness and legal framework exist regarding the inequities that are prevalent in the country in general and in the education sector in particular (p. 7). He also tried to reflect his doubt on the practicability of the policies for there are highly contradictory views because of past deep-rooted un fair treatment (Ibid).

In conclusion, because of such an encouraging effort, changes have been made in girl's education (participation and achievement) at different levels. For example, Girls enrollment at primary level increased from 20.4 in 1995 to 71.5% in 2005 (MOE, 2006). Similarly, Gross enrollment rate for female at secondary level (9-10) increased from 5.7% in 1995 to 19.8% in 2005 (Ibid)

At higher education level by the same manner, statistical abstracts show increment for under graduate degree. For instance in 1997/98 academic year, female enrollment was 13.1%. In 2001/2003, the percentage increased to 15.1%. However, it should be noted that there is a wide gender gap at all levels of education as we move on education ladder. For example, the gender gap for primary education (1-8 grades) increased from 10.9% in 1995 to 16.5% in 2005. In the same way for secondary level (9-10 grades), the gender gap

increased from 1.8% to 14.8% in 1995 and 2005 respectively (MOE, 2006).

Therefore, the above figures vividly show the inequity at different levels of education and it gives the direction in which educational policies and practices to be re- considered.

2.4.8. Female Education and the Contribution of Affirmative Action at Higher Education Institutions

In a social process and change some groups of people may be discriminated or segregated from the basic services of the society. To correct the imbalance made in the past, taking various measures in the form of compensations seem to be important.

Thus, the low participation of females and the severity of competition at higher learning institutions have intensified a debate. This made people to duel on preferential treatment for female at this level. Despite the contentious nature of the concept, the low participation of female student led to launch intervention measures in the form of affirmative action programs to dismantle the inequity prevailed. Its importance is explained by prominent writers for instance (Levien, 1994) contends that the provision of affirmative action programs as a conscious public policy highly contribute to scale up female students' enrolment, at least, in its initial phase. Thus, to this end, measures of affirmative action programs address those aspects of educational process that hamper the limited number of female students to succeed and equally compete with male students in the institutions. To serve the intended purposes as (Lindsay, 1991) points out, creation of social awareness and mass mobilization backed up by allocation of handful resource items of man power, financial, information and material are considered to be forerunner measures.

Further, (Reed, 1983) suggested ways through which the contribution of female affirmative action programs becomes more effective. As he reasoned out, no

single program or policy could accomplish that monumental fact. Affirmative action has helped to open a few doors and the possibility exists that many more can and will be opened for individuals under represented in higher education (Ibid:347). He goes on “Affirmative action is not a panacea” (Ibid). Therefore, it connotes the idea that the program cannot, apart from other efforts, increase the number of female students and it cannot, per se, improve their achievement. However, it can provide a vehicle for erasing overt acts of discrimination with respect to female and they’re by enhancing the probability of increasing their number. To the end of his writing, Reed listed a number of elements to be considered for the effectiveness of female affirmative action at higher education. (Ibid: pp 348-349).

Faculty representatives from each academic unit should form an active campus-wide committee to focus on problems and solutions relative to effective affirmative action policies and procedures.

- 1 More emphasis must be given to grooming female graduate students for faculty positions in higher education. Greater use of members from these groups as research and teaching assistants should be made.
- 2 Affirmative action programs must be considered as a set of interrelated, mutually reinforcing activities. As such, campus affirmative action programs should be well planned, coordinated, and monitored centrally.

As a conclusion, Reeds and other scholars’ works exemplified the importance of affirmative action at higher education institutions. Besides, the writers recommended ways in which the contribution of the program becomes more effective concomitantly.

2.5. Major Factors Contributing to Female Low Participation in Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia

The importance of higher education in efforts to reduce poverty and stimulate economic and social development in Africa, especially sub-Saharan, is generally

recognized. Concurrent to this, the wide recognition of female's critical role in advancement is vital to understand. Yet, fundamental inequities in female's access to and participation in higher education are pernicious features in most African countries. It seems, to this end that different prominent writers agree ameliorating the conditions of women as an urgent priority in the continent. However, it is better, at least for the writer, to discern exhaustively the impediments before moving to the remedies.

Thus, there are myriads of challenges to female students' participation at higher education institutions. Among the factors, the following are the forefront ones (MOE, 2004): poor academic performance at primary and secondary schools, inhospitable learning environment, limited number of female teaching staff, economic constraints, socio-cultural factors, limited research and training programs on gender and women's issues.

To this end, it sounds crucial to deal with each factor in detail to understand their effects on female students' access, retention and achievement at higher education institutions.

2.5.1. Poor Academic Performance

Educators argue that low share of female students at tertiary level is the result of females' low academic performance at lower levels in general and secondary level in particular.

As Ministry Of Education states (2004), a critical indicator for measuring girls' low academic performance at secondary level is the share of female students who Passed National Examination as a percentage of the total number of girls when actually took the examination in a given year. (p.9). For instance, during the academic year 2001-02, (MOE, 2004) only 8% of the total 36, 282 girls who took the ESLCE scored 2.8 GPA and above, while 23.1% of the 60,624 of their male counterparts passed the national examination with 2.8 average grade. In

general, the number of students who took the ESLCE between the academic years 1997/98-2000/01 has shown continued increase from year to year; recording a 66.6% increase for male and 87.1% for female students. However, the percentage of students who passed the examination with at least 2.8 GPA and above has not been increasing accordingly for both male and female students. Of course, the rate of students who passed the examination with 2.8 GPA and above declined from 34.05 to 23.1% for male and from 10.1 to 8.1% for females between the academic years 1997/98 and 2000/01.

Further more, females' academic performance at secondary level, highly influences female students' retention at higher education institutions. According to MOE (2004), the drop out rates for female students is alarmingly high as compared to their male counterparts. For example, in 2002 close to two-thirds of the female freshman students enrolled in undergraduate program didn't pass to second year. (Ibid)

In conclusion, the above figures reveal that female students' performance at secondary level has a great impact at tertiary level. Consequently, it results in acute problems on female students' retention and achievement.

2.5.2. In Hospitable Learning Environment

The learning environment for successful achievement at every school level is crucial. And it is so important at higher learning institutions where, in most cases, students live far away from their family. The learning environment at higher education institutions is comprised of various elements that collectively influence the over all atmosphere and determine how safe and enabling the institutions are to various groups and nurture diversity (MOE, 2004). Above all, gender-based discrimination of any type blatantly affects the well being of female students and adversely influences their ability to survive. This may be reflected and stemmed out from problems related to attitude of teacher towards female students, existence of policies that protect the rights of

individuals including policies against all forms of harassment of female students and existence of mechanism for implementing them. (MOE, 2004). Besides, rules and regulations that protect the safety and security of female students and that govern teachers' code of conduct influence the learning environment positively or negatively (Ibid: 14). Further, in its five- year strategic framework for enhancing female's participation in tertiary education, Ministry Of Education suggested the establishment of offices in support of female's education with in higher education institutions and the presence of female role models to create favorable learning environment (MOE, 2004:14).

As MOE (2004) reported, in Ethiopian Universities, the environment is hostile and unfavorable especially for female students. As the report reveals, female students expressed, at various times, their frustration and helplessness regarding the inability and unwillingness of some of the higher learning institutions to provide them with sufficient protection of their safety and security. The report goes on, students indicated that several incidents of physical and sexual harassments took place in classes, libraries, cafeterias, around their dormitories, and in "study spaces" (P.14). The challenge for the institutions is to recognize the gender-based violence is harmful to female students as well as to the whole students and it requires developing policies and action plans with resource to materialize them. Thus, it seems, in some institutions still there is little understanding about the correlation between hostile campus environment and high female attrition rate.

2.5.3. Limited Number of Female Teaching Staff

The gender gap in the teaching staff and in leadership positions in higher education institutions has been a global issue and nations in developed and developing countries have been dealing with the phenomenon (Makhubu, 1998, MOE 2004). The presence of Women academic faculty and staff is likely to serve, as prominent writers agree, as a base for role models for female students and for minimizing the "hostility" of institutions to female students

(Almaz 2001, Makhubu, 1998). However, there are limited number of female teaching and administrative staff in the world.

For instance, according to UNESCO (1998), on average, women lead only 7% of the universities or similar institutions worldwide. Some of the impediments identified as reasons are attributed to the organizational culture of higher institutions that doesn't allow for diversity. Moreover, women's family responsibility and little chance of being elected in important leadership positions (deans, directors and heads) contributed to fewer roles to be played.

The problem is so acute in developing countries and Ethiopia is not an exception. For example, in 2002 only 199 of the total 2543 teaching staff in public universities were women (7.3 %), 93 of which were employed by institutions based in Addis Ababa. Though research evidences are required, anecdotal evidences suggest that the institutions should work for higher education institutions to re-examine their recruitment policies and procedures to ensure that they are transparent, non- discriminatory and offer equal opportunity for all.

2.5.4. Economic Constraints-Gender specific Impacts on Education

Though higher education in public institutions is tuition free and the government funds the provision of free housing and meal (although latter repaid in the form of service or money), it is still unaffordable for many families. There are expenses that are not within the reach of low- income families in general and rural families in particular. Therefore, poverty forces college and university students to discontinue their education and return home in order to support the destitute family they left behind. This is taken as an opportunity cost for the family since daughter help in the household chores (Helen, 1997; Yonas, 1998).

As MOE research (2004) reveals, poverty aggravates the various problems female students have and contributes to the high attrition rate of rural female

in higher learning institution (p. 212) In conclusion, it is suggested that the provision of scholarship and part time job opportunities to students from low economic backgrounds can easily remedy the situation.

2.5.5. Socio-cultural Factors-Gender specific Impacts on Education

The entrenched view of societies towards gender roles is the key factor affecting female education at all levels of schooling. At an early age, girls are taught to be quiet, shy, and most importantly obedient. Self-expressions and assertiveness are behaviors that do not fit in to the acceptable cultural norms of being a “good girl”. Because of this, the line of socialization as a bridge that connects gender and culture has significant impact on girls’ education. Both sexes are socialized in accordance with the role they are expected to play in society. It is further exacerbated when the family, school media and religious teaching socialize girls and make them to internalize the idea of male dominance (MOIC, 1997). Confirming this idea, Ababayehu (1995) also pointed out parent as the main socializing agent imparts to their male children the virtues of braveness, intelligence, self- confidence and dominance while they teach their daughters to be submissive, dependent, weak etc both physically and mentally. Since boys and girls grow following this line of socialization, when they reach higher education institutions they reflect what was deep rooted in them. As a consequence, female students may develop negative attitude towards themselves. As such, it seems crucial to teach the society at large and make them aware of gender equality.

2.5.6. Limited Research and Teaching Programs on Gender and Women’s Issues

The field of study called women’s studies has developed since the reemergence of the women’s movement in the late 1960s (Sapiro, 1994). Since then women’s studies programs have been mushrooming both in developed and developing nations. However, they are not as in developed countries as various literatures reveal, in their contribution to the well being of the society in Africa (ibid).

Women's studies are not unique in the fact that it links academics and current political and social issues. It is inter disciplinary; that is, it draws on and weaves together theories, research and insights from numerous fields throughout the humanities and social and biological sciences (Sapiro, 1994:10). Because of this, the field of gender studies and research on women's issues has gained recognition as an important field which promotes knowledge and better understanding of gender based norms that govern the society and how these are related to development. Research on gender issues can help advocate for the protection of women's rights and improve the status of women in general. They can also play an important role in creating forums engaging different groups in discussions and help them create better understanding of the role gender plays in society. These studies in addition have a potential to promote a teaching – learning environment that nurtures and respects diversity in race, gender and religion. Above all, these discussions can lead to a better understanding of issues that affect women and men and ultimately contribute to bringing about attitudinal change among staff and students at large (MC E, 2004: 26).

In Ethiopia, ten years have passed since the women's policy was adopted and institutional structure at central and regional levels was created. Similarly, there is a growing demand for trained personnel to fill gender advisor positions created within NGO's and other donor agencies. Yet, in Ethiopia, it is only AAU, which currently studies issues of gender and women at higher education (MOE 2004). According to MOE other universities are following the footsteps of AAU and are in the process of integrating gender in to their curriculum. Thus, the endeavor helps to create the need to mainstream gender into research, program planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation across sectors in creating new positions.

2.6. Prominent Agents to Materialize Affirmative Action Programs

In various countries, the national policies and strategies require immediate

responsible bodies to be implemented. Other stakeholders also have a great share to realize what is intended. Yet, some programs demand extra ordinary effort to break through the barriers. Among these, sensitive sociopolitical and religious issues took the forefront positions or ranks. For example, gender issues are the most contentious topics in the socio economic activities of nations across the world. And it becomes acute problems in developing countries. Therefore, the implementation of such programs require due consideration from all stakeholders at different stages. Below, this paper tries to discuss responsibilities to be played by various government and non-government agencies to operationalize female affirmative measures at different education levels with special emphasis to tertiary education. To this end, the major powerful agents are internal agents and contextual agents (Titjen, 1991).

Further, the internal agents are categorized to Ministry Of Education and institutes of higher education, which are the heart of policy statements or programs to be implemented.

2.6.1. Ministry of Education

As one of the close government body, for example in Ethiopia, Ministry Of Education is expected to put in to practice what is designed at the ministers' council and promulgated at the House of people's representative. With in this framework, Ministry Of Education has the mandate to initiate and promote issues related to education. Thus, it is the responsibility of this ministry, above all, to promote educational equity across the nation. With regard to this (Bastian, 1986) enumerated the following responsibilities to be played by Ministry of Education especially in implementing female affirmative actions (with emphasis) clear conceptualization of the concept of educational equity and its implementation in accordance with educational aims and objectives. He further stated the act of comprehending the impediments to the program and formulating the strategies to mitigate them as core responsibility of the Ministry. Dissemination of the activities to other offices and providing necessary

logistics and program monitoring are also the assignments to be done by Ministry Of Education.

Of course, currently Ministry Of Education, under the auspices of women's Affairs Department designed strategies to enhance women's access to tertiary education (2004). With in the strategies there are objectives to be attained Among these: increasing female in- take in tertiary education, providing assertiveness training to female students at higher education institutions, providing gender-related materials to institutions, increasing number of female teachers, establishing gender department, discussing issues of gender disparity at the annual conference of the higher education institutions are some of them. Nonetheless, it is crucial to bear in mind that the responsibilities are not exclusive to the Ministry Of Education. They can be practiced by institutions if initiated by the ministry.

2.6.2. Higher Education Institutions

Since higher education institutions are the level where the programs become operational, they play a paramount role for the successful implementation of the intervention measures. Therefore, institutional policies and programs related to gender issues have a great importance. Institutional policies such as readmission, grading and examination policies, graduation requirements, the provision of tutorials, consultation, orientation, guidance and counseling services, flexible curriculum requirements, fair grading policy, department transfer etc are the core areas to be dealt in higher learning institutions (Lindsay, 1991).

Moreover, Ministry of Education (2004) recommended the following measures to strengthen the institutions' efforts in support of female education. According to the recommendations, higher education institutions develop an action plan to ensure gender related issues are addressed and that female students receive the necessary support. Besides, the institutions are expected to establish

gender offices (accountable to the institution leadership) and recruit staff for the office to ensure that gender-related issues are appropriately addressed (Ibid:28).

In addition to the above roles, higher education institutions have to deal with issues related to curriculum and instruction. These are making teaching alive and flexible, promoting cooperative and communicative learning as discussions and group works are important elements to be practiced in institutions. Gender relationships can be strengthened through sensitizing campus community environment during orientation, conference, workshops, etc. If researches are conducted and co-curricular activities are maximized, the relationship between male and female can be strengthened and thereby result in conducive environment (Lindsay, 1991) which paves the way for equity education.

2.6.3. Contextual Agents

To achieve such an egalitarian goal at national level, it demands a cumulative effort of both agents. Ministry Of Education and higher education institutions alone cannot lead to the end with out the help of external agents. This is because educational institutions in general and higher institutions in particular depend on myriads of variables outside the learning environment. For example, to run such kind of programs, it requires funds, monitoring the overall programs, support in the form of consultant and material, etc. To do this the central government, the legal pressure groups and interest groups play a great role (Platt, 1997; Tietjen, 1991; Subbarow, 1994).

In general, to provide equitable education at higher learning institutions through intervention measures in the form of affirmative action, concerted efforts should be made by government and its responsible bodies. Besides, other pressure and interest groups have great roles with immediate responsible bodies like Ministry Of Education and higher education institutions.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In this chapter, the methodological structure of the research is disclosed. It moves smoothly through the following sub-topics: specification of the purpose of the study, selection of the research design, identification of the sources and participants, population and sampling, development of the instruments for data collection, data collection procedures and methods of data analysis.

The study was intended, primarily, to investigate the effectiveness of female affirmative action program at Jimma University (JU)-Education faculty using the information secured from the sources. Besides, the study tried to discern the problems ascribed to the program and thereby to show future prospects.

Basically quantitative research design was employed and qualitative as a tool used to complement the quantitative one for unique purpose-ascertaining the effectiveness of the program.

Thus, to procure trustworthy results, survey method was used for the quantitative one. This method is relevant and helpful, as different educational researchers suggested, in showing the existing situation. Amongst, Sharma (2000) briefly described the status of the method as “No category of educational research is more widely used than the type variously known as the Survey”. Since the data was collected at one point in time, cross sectional survey type was employed for this study. Moreover, information collected from respondents via interview and from documents was interpreted qualitatively.

3.2. Data Sources and Participants

To collect reliable information, two types of data sources were used. These were primary and secondary sources. The primary sources were the participants of the study- female students, instructors and gender issue experts. The information was obtained from instructors and students through questionnaire. Interview was used to collect data from the experts.

The primary source was strong enough to exploit first hand information from the subjects. Instructors' and students' profiles and other documents were used as secondary sources. Both types of sources were crucial in building up a comprehensive outcome. Besides, they backed up the researcher to obtain trust worthy information.

With respect to subjects of the study, three types of research participants were involved. It was the researcher believes and the nature of the research questions to make female students, instructors and gender issue experts as part of research informants. Female student participation is indispensable for the research questions targeted to procure authentic information about them. Besides, the program it self was designed to empower female students so that they would compete equally with their male counter parts. Therefore, no one knows about the effectiveness of the program than the victims of inequality. The instructors too have close opportunity to evaluate the program. They are working with in the students' environment and have direct contact than any one else. They can also identify where the problem lies. Eventually, experts from gender office were also involved in the research. Their contribution was so invaluable in diagnosing female students' problem in the institution. Above all, they are assumed to be immediate agents whenever various maladies face female students.

3.3. Population and Sampling

There is a general consensus at least in survey type's research that the first step in sampling is to define the population. Population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group that the researcher would like the results of the study to be generalizable (R.Gay, 1996:122). Generalizability is the extent to which the results of one study can be applied to the other populations or situations. Population, therefore, can be explained as any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are interest to the researcher. Robert Gay further analyzed the term population into accessible

population to which the researcher interested for this study and target population. Target population is the type of population where the researcher can realistically select from and generalize.

Accordingly, this study employed the accessible population where all 2nd and 3rd year female students, instructors and gender issue experts involved. The detailed descriptions of the population are presented in table (1).

In 2006/07, the faculty is entertaining 316 female students excluding new entrants. The population of instructors and gender issue experts were 124 and 2 respectively. Below, the table portrays the population of the research participants.

Table: 1 Population of the Subjects

S.No	Subjects	No	Total	
1	Female students	2 nd year	129	316
		3 rd year	187	
2	Instructors	Male	118	124
		Female	6	
3	Gender issue experts	Female	2	2

The grand sum of the population is 442. Since it is cumbersome to use all the population as research participants, it requires a mechanism to select some of them, which are assumed to be a representative of the population. Next the type of mechanism and how it works will be presented.

3.4. Sampling Procedures

Sometimes to study the whole population would not be feasible or would be positively costly and time consuming. Sampling, therefore, is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that they represent the larger group from, which they were, selected (R.Gay, 1996). The degree to which the sample represents the population is the degree to which results for one are applicable to the other.

Thus, selecting a sample is a very important step in conducting a research. The “goodness” (being representative) of the sample determines the meaningfulness and generalizability, of the results. There are various appropriate techniques for selecting a sample. However, regardless of the technique used, the steps in sampling are essentially the same; identify the population, determine the required sample size, and select the sample (R.Gay 1996:123). Among the probability sampling techniques, simple random sampling and proportional sampling seems to have a great weight to be used for this study.

Thus, proportional sampling was used to select students from the nine departments and instructors from ten departments. Again proportional sampling was employed for students across batches. However, simple random sampling was used at each department. Accordingly, the population for the students in both batches was 316. The total population has two subgroups (batches) 2nd yr and 3rd yr. Both batches share 129 and 187 respectively and their representation was proportional. Next, each department took proportional share in both batches. For each department simple random sampling was employed at each department.

Similarly, the same procedure was used to sample the instructors. Primarily, stratified sampling was used on the basis of gender and department. Finally simple random sampling was employed.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

To get reliable information from the research participants, types of instrument to be used have paramount importance. Thus, questionnaire and interview were identified as pertinent tools of this study. Below, the detailed description and procedures are presented.

3.5.1. Questionnaire

Regarding the importance of questionnaire to collect authentic information,

J.W. Best and J.V. Kahan (1989) put in the following terms "it is used when factual information is desired." Further, Sarantakos (1998) explained questionnaire as an integral part of the process of translation of variables to dimensions and indicators. It has two forms: opened and closed forms. Open-form or unstructured questionnaire calls for a free response in the respondent's own words. In contrary, closed form or restricted type of questionnaire requires a short response, or, check an item from a list of suggested responses.

Accordingly, both forms of questionnaires were prepared for instructors and female students. For the female students six sets of questions were prepared. Each set consists of independent items. The first set of question dealt with the background of the respondents; the second with female students' self-esteem. The third set sought to attain information regarding female students' attitude towards the program. Factors affecting female students' academic performance were presented in the fourth set of question. Adequacy of orientation and sufficiency o. support services took the fifth and sixth sets of questions respectively. Moreover, most of closed-form of questions had open or un restricted streams of responses to further consolidate the responses acquired. Concerning instructors, two sets of questions were prepared. The questionnaire used the background of instructors as an opening statement. With in this set items that exploit trust worthy information regarding instructors were included. Thus, the first set entertained respondents' sex, qualifications, departments and teaching experience. The second set of question dealt with the over all issues of affirmative action program that search factors affecting female students performance and suggestions regarding the contribution of various stakeholders to promote equity education. Like the students' questionnaire, it employed both forms of questions; open and closed, of course, highly interrelated.

3.5.2. Interview

This instrument is in a sense an oral questionnaire. Instead of writing the

response, the subject or interviewee gives the needed information really and face- to- face. Since the interview is often superior to other data gathering devices (J .W. Best and J.V. Kahn, 1989), the researcher was backed to explain more explicitly the investigation's purpose and the type of information required. Whenever subjects misinterpreted the question, the interviewer followed it with a clarifying question. Moreover, through the interview technique the researcher stimulated the subject's insight in to his own experiences, thereby exploring significant areas not anticipated in the original plan of investigation.

Like questionnaire, interview has also two forms. Open and closed form questions. An open-form question was sought to exploit greater depth of response since the participant were encouraged to answer in their own words at some length. The closed form question was made easy to record but yielded more superficial information. Therefore, this study treated both forms of interview questions. The closed-form questions were used to guide the interview process and the detailed information was exploited through open-ended questions. The questions in general were set to dig out information to corroborate results secured through questionnaire.

Though they are often one-time data gathering devices with a very short life, administered to limited population, there are ways, however, to improve validity and reliability of questionnaires and interview. Thus, suggestions from colleagues and experts in the field of inquiry were considered after ambiguities revealed and items that do not contribute to a questionnaire's purpose identified. Moreover, since the key to effective interviewing is establishing rapport, the researcher tried to form good relationship despite the skill is some what intangible, including both a personality quality and developed ability. Here ethical considerations (not to touch interviewees' privacy) were taken in to account though forming good rapport was the utmost quality of the interview. In addition, to elicit significant information from the interview, the questions were carefully structured and the consistency of the response was evaluated by

re-stating the questions in slightly different from at a later time in the interview.

3.6. Methods of Data Analysis

The collected data were tabulated and statistical techniques-percentage, mean and t-values were used for the numerical interpretation. The percentages were used to show the proportion of the responses. Mean used to describe the characteristics of given items. T-values were used to see whether there is a significance difference between responses of different groups for the similar items. Besides, responses collected through interview were narrated to move in parallel with numerical values.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

This chapter deals with presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data secured through various inquiry forms-questionnaire, interview, statistical abstracts of educational information and record files of the departments.

Questionnaires and interview were used to collect and obtain relevant information for the study. To substantiate the major instruments, record documents of each department were exploited.

As the primary forms of data inquiry, 195 questionnaires were distributed to female students, based on the predetermined proportion. Of these, 190 (97%) were returned after being filled. Similarly out of 72 questionnaires for instructors, 70 (97%) were returned. Moreover, interview was conducted with two officials Namely-Jimma University Gender office representative and Education Faculty Gender issue coordinator.

Thus, percentage, mean and t-value as statistical methods were employed to analyze the structured items of the questionnaire quantitatively. To substantiate the procured information through the questionnaire, the data from open ended questions of the questionnaire and interview results were analyzed and described qualitatively in words.

4.1. Respondents' Background

In the study, three types of respondents were participated .To make the characteristics of the respondents more explicit, their composition are presented independently. Instructors' background was included in the study to see their distribution in terms of sex, qualification, department and teaching experience. Sex as an element of instructor's background has a potential to show the participation and involvement of female instructors at the faculty. Qualification, similarly, helps to depict the status of instructors in line with the required qualifications at higher education institutions. Instructors' placement in terms of department elucidates the availability of human resource at each department. Moreover, teaching experience has an implication in teaching

female students in accordance with contemporary realities. Likewise, female respondents' information across batches and departments was incorporated to see their access and participation in comparison with female students. Regarding the interviewees, their positions are quite informative and are supposed to bear the qualities to materialize the objectives of the program. Accordingly, table 2 portrays these compositions.

TABLE 2: Instructors' Background Information

No	Particulars		No	%
1	Sex	Male	64	91
		Female	6	9
		Total	70	100
2	Qualification	BA/BED/BSC	24	34.3
		MA/MSC	43	61.4
		PhD	3	4.3
		Total	70	100
3	Departments	Afan Oromo	7	10
		Amharic	5	7
		English	10	14
		Biology	7	10
		Chemistry	8	11
		Physics	6	9
		Geography	6	9
		History	6	9
		Mathematics	8	11
		Pedagogy	7	10
		Total	70	100
4	Teaching Experience	1-2	14	20
		3-4	34	49
		>4	22	31
		Total	70	100

As portrayed in table 2, 64 (91%) of the instructors were male and only 6(9%) were female. This implies that there were very few female instructors at the faculty who are supposed to be role models for female students.

The instructors' qualification and teaching experience were incorporated in the background to identify whether the faculty had qualified and relatively experienced manpower. Accordingly, the data in the table reveal that about 43(61.4%) were earned their second degree. 34.3% and 4.3% were qualified with first degree and Doctor of philosophy respectively. Nevertheless, according to Ministry of education, higher education institutions at least have to entertain 20%, 50% and 30% of first degree, second degree and PhD holders. Thus, it seems, the faculty has a huge assignment with regard to teacher educators' qualification. Similarly only 49% of total respondents had average (3-4years) teaching experience at the institution since its opening (1994 E.C). Therefore, the faculty requires more experienced instructors to achieve the intended objective. With regard to this, there is an agreement that as the experience of instructors extends the possibility of treating male and female students in an equitable manner increase (John, 1996).

Concerning the distribution of instructors at each department, except- English department (14%), the rest has almost similar proportions nearest to each other. Their percentage ranges from 7 %(Amharic) to (11%each) Mathematics and Chemistry. Three departments (Physics, Geography and History) account 9% of the respondents independently. A couple of departments (Biology and Pedagogy each) also share 10% of the total respondents. This helps not to be dominated by the response of a given department. Of course, if that were the case, since the sampling is proportional it would never bias the rest.

In general instructors' background information shows instructors seem to lack standardized qualifications at the faculty. In addition, sex and department wise representation is not proportional. These impediments, in one way or another, have contributions to dwindle down the expected results from a certain program.

TABLE 3: Distribution of female student respondents in terms of their departments and batches

S.No	Departments	Year	No	Total
1	Afan Oromo	2 nd	20 (26%)	52(27%)
		3 rd	32 (29%)	
2	Amharic	2 nd	13(17%)	26(14%)
		3 rd	13(12%)	
3	English	2 nd	4(5%)	18(9%)
		3 rd	14 (13%)	
4	Biology	2 nd	12 (15%)	24(13%)
		3 rd	12 (11%)	
5	Chemistry	2 nd	5 (6%)	13(7%)
		3 rd	8 (7%)	
6	Physics	2 nd	2 (3%)	7(4%)
		3 rd	5(4%)	
7	Geography	2 nd	14 (18%)	30(16%)
		3 rd	16 (14%)	
8	History	2 nd	4 (5)	10(5%)
		3 rd	6(5%)	
9	Mathematics	2 nd	4 (5%)	10(5%)
		3 rd	6 (5%)	
Total =				190 (100%)

Note:

Total 2nd year female respondent students = 78

Total 3rd Year female respondent students = 112

As can be read from the table, the distribution of the students at each department is by far different. For example, Afan Oromo accounts 27% of the total number of respondents. Physics on the other hand, however covers only 4%. This works across the bathes. Afan Oromo takes 26% and 29% for 2nd and 3rd Year students respectively. Nevertheless, physics accounts for 3% and 4% at 2nd and 3rd year. Geography, Amharic and Biology entertained 16%,

14% and 13% of the respondents respectively. Chemistry and English Language as department participated in the research with 7% and 9% of the respondents respectively. Next to Physics, Mathematics and History took the lowest percentage (5% each) in the study. Since their sampling is proportional their distribution shows that large numbers of students are assigned to language and to some extent social science streams. Science disciplines and history have a limited number of students. This seems as if female students are incompetent in the traditionally called “Male” disciplines such as science and mathematics. This might have resulted because of the lack of sufficient orientation on department choice.

Despite the un proportional distribution across departments and batches, there is an increment with the number of female students enrolment from 2nd year to 1st year. Table 4 explicitly presents the crude figures.

TABLE 4: Number of Regular students at Education Faculty across Departments /2006/07

No	Departments	Year							
		III		II		I		Total	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Afan Oromo	64	54	58	33	101	52	223	139
2	Amharic	52	21	39	22	63	52	154	95
3	English	114	24	108	6	173	25	395	55
4	Biology	66	20	66	19	68	38	200	77
5	Chemistry	92	13	71	9	82	24	245	46
6	Physics	86	9	81	4	101	17	268	30
7	Mathematics	119	10	97	6	98	19	314	35
8	Geography	89	26	105	23	104	49	298	98
9	History	105	10	137	7	102	41	344	58
Total		787	187	762	129	892	317	2441	633
Grand total		974		891		1209		3074	

**Source: Jimma University Education Faculty*

The table shows that the number of male and female students is not proportional. For instance, out of 974 students at third year, only 187 (19%) were female. Male students took about 81% of the batch. Similarly, the numerical gap is wide for second and first year students. Male students took 85% and 73.8% respectively from the total accommodation. This depicts the enrolment of female students to the faculty is very low. On the other hand, female representation from the total population is very minimal and this fact disproves the claim that female students access to higher institution tremendously increasing. In fact, the raw data shows numerical change from year to year. However, it is not proportional if keenly observed. The figure from the table portrays this fact. The faculty runs its programs with 3074 students this academic year. Nevertheless, female students share only 21%. This implies, still the question of getting equitable access to education is under question. Moreover, the representation of female students in some departments worsened the situation. For example, Mathematics department has only 11% of the total students admitted to the department. History department too provides about 17% for female students with in three batches. To optimize the prevailed gender gap at the faculty, Jimma University gender office designed a number of strategies. The strategies are primarily targeted at changing female students' attitude towards affirmative action programs, raising students' awareness regarding the status of female education with respect to their proportion and there by optimizing the importance of providing services with in the structure of the program. Types of services to be provided depend on the capacity of the office and the seriousness of the maladies. The over all philosophy of the office is not only to boom up students performance being dependent on immediate services such as tutorials, however, to empower them so that they become self-sufficient at every juncture. Below, findings from the inquiry forms (questionnaires and interviews) will be analyzed to identify whether the program is producing the intended objectives or not at the faculty.

4.2. Female Students' Self-esteem

The question of self-esteem has a great potential in breaking through myriads of education barriers afflicting students. Female students in particular, requires special treatment to develop strong self-esteem against societal under estimation. However, there have been a number of impediments eroding the confidence and power of female students' self-esteem. The line of socialization as a bridge that connects gender and culture has significant impact on girls' self-esteem. Boys and girls are socialized in accordance with the role they are expected to play in the society. Thus, from early periods, the family, schools, media, religious teachings socialize girls and make them to internalize the idea of male dominancy. As a result, male students develop the virtues of braveness, intelligence, self-confidence, demanding, responsible, superior and important. In contrary, poor qualities of being submissive dependent, weak, less active, easily swayed, and inferior are attached to female as innate traits. The cumulative outcomes of all these factors acutely shape female students to have negative attitude towards their academic ability and potentials. Furthermore, gender role socialization highly slows down the affinity between male and female students and thereby erodes female students' self-esteem since they develop pessimistic self-perception. Thus, Gender office at Jimma University is supposed to provide valuable aids so that students reach their potential.

TABLE 5: Level of Female Students' Self-esteem

S.No	Items	Respondents	Frequency	4	3	2	1	Total	Mean
1	What did you feel when you were admitted to higher education institutions?	students	No	72	54	64	-	190	3.04
			%	37.9	28.4	33.7	-	100	
2	Were you confident enough to graduate when you were assigned to your department?	students	No	-	19	81	90	190	1.63
			%	-	10.0	42.6	47.4	100	
3	How do you evaluate your performance at your department at a moment?	students	No	22	76	52	40	190	2.42
			%	11.6	40.0	27.4	21.1	100	

Note: for Item One: 1. Other 2. Bad 3. Indifferent 4. Good
Two: 1. Yes 2. No 3. Other
Three: 1. Poor 2. Fair 3. Good 4. Excellent

As table 5 shows, the majority of the students (37.9%) were feeling good about their admission to higher education. Similarly, 47.4% of the students were confident enough to graduate from their respective departments. By the same token, 40% of the respondents marked their performance as 'good'. However, the responses for open-ended questions of the structured items don't show the students self-esteem as they claimed in the closed form of questions. Some of the respondents provide issues unrelated to academic concerns. For example, one of the respondents fictiously named Jemanesh wrote she felt good when she was admitted to higher education because she was expecting to be engaged in marriage if she couldn't get an opportunity to escape from her village. She goes on suggesting ...

I was so confident to graduate at the end of the day when I was assigned to my department. I felt so because to some extent the burden I was carrying would be dwindled. However, I am not performing as I expected at the beginning. 5/7/99 E.C

The other respondent too attributed her reason to her family's despotic rule. Her word runs:

My family was controlling me in conservative way. Thus, when I was admitted to higher education, I felt delight though I was not a ware of my future fate. 5/7/99 E.C

Some of the students on contrary felt bad when they had got the opportunity to pursue their education. Most of the responses under the open-ended questions were targeted on the rumor about higher institutions environment. As one of the respondents wrote, "Let alone for female, it is quite difficult even for male students to succeed at higher education." In one-way or another, the ideas reflect what they were informed in hearsay developed in them and produce a negative attitude to wards higher education learning. Rather than taking such an opportunity as a success, they were looking for other less valued competitions. Thus, their suggestions imply that they were not confident enough and didn't want to join higher education. However for the answer

regarding their performance at a moment, they rated as good. Therefore, what they expected and what they deserved is by far different. They were expecting to stay just for a semester, but they managed to promote to 2nd and third year.

Results from the interview substantiate some arguments of the respondents and it has an implication that students seem to have low self-esteem. Gender office representative at the institution expressed the empirical status of female students self esteem in the next statements.

Obviously our students don't have good self-esteem. If they had such a noble quality it would be needless to open gender office over here. One of the major problems for low self esteem at the institution is low self-perception. This moves us back to the society. Since our community don't have good attitude towards female students education, female students join universities with pessimistic self-perception and frustration. As a result their participation in every aspect at the institution remained below their male counter parts. However, there are change implications because of the endeavor made to change their attitude through various orientations provided.

5/7/99 E.C

Further, Elsa-faculty gender issue coordinator, pronounced, "Most of the students have no high self-esteem to compete with male students because of the negative societal attitude towards female education and as a result their self esteem made to be eroded". She further explained, "Though the students are at higher education, still they reflect the attitude of the society towards themselves." Here, the interview response shows another version of the assignment for the faculty to change such unproven attitude that afflicts students' self-esteem. As various anecdotal evidences reveal many parents have negative attitude towards their daughters' education. Female education is considered a luxury and that of boys as a necessity. The education of boys' is

seen as an investment; where as girls' education is considered in terms of consumption. Generally, the result shows contradiction between what the students responded quantitatively and the interviewee suggested. This might be because of the fact that students raised some points, which are not related to the idea of self- esteem in academic context.

4.3 Provision of Orientation

As several research results reveal, there is a notion that higher education institutions are centers for bringing about attitudinal change on various social issues and the learning environment in and around the institutions determine the participation, retention and achievement of female students. Therefore,

Getting relevant orientation helps students to adjust themselves with unfamiliar learning environment to be effective in their academic performance.. For the list of academic support enumerated in table 6, the respondents marked the availability and level of adequacy of the orientation provided on each item. The first item shows 60.5% of the respondents didn't get adequate orientation on their arrival at the institution. However, in relation to this in spite of the inadequacy the orientation helped 48.4% of the respondents to join department of their choice. This is revealed in item two. For the rest items, there is variation in response to each statement. For instance, item 3, 4 and 5 has got "good" level of provision. Their percentage is represented as 54.2%, 35.8%and38.9% respectively. Item seven marked its highest percentage 37.9% for fair provision of orientation. However, item number 8 and 9 tends towards poor orientation on social relation ship in campus having contact with female students who are supposed to be role models and getting special support from female instructors. The results are 30.5%, 37.4% and 50.0% respectively.

TABLE 6: The provision of Orientation at the Faculty

No	Items	Respondents	Frequency	4	3	2	1	Missing	Total	Mean
1	Were you got adequate orientation on your arrival at the institution?	Students	No	-	6	115	69	-	190	1.67
			%	-	3.2	60.5	36.3	-	100	
2	Do you think the orientation you had got helped you in choosing your department?	Students	No	-	10	86	92	2	190	1.56
			%	-	5.3	45.3	48.4	1.1	100	
	How do you rate the provision of orientation regarding the following items		No	36	103	42	9	-	190	2.87
3	Availability of educational services	Students	%	18.9	54.2	22.1	4.7	-	100	
4	How to succeed at the university	Students	No	18	68	60	44	-	190	2.32
			%	9.5	35.8	31.6	23.2	-	100	
5	Academic information	Students	No	35	74	59	20	2	190	2.68
			%	18.4	38.9	31.1	10.5	1.1	100	
6	Social relation ship at the campus	Students	No	29	50	53	58	-	190	2.26
			%	15.3	26.3	27.9	30.5	-	100	
7	Institutional discipline and conducts to be practiced by students	Students	No	31	48	72	39	-	190	2.37
			%	16.3	25.3	37.9	20.5	-	100	
8	Having contact with female students who are supposed to be role models	Students	No	16	47	54	71	2	190	2.07
			%	8.4	24.7	28.4	37.4	1.1	100	
9	Getting special support from female instructors	Students	No	17	18	60	95	-	190	1.7
			%	8.9	9.5	31.6	50.0	-	100	

Note: For Item. 1 & 2: 1. Yes 2. No 3. Other
 “ “ “ “ 3-9: 1. Poor 2. Fair 3. Good 4. Excellent

Nevertheless, the interview result doesn't corroborate the quantitative out comes. Jimma university gender office representative claims the following elements in relation to orientation:

"...The office has a special program to orient all students and specifically female students on academic and non-academic issues."

She goes on explaining:

The orientations are on how to get counseling and tutorial services, how to use educational material, how to protect from sexual harassment, etc.

6/7/99 E.C

However, faculty gender issue coordinator, Elsa suggested additional educational issues. She said,

... The gender office is good at providing theoretical orientations, but, to tell you frankly, there is a great problem in materializing the services. Besides, she said, except few individuals most of the faculty members are not willing to materialize what the office designed as strategy to help female students.

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Here, the interview result portrays the conflicting responses between students and gender office representative. In addition, as the faculty gender issue coordinator pointed out, rendering theoretical principles doesn't mean that the program is effective. Rather, a program is said to be effective if and only if empirical behavioral changes revealed. Thus, for this specific study, the orientation should, at least, open a room for having good relation ship between male and female students in the institution. Moreover, promoting female students and instructors as role models can be taken as utmost qualities of good orientation.

4.4 Factors that Affect Female Students' Academic Performance

There are a number of factors that create gender inequality in education. Several research findings revealed myriads of impediments in different contexts. The major ones are abridged to two macro levels. These are the demand and supply side factor (Subbarow, et al., 1994). According to the educators, the demand side comprises household and community related factors, low demand for female students education and cost of pursuing education. The supply side incorporates school related factors such as enrollment and promotion policy, management, calendar, safety, curricular materials and methods. In general terms, the dominant factors in one way or another related to students' achievement in previous grade levels, socioeconomic strength of the family, socio cultural factors manifested in gender role-socialization, the learning environment, number of female instructors who are supposed to be role models, and research works on gender. The effect of each factors or the combination of two or more of them significantly impedes the retention and achievement endeavor of female students. Its eventual consequence is gender inequality at higher education institutions.

Accordingly, the following table depicts the results in numerical terms. Each item implicitly has different minor factors attached to it. For instance economic constraint as a major factor deals with family related issues.

TABLE 7: Factors affecting female students' Academic performance

No	Items	Respondents	Frequency	3	2	1	Missing	Total	Mean	't' Value
1	Poor academic performance at primary and secondary levels	Students	No	115	60	15	-	190	2.53	*6.531
			%	60.5	31.6	7.9	-	100		
		Instructors	No	68	2	-	-	70	2.97	
			%	97.1	2.9	-	-	100		
2	The un favorable learning environment at higher education	Students	No	85	100	5	-	190	2.42	*-3.732
			%	44.8	52.6	2.6	-	100		
		Instructors	No	14	47	9	-	70	2.07	
			%	20.0	67.1	12.9	-	100		
3	Limited number of female teaching staff	Students	No	61	72	57	-	190	2.02	0.591
			%	32.1	37.9	30.0	-	100		
		Instructors	No	25	27	18	-	70	2.10	
			%	35.7	38.6	25.7	-	100		
4	Economic constraints	Students	No	86	60	44	-	190	2.22	0.861
			%	45.2	31.6	23.2	-	100		
		Instructors	No	27	32	9	2	70	2.26	
			%	38.6	45.6	12.9	2.9	100		
5	Socio-cultural factors	Students	No	101	62	27	-	190	2.39	0.370
			%	53.2	32.6	14.2	-	100		
		Instructors	No	41	21	8	-	70	2.47	
			%	58.6	30.0	11.4	-	100		
6	Limited research and teaching programs on gender	Students	No	16	73	101	-	190	1.55	*2.989
			%	8.4	38.4	53.2	-	100		
		Instructors	No	26	19	23	2	70	2.04	
			%	37.1	27.1	32.9	2.9	100		
7	How do you rate the learning environment at your faculty?	Students	No	73	108	9	-	190	2.34	
			%	38.5	56.8	4.7	-	100		

* Statistically significant at 0.05 two tailed (± 1.96)

Note: For item 1-6: 1.Low
For item 7:1. Other

2.Moderate
2.unfavorable

3.High
3.favorable

A cursory note over the table portrays poor academic performance at primary and secondary schools highly affected female students at the faculty. It counted 60.5% of the responses for the students and 97.11% for the instructors. The mean values show that the results approach to the rating word "high", the minimum mean value is for item number 3- Limited number of teaching staff (2.02%). However, again it is more than average (1.5%) for the three choices. Similarly, Economic constraints and socio cultural factors share 45.21% and 53.2% for the student respondents who ticked under "high" rating value respectively. It implies, in addition to other factors, poor academic performance, Economic constraints and socio cultural factors take the highest proportions in impeding female students' performance. Un favorable learning environment and limited number of teaching staff, as table 7 shows, moderately affected male students' performance. However, the students' and instructors' response variation explicitly seen on the six items; Limited research and teaching programs on gender. More than half (53.2%) of the student respondents claimed limited research and teaching affect at low level female students' performance. On contrary, most of the instructors (37.1) valued the mentioned factor as one of the most prevailing impediments. Besides, the t- values for items 2, 3 and 4 show that there is no significance difference between students and instructors responses.

With regard to the interview results, all factors are mentioned as impeding elements. However, the emphasis was on female students' performance at high school level. Gender office representative, explained the severity of this factor as follows:

... All the problems our students are facing here in one way or another related to their low academic performance at high school level. If they were competent enough there, today no gender related issues would be our main concern at every corner of the institution.

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She also suggested long lasting solutions and as to her a lot of pre-active

measures must be done before they join universities and colleges. However, for short term remedies the office is also working with eight high schools in Jimma and around towns as she said. In parallel to this, the office is designing different project works to discern female students related problems at the faculty and these are providing tutorial services, one to one counseling, financial aid, encouraging female students so that they can be role models in organizing and leading clubs, committees, etc.

4.5 Female Students' Attitudes towards Female Affirmative Action Program

Attitude highly influences students' motivations to get the best out of education. Though arguments are persisting on, there is a consensus that if it is used as a corrective measure, the program is advantageous. It can redress the injustices rather than entrenching the empirical discriminations. To exploit the values attached to it, first and for most, the beneficiaries ought to understand its basic nature.

In most cases, girls are victims of self prophesy i.e. becoming more of what others expect them to be. Primarily, they don't value themselves as eligible for perpetual education or to pursue education equally with boys. Even when they have an access, they frustrate and lack confidence. This might have stemmed from acknowledging the idea of male chauvinists.

If such sort of attitude is implanted in them, it is in escapable that they deduce any form of affirmative action has no potential to lift up their academic status. Therefore, they remain obdurate refusing to change their attitude.

Thus, to see the students' attitude towards the program, lists of statements are presented and the results are tabulated as presented below. To make the analysis smooth and manageable, the five-point attitude scale is abridged to three. The statements in the table have two forms; most of the items bear the direct arguments of the opponents of affirmative action program. Item number eight, however, reflects the convictions of the proponents_ the program develop self-confidence of the beneficiaries.

TABLE 8: Female students' Attitude towards Affirmative Action Program

No	Items	Respondents	Frequency	3	2	1	Total	Mean
1	Do you think female affirmative action programs are helpful for female students' retention and achievement at the faculty?	Students	No	2	65	123	190	1.37
			%	1.1	34.2	64.7	100	
Show your agreement or disagreement for the following items			No	107	29	54	190	2.28
2	Affirmative action is a reverse discrimination	Students	%	56.3	15.3	28.4	100	
3	Affirmative action is a reverse discrimination	Students	No	91	37	62	190	2.15
			%	47.9	19.5	32.6	100	
4	Affirmative action drops down self-esteem	Students	No	84	54	52	190	2.17
			%	44.2	28.4	27.4	100	
5	The public doesn't support the program any more	Students	No	90	33	67	190	2.12
			%	47.4	17.3	35.3	100	
6	It promotes prejudice	Students	No	98	32	60	190	2.20
			%	51.6	16.8	31.6	100	
7	It serves individuals at the cost of groups	Students	No	81	26	83	190	1.99
			%	42.6	13.7	43.7	100	
8	It develops self-confidence of the beneficiaries	Students	No	86	30	74	190	2.06
			%	45.3	15.8	38.9	100	
9	It dilutes standards	Students	No	76	23	91	190	0.918
			%	40.1	12.0	47.9		

Note: for Item 1: 1. Yes 2. No 3. Other
 Item 2-9: 1. Disagree 2. Undecided 3. Agree

At the on set of the table, about 64.7% of the responses affirm their agreement on the importance of the program. Close examination of the results depict that the majority of the respondents agree with the statements listed in the table. The second and the sixth items score inclined above fifty percent; 56.3% and 51.6% respectively. The other percentages corroborate these outcomes. Next to the 'agreement' rating scale, the respondents who mark under 'disagreement' counts certain percentages. As an example, 43.7% of the responses disagreed with Item seven. Nevertheless, the mean values of each 1st, the 7th and 9th items are more than two. The other respondents who represent the minimum proportion are in between and seem to be neutral. Their neutrality might be because of corroborating the hearsay that providing the program is discouraging and killing beneficiaries' potential. However, proponents of affirmative action have justifications for their arguments. For instance, according to them affirmative action by no means be a reverse discrimination rather it brings the marginalized groups to the center (plouse: 2003); It treats individuals or groups who were wronged in one way or another to minimize if not to eradicate the deficiencies.

To sum up, most of affirmative action proponents suggest that the beneficiaries should be let to know the international recognition of the program and nature before inviting them to the program. The underlying chaos as they mentioned is having unproved evidences about the program. According to them, the reverse interpretation of the items in the table fulfills the fundamental objectives of the program i.e. rather than discriminating the wrong doers, it redresses discrimination. Similarly, it encourages females to coup up with male counter parts. Rather than diluting the standards, it creates an opportunity for the beneficiaries to standardize the criteria with in the system.

4.6. Provision of Support Services

Support services have a great potential in getting the intended outcomes from affirmative action program. These services can be academic and non-academic

in nature. The academic services have a direct linkage with students' learning and such as stationary supply, library service, tutorial, counseling, etc. can be incorporated under this service. On the other hand, non-academic services are types of services which are substantial to the academic services. Financial services and other off campus but important issues would be treated under non-academic services. However, both contribute a lot for students' successful performance. Thus, below results of the questionnaires and interviews are presented. The tabulated results represent only close-ended inquiry forms. The interview results are presented only in the analysis part together with the tabulated values.

As can be noted from table 9, 47.9% of the responses for item one are mentioned to be 'No'. However, 42.6% of the responses are marked as 'yes'. Besides, 9.5% of the responses carry different response as un 'decided'. A keen examination of the items note that most of the services indicated under item 2,3 and 5 are provided 'usually'. Their percentages are 57.1%, 37.4% and 41.7% respectively. On the other hand, item 4, 6 and 7 yielded the highest percentage under the 'Never' column. The provision of financial aid and academic support from female instructors, for example, account (49.4% each) under the 'yes' responses. Support from model female students bear 63.7% of the respondents.

Regarding the importance of providing support services, the majority of the responses for the three consecutive items, 8, 9, and 10 have got an agreement scale. The items account 66.8%, 43.7% and 46.8% respectively. The results imply that if sufficient support services are provided effectively and efficiently, female students can attain their speed to run with male counter parts on the educational competition truck. On contrary, for the last two items (11 and 12), the majority of the respondents tilted towards marking on the disagreement scale. To put it in figure, 42.6% and 48.4% of the responses reflect the assumption that support services can't create awareness about gender issues

and cannot serve as a remedy for female students' problems. However, there is a consensus that if provided, as it ought to be, a number of solutions can be exploited from support services. For instance, if a female student gets support from another female model student or female instructor, she would develop a sense of self-esteem and stretch forward to use her potential.

The interview results, however, contradict the numerical values.. Both, gender office representative at the institution and gender issue coordinator at the faculty level mentioned confidently that the provision of financial aid and supports from model female students in collaboration with female instructors are available. The words of gender office representative in the following statements are quite confirming to show the difference.

...The office is providing financial support for some of the female students to cover their monthly expenses on sanitation. Besides, there is a committee mandated to help female students through model female students and volunteer female instructors.

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Thus, her suggestion doesn't corroborate what the crude numerical values indicate. This might be attributed to what the office is trying to provide in the future. Or else, the office is serving informally limited number of individuals at office level. In turn, this seems that the office is not publicizing areas of support at campus level or couldn't identify students who need special support.

TABLE 9: The Provision of Support Services at the Faculty

No	Items	Respondents	Frequency	4	3	2	1	Total
1	Are supporting services available at your faculty? If yes which of the following and to what extent?	Students	No	-	18	91	81	190
			%	-	9.5	47.9	42.6	100
2	Tutorial	Students	No	25	52	13	1	91
			%	27.5	57.1	14.3	1.1	100
3	Counseling	Students	No	31	34	15	11	91
			%	34.0	37.4	16.5	12.1	100
4	Financial aid	Students	No	9	5	32	45	91
			%	9.9	5.5	35.2	49.4	100
5	Allocating sufficient resources	Students	No	6	38	33	14	91
			%	6.6	41.7	36.3	15.4	100
6	Support from female instructors	Students	No	4	16	26	45	91
			%	4.4	17.6	28.6	49.4	100
7	Academic support from model female students	Students	No	1	11	21	58	91
			%	1.1	12.1	23.1	33.7	100
8	Mark your agreement or disagreement regarding the importance of providing academic services It helps female students in accessing and completing education at the faculty	Students	No		127	31	32	190
			%	-	66.8	16.3	16.8	100
9	It creates sense of self-esteem	Students	No	-	83	46	61	190
			%	-	43.7	24.2	32.1	100
10	It paves the way for good relationships among male and female students	Students	No	-	89	39	62	190
			%	-	46.8	20.6	32.6	100
11	It creates awareness about gender issues	Students	No	-	54	55	81	190
			%	-	28.5	28.9	42.6	100
12	It serves as a remedy for some basic female students' problems	Students	No	-	64	34	92	190
			%	-	33.7	17.9	48.4	100

Note: for Item 1: 1. Yes 2. No 3. Other
 2-7: 1. Never 2. Seldom 3. Usually 4. Always
 8-12: 1. Disagree 2. Undecided 3. Agree

4.7. The Importance of Female Affirmative Action Program and How to Make It More Effective

To evaluate a given program, it demands to consider, at least three basic elements. Primarily, the importance of the program takes the lead. Unless the program has some valuable outcomes, the destination would be spending resources with getting nothing. The other important element is to discern its effectiveness. The question of effectiveness goes with getting the intended outcomes as speculated. Let the program be important, if it doesn't bear what assumed to deserve, it will not, at all, be effective. Finally, a program can be more effective through employing various diverse strategies. These triple elements complement each other to get the maximum value from a given program. Accordingly, the following table tries to respond to these elements. The tabulated values are results of close-ended questionnaires. Interview results are presented in the analysis part together with close-ended responses from the questionnaires.

TABLE 10: The Importance and Effectiveness of Female Affirmative Action Programs at the Faculty

No	Items	Respondents	Frequency	3	2	1	Missing	Total	Mean
1	Do you think intervention measures are important at higher education to promote gender equity?	Instructors	No	16	3	51	-	70	1.50
			%	22.9	4.2	72.9	-	100	
2	Do you think the curricular materials at your department integrate contents related to gender issues?	Instructors	No	4	50	14	2	70	1.85
			%	5.7	71.4	20.0	2.9	100	
3	Is the gender office at Jimma University effective in promoting equity education for your faculty?	Instructors	No	20	35	15	-	70	2.07
			%	28.6	50.0	21.4	-	100	
How do you rate the following items of regarding their importance in getting the best out of the program?		Instructors							2.76
4	Providing scholarship service		No	57	6	5	2	70	
			%	81.4	8.6	7.1	2.9	100	
5	Strengthening gender guidance and counseling service	Instructors	No	66	2	2	-	70	2.91
			%	94.2	2.9	2.9	-	100	
6	Re-examining current institutional policy and practices regarding gender inequalities	Instructors	No	58	4	8	-	70	2.71
			%	82.9	5.7	11.4	-	100	
7	Promoting co-curricular activities related to gender issues	Instructors	No	63	7	-	-	70	2.90
			%	90	10	-	-	100	
8	Encouraging female students to take leadership positions in student counsels, association and clubs	Instructors	No	58	8	4	-	70	2.77
			%	82.9	11.4	5.7	-	100	

Continued on the next page.....

No	Items	Respondents	Frequency	3	2	1	Total	Mean
9	Developing mentoring programs for female students	Instructors	No	54	14	2	70	2.74
			%	77.1	20.0	2.9	100	
10	Exploring national and international funds to run affirmative action programs	Instructors	No	57	3	10	70	2.67
			%	81.4	4.3	14.3	100	
11	Raising staff awareness on issues of sexual harassment	Instructors	No	57	13	-	70	2.81
			%	81.4	18.6	-	100	
12	Developing anti-sexual harassment policies and grievance procedures	Instructors	No	62	6	2	70	2.86
			%	88.5	8.6	2.9	100	
13	Popularizing the benefits of taking tutorial services	Instructors	No	63	2	5	70	2.83
			%	90.0	2.9	7.1	100	
14	Involving gender offices and students in the planning and implementation of the tutorial service programs	Instructors	No	66	-	4	70	2.89
			%	94.3	-	5.7	100	
15	Establishing gender studies department	Instructors	No	60	6	4	70	2.80
			%	85.7	8.6	5.7	100	
16	Developing University linkage programs	Instructors	No	63	3	4	70	2.84
			%	90.0	4.3	5.7	100	
17	Coordinating activities with government and non government organization that advocate and work for gender equality	Instructors	No	68	2	-	70	2.97
			%	97.1	2.9	-	100	

Note: for Items 1, 2 and 3: 1. Yes 2. No 3. Other
4 -17: 1. Disagree 2. Undecided 3. Agree

With the exception of the 1st three items, the rest fourteen items try to answer the question how affirmative action program becomes more effective Responses regarding the importance of intervention measures in the form of affirmative action at higher education to promote equity education are more of positive and shows an agreement. Thus, for item number one 72.9 % of the responses mentioned to be 'yes' and only 4.2% of the responses take the 'No' choice. Infact, 22.9% of the responses have additional comments.

For the additional comments, a large number of suggestions are provided. However, they can be summarized as follows: The interventions have two faces. Intervening after awareness creation and intervening with out creating awareness about gender gap. If the beneficiaries understand the prominently prevailed gender gap, they will be willing to be served. Otherwise, they suggest, rather than spending resources unnecessarily, nothing will be gained from the program.

Regarding the contents of curricular materials whether they entertain gender issues or not, 71.4% of the responses claimed it to be 'No'. Only 20% of the responses are mentioned to be 'yes'.

Concerning the measures to be taken to have more effective affirmative action program, most of the items get an agreement scale of reference. About six items (5, 7,13,14,16 and 17) have ninety and more than that percent in their response. The other too record totally more than 50% to be 'Agree'. Specifically three items account the largest percentages. Strengthening gender guidance and counseling service get the respondents' support by 94.2%. Similarly, involving gender office and students in the planning and implementation of the tutorial service programs bear 94.3% of the responses. Surprisingly, with great emphasis, 97.1% of the respondents mark the importance of coordinating activities with government and non-government organizations that advocate and work for gender equality to promote equity education at the faculty..

Despite the recognition of the importance of the program at the faculty, the result shows serious drawbacks on the inclusion of gender related contents is one of the manifestations of equity education especially at higher education institutions where learners are highly influenced by contents to be taught.

Strikingly, strengthening gender guidance and counseling, promoting co-curricular activities and popularizing the benefits of tutorials were the highly acclaimed statements to improve the effectiveness of the program. Furthermore, a concerted effort of students and gender office in planning for tutorial program and the establishment of department (gender studies) has got utmost support.

Finally to find out whether the program at the faculty level is effective or not, a general question was asked and as can be noted from the table, 50% of the responses reveal that it was not effective. Their response to open ended question also correspond with the numerical values.” But what the gender office is claiming is different-the program is successful though barriers are prevailing.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Summary

The general objective of this study was to examine the effectiveness of female affirmative action at Jimma University-Education Faculty. To attain the objective, the following basic research questions were treated.

1. What is the attitude of female students towards female affirmative action?
2. What are the main constraints that female students face in accessing and completing education at the faculty?
3. Which intervention measures and options appear most promising to educational equity?
4. Is the program effective in enhancing female students' participation?

In order to answer the basic questions, questionnaire, interview and document analysis were used as data collecting instruments. The subjects of the study were: female students, instructors and gender issue experts. Survey and descriptive interpretation method were used to attain the research objectives. Simple random and proportional samplings were employed to collect information from students and instructors. However, census was used to secure reliable information from experts.

Concerning the analysis, basic analysis methods such as percentages, mean and t-test were employed. Accordingly, the major findings of the study are summarized as follows.

1. Though affirmative action is under way at the faculty, the number of male and female students is not proportional. Across the batches, the percentages of female students are 26.2%, 14.4% and 19.1% in 2006/07 for the 1st, the 2nd and the 3rd year respectively. The total percentage of female students in the academic year is only 20.5%.
2. Regarding respondents' background

- A) Most of the instructors at the faculty were male. They account 94% and only 6% were female. Their qualifications too significantly vary. Only one female instructor is MSC holder. The rest qualified with BA/BSC degree. Moreover, the highest percentage (49%) of the respondents has only 3-4 years of teaching experience.
- B) Female students' placement across departments was not proportional. Science studies had minimal share as compared to language and social studies.
3. The quantitative result of female students' response revealed that they had good self-esteem. However, their response to the open-ended question had no direct relation to the idea of self-esteem. Moreover, the interview result indicated that female students had no good self-esteem and their self perception is highly eroded.
 4. Although the responses revealed good provision for the majority of the types of orientation, getting support from female instructors and female role model students was very minimal; 50% and 37.4% respectively.
 5. From myriads of factors that affect female students' performance, poor academic performance at lower education levels took the highest percentage; 97.1% for instructors' responses. Similarly, economic constraints and socio cultural factors had great negative impact as the students responded. Moreover, 56.8% of the responses showed that the learning environment at the faculty was unfavorable.
 6. Regarding female students' attitude towards affirmative action programs, the majority of the respondents agreed with statements that reflect the arguments of the opponents of affirmative action.
 7. Out of 190 respondents, only 42.6% of them confirmed the availability of support services at the faculty. Besides, according to the result, financial aid and support from female instructors counted the least percentages. Moreover, the majority of the respondents agreed with the importance of support services for successful academic performance.

8. Concerning the importance of affirmative action program at the faculty and strategies to make it more effective, the data revealed the following points:

- 1 The majority (72.9%) of the instructor respondents agreed on the importance of the program at the faculty.
- 2 Similarly 71.4% of the respondents confirmed the curricular materials had no contents related to gender issues.
- 3 Most of the respondents agreed with all of the statements presented and accounted more than 90%. Above all, the importance of coordinating activities with government and non-government organizations that advocate and work for gender equality to promote equity education at the faculty took 97.1%

5.2. Conclusions

1. Female students' enrolment at the faculty was found to be significantly lower than males' enrolment. Therefore, unless changes will be made at lower levels, their percentages remain to be minimal. Moreover, if there is no successes after female students join higher institutions, the outcomes will be using resource with getting a few things.
2. The percentage of female instructors at the faculty is very minimal. Therefore, female students had a few or no role models and definitely influenced their performance.
3. Large numbers of female students at the faculty were enrolled to language and social science studies and science stream shared lower percentages. Thus, female students' interest towards studying science disciplines was not good and led them to be allergic to science.
4. Female students' self-esteem was not encouraging and the orientation provided was not effective specially on having contact with female role model students and instructors.
5. Although a number of factors affect female students performance at the faculty, poor academic performance at lower levels, economic constraints and socio-cultural factors highly influenced their performance. Therefore, it demands a concerted effort to change the situation.

6. Since female students had negative attitude towards the program, they couldn't get the best out of the program. This resulted in wastage of resource at the faculty.
7. Support services at the faculty were not sufficient. Because of this the faculty couldn't attain gender equity in education though others factors had contributed to the low participation of female students.
8. There was an agreement with respect to the importance of the program from instructors. However, students connoted it negatively. Therefore, awareness creation programs were not done to change their attitude so as to get the intended objectives.

5.3. Implications

Based on the conclusions, the following implications are shown:

In addition to increasing female-in-take at the faculty, using various strategic actions seems to be important. Accordingly, the faculty, in collaboration with gender office and other sectors has to work on:

- Using tutorial services at the preparatory schools as a means to enhance female students' academic performance.
- Strengthening the linking of higher education institutions with preparatory schools through CBTP and practicum programs and creating means to inspire female students to aim for higher education.
- Strengthening gender sensitive guidance and counseling service at the faculty.
- Providing sufficient orientation to female students about both the academic and non-academic matters at the faculty on their arrival as well as through out their learning.
- Incorporating contents related to gender issues in the curriculum
- Encouraging the involvement of female teaching staff at the faculty so as they become role models for female students.
- Creating awareness primarily on the importance of the program.
- Encouraging female students so that they participate in various clubs and develop good self- confidence which is the fundamental criterion to succeed at the faculty.

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Appendices

Appendix A

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHERS
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE FILLED BY FEMALE STUDENTS

Dear Student,

First of all I would like to mention my great regard and much thank for the cooperation you owe me in providing invaluable response to the questionnaire devoting your precious time.

As you well know, since the academic year 1996/97 female affirmative action programs have been implemented in higher education institutions to promote gender equity in education. In this regard, it is the view of the researcher that you have directly or indirectly come in to contact with the issue of female affirmative action programs as the policy maker, strategy designer, practitioner, beneficiary, victim, advocator, etc. Taking in to account such premise, this evaluation study is conducted to see the effectiveness of the program. There fore, I humbly request you to provide your onerous response to every item accordingly.

Thanks a lot

Additional Remark

100the purpose of the study is purely academic and your response remains confidential

101you don't need to write your name

Part I. Background of the respondents

1. Name of the University _____
2. Department _____
3. Faculty _____
4. year of entry -19 _____

Part II. Questions related to female students' self-esteem

1. What did you feel when you were admitted to higher education institution?
 - a. Good _____
 - b. Indifferent _____
 - c. bad _____
 - d. other (specify) _____
2. Would you reason out for your answer in question number one?

3. Were you confident enough to graduate when you were assigned to your department?
 - a. yes _____
 - b. No _____
 - c. other suggestions _____
4. What are your reasons for the answer you have provided in question number three?

5. How do you evaluate your performance at your department at a moment?
 - a. Excellent _____
 - b. Good _____
 - c. Fair _____
 - d. Poor _____
6. Would you enumerate the reasons behind your answer to question number five?

Part III Questions related to the attitude of female students towards affirmative action programs provided.

1. Do you think female affirmative action programs are helpful for female students' retention and achievement at the faculty?

A. Yes _____

B. No _____

2. Would you please reason out for your answer to question number one?

3. To what extent you agree with the following statements regarding affirmative action programs at your faculty? Check your position on the following point of reference

- 4. Strongly disagree
- 5. Disagree
- 6. Undecided
- 7. Agree
- 8. Strongly agree

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
i. It is a reverse discrimination					
ii. It drops down self-esteem.					
iii. It favors unqualified over qualified candidates					
iv. the public doesn't support the program any more					
v. it promotes prejudice					
vi. It serves individuals at the cost of groups					
viii. It develops self confidence of the beneficiaries					
x. It dilutes standards					

Part IV. Questions related to factors affecting female students' education at higher education institutions.

1. What are the basic factors you think contribute for low participation of female students at higher education institutions? List as much as you can.

2. How do you rank the following factors regarding their contribution to low participation of female students at higher education institutions? Mark your choice in the box provided.

Factors	High	Moderate	Low
i. Poor academic performance at primary and secondary schools			
ii. The unfavorable environment at higher education			
iii. Limited number of female teaching staff			
iv. Economic constraints			
v. Socio cultural factors			
vi. Limited research and teaching programs on gender			
vii. Other (specify)			

3. How do you rate the learning environment at your faculty?

a. Favorable _____ b. Unfavorable _____ c. other (specify) _____

4. What are your basic reasons to choose the answer to question number three?

5. How the numbers of female teaching staff affect the performance of female students at higher education institutions? Specify some points

6. What strategies you suggest to create an enabling environment at higher education institutions in general and at your faculty in particular?

Part V. Adequacy of Orientation

1. Were you given adequate orientation on your arrival at the institution?
 a. Yes _____ b. no _____ C. Other suggestions _____
2. If your answer is 'yes' for question number one, what types of orientation were provided? Specify

3. Do you think the orientation you had got helped you in choosing your department?
 a. Yes _____ b. no _____ c. other (specify) _____
4. Would you specify below the reasons for your answer to question number three?

5. In the following questions kindly check the appropriate column against the type and extent of orientation provided at your faculty.

1. Poor	2. Good
3. Fair	4. Excellent

Types of orientations on	1	2	3	4
i. Availability of educational services				
ii. how to succeed at the university				
iii. Academic information				
iv. Social relationship in the campus				
v. Institutional disciplines and conducts to be practiced by students				
Vi. Having contact with female students who are supposed to be role models				
Vii. Getting special support from female instructors				

Part VI Questions related to sufficiency of support services

1. Are educational support services sufficient at your faculty?
 A. yes _____ B. no _____ C. other (specify) _____
2. If your answer is 'yes', kindly check how often and what types of services you have been rendered?

	Always	Usually	Seldom	Never
Tutorial				
Counseling and counseling				
Financial aid				
Allocating sufficient resources				
Support from female instructors				
Academic support from model students				

3. Would you identify other forms of services provided to female students at your faculty? _____

4. To what extent you agree with the following statements regarding the importance of support services to female students. The following statements represent opinions, and your agreement or disagreement will be determined on the basis of your particular convictions. Kindly check your position on the scale, as the statement first impresses you. Indicate what you believe rather than what you think you should believe.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Undecided
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
i. It helps female students in accessing and completing education at the faculty.					
ii. It creates sense of self-esteem.					
iii. It Paves the way for good relationship between male and female students.					
iv. It creates awareness about gender issues at the faculty.					
v. It serves as a remedy for some basic female constraints at the institution (faculty)					

Appendix B

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHER
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE FILLED BY INSTRUCTORS

Highly Esteemed Instructor,

First of all, I would like to mention my great regard and much thank for the cooperation you owe me in providing invaluable response to the questionnaire devoting your precious time.

As you well know, since the academic year 1996/97 female affirmative action programs have been implemented in higher education institutions to promote equity education. In this regard, it is the view of the researcher that you have directly or indirectly come into contact with the issue of affirmative action as the policy maker, strategy designer, practitioner, beneficiary, victim, advocator, etc Taking in to account such premise, this evaluation study is conducted to see the effectiveness of the program. There fore, I humbly request you to provide your onerous response to every item accordingly.

Thanks a lot

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1. Providing scholarship service.					
2. Strengthening gender guidance & counseling service.					
3. Promoting co-curricular activities related to gender issues.					
4. Re-examining current institutional policy and practices regarding gender inequalities.					
5. Encouraging female students to take leadership positions in student councils, associations & clubs.					
6. Developing mentoring programs for female students.					
7. Exploring national & international funds to run affirmative action programs.					
8. Raising staff awareness on issues of sexual harassment at the faculty.					
9. Developing anti-sexual harassment policies & grievance procedures.					
10. Popularizing the benefits of taking tutorial services.					
11. Involving gender offices and students in the planning and implementation of the tutorial service programs.					
12. Establishing gender and women's studies department.					
13. Developing university linkage programs.					
14. Coordinating activities with government and non government organizations that advocate & work for gender equity in education.					

4. Do you think the curricular materials at your department integrate contents related to gender issues?

A. yes _____ B. no _____ C. other suggestions _____

5. Would you list areas of contents incorporated in the curricular materials?

6. How do you rank the following factors regarding their contribution for low participation of female students at higher education institutions? Mark your choice in the box provided.

	high	Moderate	low
i. Poor academic performance at primary and secondary levels.			
ii. The unfavorable learning environment at higher education.			
iii. Limited number of female teaching staff.			
iv. Economic constraints.			
v. Socio-cultural factors.			
vi. Limited research and teaching programs on gender issues.			
vii. Other (specify) -----			

7. Is the gender office of Jimma University effective in promoting equity education at your faculty?

A. yes _____ B. No _____ C. Other suggestions _____

8. What are your reasons to the response you have provided to question number seven?

9. What do you think the roles of the following stakeholders in education to promote gender equity at higher education institutions?

a. Ministry of Education

b. Higher education institution with its faculties

c. Instructors

d. The society

Appendix C

Interview guidelines for gender office experts

1. What are the major constraints affecting female students' retention and achievement at your institution in general and Education Faculty in particular?

2. What measures have you taken so far to alleviate the constraints?

3. Do you have a strong linkage with the women's Affairs Department at the Ministry of Education to work effectively and efficiently on gender issues?

4. How often you work with local stakeholders such as community leaders and interest groups to create awareness about gender issues in education at the faculty?

5. Do you think your office is successful in promoting gender equity in education at the institution in general and Education Faculty in particular?

6. In conclusion, what do you suggest personally to promoter gender equity at your institution?

Declaration

I hereby confirm this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used in this thesis have been dully acknowledged.

Name Tariku Sime

Signature 

Date 27/07/07

Advisor's approval

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor.

Name Dr. K. Eaganalli

Signature 

Date of approval 27/07/2007