



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT**

**Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public
Higher Education Institutions:**

Perceptions, Practices and Challenges

A

DISSERTATION

**Submitted to the College of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa University in
Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Educational Policy and Leadership

BY

EASAW ALEMAYEHU ASSEFA

June, 2024

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Easaw Alemayehu Assefa entitled: *Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: Perceptions, Practices and Challenges* is submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in educational policy and leadership, complies with the regulation of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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ABSTRACT

This doctoral dissertation aimed to critically examine and provide insight into the perception, practices, and challenges of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. Convergent parallel mixed research (QUAN + QUAL) design that, philosophically, followed to the pragmatic research paradigm was used. Information on survey questionnaire responses came from (n=395) undergraduate regular students and (n=247) regular students with disability totally (n=642) who were randomly chosen from among the five public Ethiopian HEIs. Qualitative empirical data gained from n=37 (22 male and 15 female) interview respondents, document analysis and observation. Two types of survey questionnaires with 57 items for Gender Diversity Management (GDM) and 51 items for Disability Diversity Management (DDM) were prepared in accordance with Hurtado's et al., (2012), Diversified Learning Environment (DLE) model. Descriptive statistics (percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Independent samples t-test, Pearson's correlation, & Multiple linear correlation) were used. SPSS version 25 was used to analyze the data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather participants' lived experiences, and document analysis was also performed. It has been found that the overall perception of respondents' regarding GDM & DDM at Ethiopian public HEIs was positive (M=3.34 for GDM, M=3.4 for DDM). On the one hand, the respondents' perceptions of the use of curricular activities in relation to GDM & DDM were low, with a mean score of 2.96 for GDM and 2.8 for DDM. This suggests that respondents perceive the current curriculum in Ethiopian public HEIs to be lacking in content and approaches that adequately address issues of both gender and disability diversity. On the other hand, based on the qualitative data and the grand mean of 3.58 (for both GDM & DDM), the study found that respondents generally had positive perceptions towards the use of extracurricular activities aimed at promoting gender & disability diversity at Ethiopian public HEIs. However, respondents noted lower participation levels for female students and SWDs compared to their male and non-disabled peers. Besides, although policies for managing the diversity of gender have somehow existed, disability diversity-related policies, legislations and guidelines are not effectively communicated and practiced (M=2.44). Physical and attitudinal barriers had a strong negative impact on GDM & DDM. Not putting much emphasis on GDM & DDM is also one of the challenges at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. The commitment of Ethiopian public HEIs' senior leaders to students' GDM & DDM & is positive (M=3.43, and M=3.58), however, their efforts in creating a campus environment that truly welcomes and embraces gender and disability diversity were limited (M=2.86 for GDM & M=2.67 for DDM). Additionally, the institutions did not adequately handle matters related to gender and disability diversity in a fitting manner (M=2.56 for GDM & M=2.65 for DDM). The results also showed that students were not as such satisfied with the GDM & DDM of Ethiopian public HEIs. The findings further revealed that there is a weak and positive relationship between perceptions of GDM & DDM-related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities. There was no significant difference ($p=0.738$) in perceptions of GDM between male and female respondents because $p > 0.05$. This suggests that both genders had similar views on GDM. However, there was significant perception difference ($p=0.022$, $p < 0.05$) in DDM between male and female respondents, implying that their perspectives diverged when it came to DDM. There was a strong positive relationship ($r= 0.613$ for GDM, $r = 0.698$, for DDM) between policy practices and the commitment of senior leaders with a p value of 0.000, <0.01 , which is statistically significant, highlighting the importance of creating inclusive policies and practices to foster diversity and commitment within HEIs. As a result, the researcher identified some key policy & practice implications that would help Ethiopia's public HEIs manage gender and disability diversity effectively: Create a clear vision for GDM and DDM, design & institutionalize more GDM & DDM related curricular & extracurricular activities, plan and implement successful GDM and DDM strategies, review policy directives & initiatives.

Key Words: Disability, Diversity Management, Gender, Higher Education Institutions

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Easaw Alemayehu Assefa

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

June, 2024

DEDICATION

I have joyfully dedicated this doctoral dissertation to my two beloved children, Zablon Easaw and Joshua Easaw. Dream big! If you have faith in God and confidence in yourself, you can succeed. If you are also perseverant, determined, and of excellent character, you can accomplish your goals. I want you to know how much I love you and how blessed and thankful I am for having you.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAU: Addis Ababa University

AASTU: Addis Ababa Science & Technology University

ASTU: Adama Science & Technology University

BDU: Baehiar Dar University

BEST: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

DDM: Disability Diversity Management

DLE: Diversified Learning Environment

DBU: Debre Berehan University

ENPC: Ethiopia National Planning Commission

EPRDF: Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front

ESDP: Education Sector Development Program

FAWE: Forum for African Women Educationalists

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

GDM: Gender Diversity Management

GIS: Geographic Information Systems

GCMS: Gondar College of Medical Sciences

GTP: Growth and Transformation Plan

GPA: Grade Point Average

GSFGE: Government's Strategic Framework for Gender Equality

HU: Haromaya University

HDP: Higher Diploma Program

HEIs: Higher Education Institutions

JU: Jimma University

KUE: Kotebe University of Education

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

MoFED: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

MoE: Ministry of Education

MoSHE: Ministry of Science and Higher Education

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

PWDs: Persons with Disabilities

SCUP: Society for College and University Planning

SDG 5: Sustainable Development Goal 5

SWDs: Students with Disabilities

SWVIs: Students with Visual Impairments

TGE: Transitional Government of Ethiopia

UNCRPD: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

UN: United Nations

UNECA: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

UNESCO: United Nations of Education, Science and Cultural Organization

UAS: University of Applied Science

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This chapter focuses on clearly defining and justifying the research problem to be investigated. To accomplish this, the chapter is divided into eight distinct sections. First, it establishes the broader context and rationale for studying the particular research problem. Next, the specific research problem is articulated in clear terms. Following this, the key objectives of the research investigation are outlined. Furthermore, the significance and potential contributions of the study are explained. Additionally, the scope and limitations of the investigation are delineated. The chapter also provides operational definitions for the key terms and concepts used throughout the dissertation. Finally, the organization of the remaining chapters is presented.

"Diversity may be the hardest thing for a society to live with, and perhaps the most dangerous thing for a society to be without." —William Sloane Coffin Jr.

1.1 Background

Across the globe, educational research has consistently evidenced that the topic of human diversity is important and difficult (Kirton & Greene, 2015; Adamu, 2014). Besides, one of the most commonly used words in social and behavioral science is now diversity (Adamu, 2014). It incorporates both visible and invisible characteristics that people use to categorize themselves and others (Pineda & Mishra, 2022). Diversity encompasses accepting the fact that every one of us is unique and recognizing our differences (Berhe, 2023; Byrd, 2019). The differences could be based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, age, physical ability, religious views, political opinions, and other ideologies (Cengiz, 2009). As pointed out by Soner et al. (2017) & Gause (2011), it's about getting to know one another and moving beyond tolerance to accepting and enjoying the many dimensions of diversity that each person possesses.

As suggested by various authors, the new diversity paradigm defines diversity as the act of developing and sustaining an environment that naturally allows all people to contribute to their full potential by categorizing as primary and secondary aspects of diversity (Yang & Konrad, 2011; Pitts & Jarry, 2007). The current understanding suggests that the primary characteristics of diversity are those that are vital to a person's self-concept or core self which includes race, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical ability or disability (Deshwal & Choudhary, 2012). Despite

having various meanings, in this study, diversity is operationally defined as the concept of recognizing the variety of qualities possessed by students with different gender and disability diversity groups within Ethiopian public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In addition, it emphasizes the individuality of students, and the importance of valuing each student for his or her unique contribution of skill, competency, attribute, knowledge, personality trait and so on.

When it comes to the situation in the HEIs, research indicates that, since the middle of the 20th century, proposals from international organizations have pushed for the creation of educational environments that are inclusive of diversity and equality (UNESCO, 1994). Since then, diversity has been highlighted in the literature as one of the primary characteristics linked to HEIs systems' favorable performance (Huisman et al., 2007). For instance, studies by Van Vught, (2008) & Gurin et al (2002), evidenced that expanding a higher education system's diversity is a vital technique for meeting students' needs. Similarly, UNESCO 2022, also stated that to improve relationships in educational institutions, “pedagogies that treasure diversity and pluralism” (p.2) need to be applied. In an earlier study by Terenzini et al (2001), there is an argument that a more diverse system is seen to be better equipped to provide access to higher education students from a variety of educational backgrounds. These arguments show that diversity is frequently seen as a desirable objective for HEIs.

Studies also indicated that diversity is one of the most significantly challenging issues confronting HEIs (Manaze & Zeleke, 2021; Adamu, 2014). Furthermore, several scholars provided empirical evidence demonstrating that unmanaged diversity can lead to anxiety, unhappiness, weakness, inefficiency, misunderstanding, and conflict (Cletus, et al., 2018). This demonstrates that, while diversity is frequently considered a virtue in HEIs because of the potential possibilities it affords, it is not necessarily always an opportunity (Lumadi, 2008). The outcome diversity depends on how it is managed in different contexts.

More recently, academics advocate that diversity management at HEIs has recently acquired attention as a result of increased demand for inclusive teaching, learning, and service settings (Berhe, 2023; Mousa, 2021). Recent empirical research by Wall (2009), evidenced that diversity management in HEIs is an intellectual endeavor that needs inventive thinking, critical analysis, and research. Several scholars provided empirical evidence demonstrating that HEIs diversity management may affect society by transforming HEIs (Aigare et al., 2011). Taken

together, this suggests that HEIs are an ideal context to study diversity management. In this study, diversity management particularly refers to the process of creating and maintaining a positive environment by HEIs where the differences of gender and disability are recognized, understood and valued (Lumadi, 2008), so that they can achieve their aim to promote greater inclusion of students through specific policies, programs, strategies, curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

As argued by Kundu & Mor (2017), sound diversity management research begins with examining perceptions of how their institutions deal with differences and what steps are made to encourage inclusion. Such perceptions of diversity vary from person to person due to disparities in age, gender, disability, education, religion, and job experience (Mousa, 2021;). Prior research has underlined that perceptions of diversity management are inherently subjective and they are never a precise record of an event or scenario (Swanepoel et al., 2008). Similarly, the current understanding suggests that the need for checking the perception of how members of institutions interpret diversity management has grown, since some interpretations by members may encourage or discourage diversity tolerance and dispute resolution (Roberson & Stevens, 2006).

Research also indicates that people make sense of what they perceive and refer to it as reality (Rudhumbu & Chawawal, 2014). On top of that, if a large proportion of individuals have unfavorable perceptions about the success of diversity management, institutions must focus on these opinions regardless of their merit. As a result, regardless of whether or not students' perceptions of diversity management are congruent with reality, what they perceive about it is critical (Henry et al., 2011).

A growing body of evidence supports expanding an interesting curriculum inclusion as a means of enhancing diversity management strategies (Hurtado et al., 2012). Research also found that when students are exposed to diversity in the curriculum, they are more likely to develop critical opinions on how their institution fosters a positive climate for diversity (Mayhew et al., 2006). According to the study's findings, instructors who include various students' points of view into their courses create an environment that is more friendly to students of all backgrounds (Mayhew et al., 2006). Diversity in the curriculum is crucial, but content-knowledge interventions work better when contact with various populations is included (Denson, 2009).

As a diversity management strategy, HEIs are expected to provide extracurricular activities and campus-sponsored events that provide a diverse range of students with opportunities for

meaningful learning outside of the classroom (Denson, 2009). Co-curricular activities have a vital role in nurturing a supportive environment on campus, impacting students' personal development, and improving their academic performance (Terenzini et al., 2001). Like the elements of a classroom, the co-curricular section on HEIs symbolizes staff and student identities in addition to content design, programming, and student development techniques all of which are essential to meeting the demand for diversity management (Engberg, 2004). Diversity-related efforts, such as co-curricular diversity events, are also one way that colleges and universities may assist students in experiencing engagement across differences (Denson, 2009).

When it comes to managing a particular diversity, the commitment of the top leadership shapes individual's perceptions and maintains their behavior even in the absence of tangible rewards or positive reinforcement (Ng & Wyrick, 2011). Research indicates that institutionalizing gender and disability diversity management calls for time, extra resources, and commitment in addition to the usual personal zeal and work (Hurtado et al., 2012).

Fischer (2007) said that one way to improve students' satisfaction with their HEIs' experience was to pay attention to diversity management. In order to maintain overall student satisfaction, HEIs should improve perceived quality, including diversity management (Misanew & Tadesse 2014). To be more precise, Sirgy et al. (2007) said, "That is why satisfaction with social life is greater than satisfaction with academic aspects, satisfaction with social aspects, satisfaction with facilities and services, and satisfaction with overall college life" (p. 123). This justifies that dealing & recognizing diversity with its sound diversity management is becoming increasingly crucial because its recognition and successful management can have satisfaction & positive effect on any individual and institution (Lamberti, 2018).

Some of the diversity dimensions in HEIs that need effective management are gender and disability diversity. Gender Diversity Management (GDM) is a process that aims to develop and maintain a healthy atmosphere in which both genders' similarities and differences are respected, so that everyone may realize their full potential and contribute to an organization's goals and objectives (Berhe, 2023). Lamberti (2018) argued that females throughout the globe face gender diversity inequities that make us question why we haven't managed to overcome this challenge. Similarly, in his own most vital words, Kofi Annan, a Ghanaian diplomat who served as the UN's seventh Secretary-General from 1997 to 2006. (UNICEF, 2006), shed remarkable light on the

importance of gender diversity equality as follows: “Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance. ”

It has also been argued that gender equality does not imply that men and women are equal, but rather that women and men have equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities regardless of their sex or gender (Gomez et al., 2022). Prior research has underlined that GDM promotes creativity by allowing for a more diverse knowledge pool and better decision-making (Glass & Minnotte, 2010). Despite activism and some encouraging scenarios, there is still a gender diversity gap in HEIs that favors men in many developing nations, especially in Africa (Allan, 2012). Studies undertaken in numerous nations continue to reveal that women are underrepresented in HEIs as students, workers, and management despite international initiatives for gender equality and fairness in HEIs (UNESCO, 2016). In both developed and developing nations, women's involvement in HEIs as students is unequal across national, disciplinary, and institutional borders (David, 2015). Although there are differences across and within various areas, according to UNESCO's, 2016 study, there is a pattern where female students' involvement in HEIs tends to decline as one advances from secondary to HEIs. Similarly, Lin (2016) mentioned that female students enrolled in HEIs confront challenges due to having a double home responsibility, low self-esteem, low GDM practice, and less family support. In this context, authors also argue that, given the absence of social support for females inside the HEIs, further data reveals that females' challenges lead them to drop out (Paudel, 2019). In line with this challenge, the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) – achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls-has made ensuring equal access to HEIs for men and women a top priority (Chang et al., 2022). Given the severity gender diversity gap, of course, it would be less probable that sustainable development objectives will be achieved which aim to eliminate gender diversity imbalance at educational institutions (United Nation Women, 2022). Proper GDM could contribute to addressing gender-related challenges in HEIs and achieving SDG 5.

The basic assumption in the concept of GDM in HEIs is that a combination of gender diversity-responsive policies and strategies, such as affirmative action, female-focused curriculum & extra-curricular activities are required to achieve gender diversity equity in HEIs (Loots & Walker, 2015). More specifically, it is argued that to enable more female students and make

meaningful participation in HEIs, deliberate efforts must be taken and focused programs must be devised (Peterson, 2011). This would not only address concerns of gender diversity parity and justice, but it would also help HEIs survive and thrive (Okeke, 2005). The above discussions clearly show that addressing gender diversity issues is the most crucial component of diversity management studies.

As indicated above the other dimension of diversity in HEIs that needs proper management is disability diversity. Disability Diversity Management (DDM) is a process that aims to develop and maintain a healthy environment in which the similarities and differences of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are respected, so that everyone can realize their full potential and contribute to an organization's goals and objectives (Berhe, 2023; Lumadi, 2008). UNICEF, (2008) and Agarwal & Steele (2016), demonstrated that PWDs diversity are the disadvantaged segment of society since they are unseen, unheard, and uncared to the greatest extent and have limited access to regular life. More importantly, research also suggests that disability discrimination is a chronic social problem that hasn't been fully resolved in any country (Azhar, 2014). Actually, many studies have evidenced that PWDs diversity are frequently among the most marginalized members of society and encounter special difficulties in exercising their human rights (Pillay, 2010). At the same time, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006), in Article 30 states that PWDs diversity have equal rights with regard to their educational needs and distinctive cultural identity.

As Antonio Guterres, secretary general of the UN, stated, many nations still fall short of providing necessary assistance for PWDs diversity, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds (UN News, 2018). Additionally, it is crucial to ensure that PWDs diversity have to be represented in decisions, particularly when it comes to education (Jaafar et al., 2019). Yet, it is worth mentioning that, PWDs diversity are among the most vulnerable groups and marginalized populations in the world. These groups frequently face prejudice, high levels of violence, and undefeatable obstacles, which may lead to their exclusion from communal life (Lumadi, 2008).

Though the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2006, individuals with disabilities diversity have encountered discrimination in a number of circumstances, notably when it comes to their participation in education (Kauffman et al., 2022). Various authors have raised concerns that traditionally, students

with disabilities (SWDs) diversity have not been fairly represented in HEIs (Hanafin et al., 2007). Similarly, according to Thomas (2002), the majority of non-disabled students have created obstacles that prevent SWDs from participating in social activities. One such limitation that helps to maintain the discrimination and stigmatization of SWDs is the exclusion of disabilities from the curricula of HEIs (Aquino, 2016a). As argued by Leake, & Stodden, (2014), to empower university graduates to confront the obstacles that keep SWDs from participating in mainstream activities. They have also claimed that DDM concerns must be made more prominent in curricula. Higbee et al. (2010), for instance, addressed the following issue while discussing the current curricula gap in DDM:

Although the number of colleges SWDs diversity is growing and contributing to campus diversity in postsecondary education, many courses and texts that focus on diversity do not address disability. Meanwhile, efforts to embed multiculturalism within mainstream courses and texts tend to focus on race, ethnicity, and gender, and generally exclude disability (p.10).

Blumenthal & Boelen, (2001) indicated that HEIs have a part to play in the mainstreaming of DDM concerns as a result of their unique position to "promote growth and transform communities". However, in practice, disability diversity has received minimal attention in diversity management perception and practice research in HEIs. Future diversity management research cannot just focus only on for-profit diversity management initiatives in order to comprehend disability. Instead, it should look at DDM in connection to a broader variety of management and organizational practices, such as diversity management programs (Dolmage, 2017).

Generally, several factors must be taken into account when examining the HEIs' diversity management. However, for this study, two dimensions (i.e., GDM & DDM) will be taken into account because they are extremely important factors that should be looked into and under researched in the case of Ethiopian public HEIs.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the 21st century's global setting, diversity management has increasingly been positioned as a central policy imperative in many countries (Showkat & Misra, 2022). Along with this, the general consensus is that diversity management is a value involving the concept of an inclusive

society, with the goal of offering equal opportunities to all people, regardless of substantial social and economic inequalities or systemic discrimination based on race, class, gender, religion, disability, and other factors (Langholz, 2014).

Empirical evidences suggested that diversity management is crucial at many stages of human development, but it is regarded to be especially vital during university years since many students enter HEIs in late adolescence or early adulthood, which is a critical developmental time (Adamu 2014; Gurin et al., 2002). Although there is a bulk of research on diversity management in HEIs, most of them are of American origin and focus on race and gender inequalities (Brown-Glaude & Winnifred, 2009). It has been argued that diversity management in education is a much more serious problem influencing HEIs approaches worldwide (Meric et al., 2015). Similarly, in HEIs, where the fundamental end goals are innovation, knowledge creation and transfer, diversity management ideas and ways of thinking are directly relevant (Miller et al., 2008). On Studies also indicated that HEIs are an excellent setting for individuals to further their personal and social growth. HEIs across the world also support the promotion and implementation of diversity management and view it as a great resource for boosting learning and teaching (Maruyama, et al., 2000).

A review of previous works points out that, HEIs in Africa are facing comparable diversity challenges similar to that of HEIs around the world. However, diversity in African HEIs have received little attention, despite the fact that they face a number of challenges that must be addressed in a systematic manner (Adamu 2014; Izama, 2013). There is also a lack of research on diversity issues in African HEIs. Hence, in order to solve diversity-related concerns and gain the benefits of diversity, African HEIs are forced to be reliant on research results from outside the continent (Adamu, 2014).

Ethiopia, the country where the present study is conducted, is one of the highly diverse African countries and it is considered as “*a museum of peoples*” (Wagaw, 1999) which is rich in having more than 80 nations, nationalities, and people with their own ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural, and economic differences. Its public HEIs have students that are coming from all corners of the country, and as a result, there are various groups of students having differences in gender, life experience, performance, religion, ethnicity, culture, and disability (Ambissa, 2010). Deshwal & Choudhary (2012) suggested that, if HEIs are not interested in or do not have a diversity

management strategy, practical problems of superiority and inferiority complex, under empowerment, lack of acknowledgment, unequal treatment, low acceptance, devaluing, and disrespect to age class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, culture, religion, spiritual practice, and public assistance status may rise. This implies the importance of managing diversity in public HEIs in Ethiopia.

The issue of diversity management in HEIs is also considered in the Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation (FDRE, 2019) which states that HEIs' services are free from any form of discrimination on grounds of race, religion, sex politics, etc. Moreover, a culture of respect, tolerance and living together has to be developed. In line with this, HEI is expected to prepare institutional policies, rules, and regulations to ensure effective student's diversity management.

Research findings suggest that HEIs in Ethiopia have significantly grown over the past several decades, leading to an increase in the number of female students enrolled in a variety of academic subjects (Semela, 2010). Despite the sector's growth being very encouraging, achieving gender diversity equality has remained a difficult task. And still, according to the education development road map report, in the HEIs of the country, "there is huge gender gap in enrolment among male and female" students (MOE, 2018, p.49). As noted by Semela et al. (2020), different obstacles to females in HEIs in Ethiopia have been identified by a number of studies.

It is noteworthy that when one climbs the educational ladder in our nation, the gender gap widens in favor of men (MoE Statistical Abstract, 2007). However, the types and causes of gender inequality in the nation's HEIs received insufficient scientific evaluation (Hailu, 2010). In this direction, the annual publication from the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2014), reported that Ethiopia's position in the worldwide rankings for the gender diversity gap in HEIs enrollment from 2016 to 2020 was mostly unchanged (120th in 2016 out of 144 countries and 140th in 2020 out of 153 countries) (WEF, 2016; 2020). The latest report on 2020 from WEF also reveals that at Ethiopia's HEIs, female participation is even lower: "only 5.2% of women graduating from high school attend university" (p.30).

The Higher Education Proclamation (FDRE, 2019) in its article 33:1 stipulates that the existing disadvantaged groups, including female, will get preferential treatment as stated below:

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

One of the challenges that female students face in HEIs is that they are expected to act in a particular way due to gendered attitudes and norms (Molla & Cuthbert, 2014). The "culture of silence," the fear of retaliation for reporting incidents, the lack of basic training regarding sexual harassment, the lack of clarity on what constitutes sexual harassment in the Ethiopian context, the absence of clearly defined structures to report cases of sexual harassment, and the lack of interest among stakeholders in discussing the issue have all worked to sustain sexual harassment as a serious barrier to achieving academic potential in HEIs in Ethiopia (Molla & Cuthbert, 2014; Hailu, 2010).

To show with a specific instance, in Jimma University there aren't many female role models among the academic staff, there aren't as many female students as there are male students, and the female population lacks confidence and assertiveness (Demesse et al., 2002). It is important to stress that the implementation of an affirmative action policy was prompted by the significant attrition rate of female students during the first semester of study, which raised concerns. In a related case, according to Mersha et al. (2013), Bahir Dar University's (BDU) document analysis of students' exam results showed that female students left the university at a higher rate than male students did without finishing their studies. Similarly, on his recent study Kassie (2018) examined and presented that the proportion of female academic dismissals at Addis Ababa University (AAU), was greater than their share of enrolment, graduates, and honors list. Another similar gender sensitive circumstances that exist at Haramaya University (HU), as evidenced by Ali's, (2019) study was, a high percentage of female students drop out throughout each semester of the academic year. Consequently, the problem of female students in Ethiopia's HEIs must be studied in line with the GDM issue so as to do considerable work on alternative HEIs gender diversity policies and strategies.

Research has indicated that, on the issue of DDM, although over one in ten HEIs students have a recognized disability that affects their cognitive, physical, or psychological functioning, disability is still often ignored when discussing student diversity (Aquino, 2016b). In accordance with international agreements, customs, and principles, the Constitution of the FDRE (1994)

exhorts all Ethiopians to access to education, as well as the significance of allocating resources and aid for PWDs diversity as stated on Article 41:1, “The State shall, with its available means, allocate resources to provide rehabilitation and assistance to the physically and mentally disabled”. On top of it, the Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (1994) emphasizes on the provision of special education and training for people with special needs, with particular focus on the preparation and utilization of support for special education, and availability of special financial assistance”

Similarly, Article 41 of the Higher Education Proclamation no 1152, (2019), has four sub-articles addressing accessibility problems for students with disabilities (SWDs): 1) HEIs must make their facilities and programs accessible to SWDs diversity, to the greatest degree practicable. 2) HEIs must relocate classrooms, establish alternate testing processes, and provide various educational auxiliary aids in the interest of SWDs diversity and learning difficulties, to the extent that circumstances and resources allow. 3) Building designs, campus physical environment, technology, and other institutional infrastructures must take into consideration the needs of SWDs diversity. 4) HEIs must guarantee that SWDs diversity get academic aid, such as tutorial sessions, test duration extensions, and submission date deadline extensions. In addition, contemporary research by Birhanu, (2015), showed that despite the fact that a large number of SWDs diversity enroll in universities, there appears to be a lack of effective DDM in providing them with equitable chances.

Tirussew et al (2014) indicated that although the FDRE’s constitution and HEIs proclamation gave due concern for disability issues, Ethiopian HEIs are not well equipped to accommodate SWDs diversity. Tirussew (2023) also noted that although the government of the FDRE has worked to address the rights and welfare of SWDs through its strategies, policies, and constitution, the policies' actual implementation is under question. Studies also show that a variety of challenges prevent SWDs diversity from meaningfully participating in public HEIs. The majority of Ethiopian public HEIs constructed environments continue to provide significant challenges, causing SWDs diversity to look for assistance from others (Almaz, 2011). SWDs in Ethiopian HEIs continue to face significant obstacles that hinder their progress (Abdulfettah, 2018; Arefaine, 2008). A study that investigated the status of Students with Visual Impairments (SWVIs) at Hawassa and Mekelle universities found that SWVIs had to deal with unwelcoming learning environments and institutional settings, as well as non-interest-based department placement, rigid curricula, and unaccommodating evaluation. A study conducted in three public HEIs also found

that SWDs struggle with faculty and student misunderstandings, unfavorable attitudes, and a lack of efficient training resources (Birhanu, 2015). In most cases, HEIs and faculty members struggle to accommodate SWDs and force them to conform to the requirements of the HEIs rather than the needs of the students (MoE, 2006). Generally, SWDs who have enrolled at HEIs are dealing with a range of issues, including academic, social, and physical ones (Ahmed, 2016). To address some of the challenges that WDSs are facing the Education and Development Road Map proposed that “Disability centers and other service centers that provide service to disabled students must be led by professionals who face the challenge. Hence it is better to assign leaders and experts who themselves have the same challenges so that they can understand the problem (p.52). This alone cannot address the different and long-existing challenges that SWDs are facing in HEIs. Any endeavor that aims sufficiently address these problems needs to better understand how disability diversity is being managed in different HEIs. Although there are considerable empirical studies regarding diversity management in HEIs in Ethiopia (e.g., Adamu, & Bejitual, 2007; Adamu, 2013; Adamu 2014; Gobena, 2016; Manaze & Zeleke, 2021; Manaze, 2020; Ambisa, 2010), they did not focus on the GDM & DDM.

Therefore, based on the aforementioned gaps and the significance of the subject, this study aims to examine how Ethiopian public HEIs students perceived GDM & DDM in light of the HEIs policy, strategic planning, and HEIs program considerations, as well as their curricular and co-curricular activities, and lived experiences in line with the satisfaction for GDM & DDM. On top of it, the practice of policy context for diversity management specifically GDM & DDM at Ethiopian public HEIs was assessed.

Thus, to achieve its purpose, in this doctoral dissertation, deep attention was given to the following five basic research questions with their sub-questions:

1. What are the respondents’ overall perception regarding GDM & DDM at Ethiopian public HEIs?
 - 1.1 *How do respondents perceive the use of curricular activities in relation to GDM & DDM?*
 - 1.2 *What do respondents perceive about the use of extracurricular activities aimed at promoting gender and disability diversity?*
 - 1.3 *To what extent do respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM related coursework relate to their perceptions of extracurricular activities?*
 - 1.4 *Is there statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on perception for GDM & DDM?*
2. How are policies for GDM & DDM practiced at Ethiopian public HEIs?

- 2.1. *Do policy practices for managing gender and disability diversity relate to the commitment of senior leaders?*
- 2.2. *What are the relationships between perceptions and policy practices of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs?*
3. How is the commitment of senior leaders to managing gender and disability diversity?
 - 3.1 *Does HEIs senior leaders' commitment for GDM & DDM have significant positive correlation or regression to students' satisfaction?*
4. What challenges do respondents' face in relation to gender & disability diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs?
5. To what extent are students satisfied with the gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs?
 - 5.1 *Is there a significant positive correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities and GDM & DDM satisfaction at Ethiopian public HEIs?*
 - 5.2 *Is there statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on satisfaction for GDM & DDM?*

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to critically examine and provide insight into the perception, practices, and challenges of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs.

1.3.1 Specific objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study aimed to assess the respondents' overall perceptions regarding GDM and DDM at Ethiopian public HEIs, including examining how respondents perceived the use of curricular and extracurricular activities in relation to GDM and DDM, determining the extent to which respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM-related coursework related to their perceptions of extracurricular activities, and analyzing if there was a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents' perceptions. Additionally, the study explored how policy for GDM and DDM were practiced at Ethiopian public HEIs, assessing whether policy practices related to the commitment of senior leaders, and investigating the relationships between perceptions and policy practices of GDM & DDM. The study also evaluated the commitment of senior leaders to managing gender and disability diversity, determined if there was a significant positive correlation between HEIs' senior leaders' commitment and students' satisfaction, identified the challenges

respondents faced in relation to gender and disability diversity, and assessed the extent to which students were satisfied with the GDM & DDM, including examining if there was a significant positive correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities and GDM and DDM satisfaction, and analyzing if there was a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents' satisfaction.

1.4 Significance of the study

This PhD study is significant as it examines an important but often overlooked aspect of diversity management in the context of Ethiopian public HEIs. By focusing on gender and disability, the study sheds light on the experiences and challenges faced by two historically marginalized groups within the higher education system.

Understanding the perceptions, practices, and challenges related to gender and disability diversity is crucial for informing more inclusive policies and practices in Ethiopian HEIs. The study provides valuable insights that can guide institutional leaders and policymakers as they work to create more equitable and accessible learning environments.

The study is particularly timely given Ethiopia's push to increase access to higher education and promote greater social mobility. Ensuring that women and SWDs can fully participate and succeed in higher education is critical for achieving these national development goals. The research findings can inform targeted interventions to address the unique barriers these groups face.

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the broader literature on diversity management in public sector organizations. By examining these issues in the context of Ethiopian HEIs, it offers cross-cultural insights that can inform diversity scholarship beyond the Ethiopian setting. The conceptual framework developed in the study may also have applicability in other non-Western, developing country contexts.

The mixed, in-depth approach used in the study allows for a rich, contextualized understanding of the complex, multifaceted challenges related to gender and disability diversity. This depth of analysis is important for moving beyond simplistic narratives and capturing the nuanced, institutionally-embedded nature of the issues at hand.

The study's focus on both perceptions and actual practices is significant, as it reveals potential gaps between stated commitments to diversity and the on-the-ground realities experienced by marginalized groups. This can inform efforts to translate diversity policies into meaningful, tangible change within HEIs' systems.

By examining the perspectives of HEIs' administrators, faculty, staff, and students, the study provides a multi-stakeholder view of diversity management. This holistic approach is vital for understanding the systemic nature of the challenges and identifying collaborative solutions that engage the entire university community.

Overall, this study makes an important contribution by shedding light on critical but under-researched issues of gender and disability diversity in the context of Ethiopian public HEIs. The findings have the potential to inform more inclusive practices and drive progress towards equitable access and success for all students, regardless of gender or disability status.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

The MoE classified public HEIs into research universities, universities of applied sciences (UAS), and comprehensive universities based on their focus and mission (Ministry of Science and Higher Education [MoSHE], 2020). Although Addis Ababa Science and Technology University (AASTU) and Adama Science and Technology University (ASTU) are both thought of as science and technology universities, this was not one of the categories of differentiations. In a similar vein, the government designated Kotebe University of Education (KUE) as the country's first education university by proclamation number 1263/2022 (FDRE, 2022). Therefore, this study is delimited to five HEIs (one from each of the three categories) and one from science and technology universities together with the remaining Education University.

The research institution, UAS, and the comprehensive university were chosen by their geographic closeness to the researcher's place of residence and study in the nation's capital. The researcher was not able to choose more than one university from each category mainly because of shortage of finance as a self-funded PhD candidate. So, among the research, comprehensive, education, applied sciences and science and technology universities, Addis Ababa University,

Selale University, Kotebe Education University, Debre Berhan and Addis Ababa Science and Technology University were selected respectively.

HEIs diversity-related policies, curricular and co-curricular activities, personal experiences and satisfaction on diversity management were investigated by delimiting on both male & females and disabled students at the selected five HEIs. The actual boundaries of diversity within this research were represented by a combination of surface-level diversity traits (i.e., gender) and deep-level diversity attributes (i.e., disability) since diversity can take many various forms, including additional aspects that are not included in this dissertation. In this study the disability diversity participants were delimited to undergraduate regular students with physical disability, visual disability, and hearing disability. The study delimits its focus to undergraduate and regular students for gender and disability diversity management to concentrate on a specific stage of academic development where these issues have a significant impact. By focusing on undergraduate students, who face unique challenges and opportunities, the study can gather relevant data more easily and accessibly. This delimitation also helps ensure the findings are more generalizable to a broader student population, while also allowing for effective allocation of limited research resources.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

1. *Scope Limitation:* The study was confined to public HEIs in Ethiopia, and did not include private HEIs. This limits the generalizability of the findings to the broader higher education landscape in the country.

2. *Geographical Limitation:* The study was conducted across different areas of Ethiopia, but did not include all public HEIs in the country. The sampling may not have been fully representative of the diverse geographical locations and contexts within the Ethiopian higher education system.

3. *Cross-Sectional Study:* This study was cross-sectional, which provides a snapshot in time. This limits the ability to establish causal relationships or track changes in perceptions and practices over time.

4. *Literature Review:* The study also encountered a significant limitation due to the lack of contemporary and pertinent literature addressing the subject, particularly in relation to the Ethiopian context. The scarcity of articles, books, and other current scholarly material on the topic posed a limitation to the depth of understanding and analysis that could be achieved.

1. 7 Operational Definition of Terms

The terms used in this study reflected the analyzed theories and empirical studies on the specific context of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs.

Perception: Perception is the process through which humans organize and interpret their sensory perceptions in order to provide meaning to their environment, according to Robbins et al., (2009).

Diversity: Diversity in HEIs refers to the range of social and demographic differences, including but not limited to ethnicity, gender identity, religious, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, age, and cultural background, that are represented among the faculty, staff, and student populations of colleges and universities.

Diversity Management: Diversity management in in Ethiopian public HEIs refers to the strategic approaches and initiatives employed by universities and colleges to create an equitable, inclusive, and supportive environment that values, leverages, and promotes the representation and full participation of individuals from diverse backgrounds, identities, and experiences in all aspects of the institutional community.

Gender Diversity: In this study, gender diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs refers to the representation and inclusion of individuals of both gender identities and expressions within the student body of a university or college.

Disability Diversity: Disability diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs refers to the representation and inclusion of individuals with diverse physical, hearing and visual disabilities within the student body a university or college.

Gender Diversity Management: In this study, GDM in Ethiopian public HEIs refers to the policies, programs, and practices adopted by universities and colleges to promote the inclusion, representation, and empowerment of individuals with both gender identities among their student populations.

Disability Diversity Management: In this study, DDM in Ethiopian public HEIs refers to the policies, initiatives, and practices implemented by universities and colleges to foster a fully inclusive environment that accommodates, supports, and empowers individuals with diverse physical, hearing and visual disabilities among their student populations.

Higher Education: In Ethiopia, higher education is defined as education offered to undergraduates and graduate students enrolled in the programs (FDRE, 2019).

Diversified Learning Environment (DLE): A diversified learning environment

encompasses a range of physical settings, cultural contexts, and learning styles for students.

Practice: In this dissertation, practice refers to the implementation of specific diversity management practices or strategies within Ethiopian public HEIs.

Commitment: In this study, commitment refers to the level of dedication or support provided by Ethiopian public HEIs senior leaders towards GDM & DDM initiatives.

Challenges: In the context of Ethiopian public HEIs, students of both genders and diverse abilities encounter a range of challenges, including social, economic, cultural, and institutional factors.

Satisfaction: In this dissertation, satisfaction refers to a feeling of pleasure or fulfillment that arises when student's desires, expectations, or needs are met. It is often associated with a sense of gratification resulting from achieving a goal or experiencing a positive outcome related to GDM & DDM within the Ethiopian public HEIs.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study is divided into five sections. The first chapter provides an overview of the study, including the general context, problem explanation, objective, relevance of the investigation, constraints, delimitations, definitions of key terms, and organization of the study. It sets the foundation for the research and establishes the framework within which the study will be conducted. The second chapter, it focuses on a comprehensive examination of relevant literature. Chapter 3 presented the methodology employed to carry out the study. This chapter details the approach taken, the data collection techniques used, and the rationale behind the chosen methods. It ensures that the study is conducted in a rigorous and systematic manner, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings. In Chapter 4, the collected data from the questionnaire and document analysis are analyzed, discussed, and triangulated. This process involves examining the data from different angles, comparing and contrasting the findings, and drawing meaningful conclusions. It provides a deeper understanding of the research topic and helps to answer the research questions or hypotheses. Finally, the fifth and last chapter builds upon the research conducted in Chapter 4. It presents the significant findings derived from the analysis, discusses their implications, and offers recommendations based on the results. Additionally, this chapter may propose new ideas or avenues for future research, contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the field.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review theoretical and empirical literature related to GDM & DDM at HEIs. The major issues addressed here are, the concept of diversity, dimensions of diversity, types of diversity, respecting diversity, diversity in HEIs, gender and disability diversity, benefits and challenges of diversity, diversity management, perceptions of diversity management, diversity management in HEIs, diversity in Ethiopia, diversity in Ethiopia's educational system, overview of diversity in Ethiopian HEIs, policies that promote diversity in Ethiopian HEIs, gender and disability diversity in Ethiopian HEIs', theoretical framework of the study, conceptual framework of the study.

"I don't read for amusement, I read for enlightenment. I do a lot of reviewing, so I have a steady assignment of reading". —Joyce Carol Oates.

2.1 The Concept of Diversity

According to Thomas (2010) diversity is characterized as "... the differences and similarities, and related tensions and complexities, that can characterize mixtures of any kind" (p. 2). According to this definition, diversity is not only about people's differences, but also about their commonalities in terms of qualities such as nationality, skin color, gender, age, disability, religion, education, or socioeconomic position. Several diversity scholars said that, to fully comprehend diversity, one must consider both the contrasts and similarities of individuals. (Lamberti, 2018).

Pineda & Mishra (2022) defined diversity as any blending of components indicated by similarities and differences. A diversity combination includes both the differences and similarities seen within and across races, ages, genders, educational levels, religious affiliations, geographical origins, and work styles (Kochan et al., 2003). Diversity may take many different forms. Evident traits include things like distinctions in age, skin tone, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and language. Diversity in the background, professional experience, skills, specialization, culture, beliefs, and socioeconomic level is a prevalent trend (Kulik & Roberson, 2008).

Underlined in the most current works of Barnett (2020) is, in order to create a positive, welcoming environment that is safe for differences, allows people to reject, celebrates diversity, and realizes everyone's full potential within a cultural context where everyone benefits it is

important to have a clear diversity management strategy. According to Rosado (2006), managing diversity is a continuous process that releases the various talents and abilities that a diverse population contributes to an organization, community, or society. Multiculturalism is a non-exclusive strategy that includes everyone. The skill of handling diversity is what it is. As a result, diversity serves as a crucial "safeguard against idolatry"—the elevation of one group over all others.

Embracing and celebrating diversity requires conscious effort to build inclusive environments where everyone feels welcomed, respected, and empowered to participate and contribute (Carver, 2002). This involves addressing systemic inequities, promoting equal opportunities, and cultivating cross-cultural understanding. Organizations that prioritize diversity and inclusion often see benefits in employee satisfaction, talent recruitment, customer relations, and overall business performance (Mansouri & Wood, 2007).

At the societal level, diversity is crucial for democratic representation, social cohesion, and the exchange of ideas (Kulik & Roberson, 2008). A diverse population brings richness and vibrancy to a community, but also heightens the need for open dialogue, mutual respect, and a commitment to equity (Fincher, et al., 2014). Promoting diversity is an ongoing process that countries and communities must continuously work towards in order to reap the full benefits and create a more just, innovative, and prosperous future for all (Hunt., et al, 2018).

However, achieving true diversity and inclusion remains an ongoing challenge. Marginalized groups continue to face discrimination, underrepresentation, and barriers to access and opportunity (Brannon et al., 2018). Prejudices, stereotypes, and a lack of understanding between different communities can breed isolation and conflict (Dixon et al., 2012). Overcoming these obstacles requires sustained effort, strong leadership, and a willingness to have difficult conversations about power, privilege, and systemic change (Shields, 2017).

At the individual level, embracing diversity involves cultivating empathy, self-awareness, and a growth mindset. It means stepping outside of our comfort zones, challenging our own biases, and making space for perspectives different from our own (Murray-Larrier, & NCSC, 2021). By engaging authentically across lines of difference, we can break down walls, build bridges, and unlock new pathways for learning and cooperation (Maxwell, et al., 2023).

Ultimately, diversity is not just about celebrating differences, but about harnessing the collective power of human diversity to create a better world (Fincher, et al., 2014). When we fully embrace and leverage the wealth of experiences, ideas, and talents present in our communities, we unleash immense potential for progress, innovation, and social transformation (Fisk, et al., 2019). Diversity is thus not just a moral imperative, but a strategic and creative advantage that we must continue to prioritize and protect.

2.2 Diversity in Higher Education Institutions

According to Pineda & Mishra, (2022) the term diversity used to characterize a variety of phenomena connected to distinctions across and within HEIs. Although it is a bit earlier study, Meek et al. (2000) provided still a very helpful broad definition of diversity:

[...] the existence of distinct forms of post-secondary education, of institutions and groups of institutions within a state or nation that have different and distinctive missions, educate and train for different lives and careers, have different styles of instruction, are organized and funded and operate under different laws and relationships to government” (Meek et al., 2000, p. 3).

In the present study, which is concerned with GDM & DDM across various HEIs, we shall use, the idea of appreciating the range of talents held by students from various gender and disability groups within Ethiopian public HEIs. Additionally, it highlights the uniqueness of each student and the value of respecting each one for their specific talent, competency, characteristic, knowledge, personality feature, etc. Interestingly, in his latest publication, Stachowiak (2016), a professor who teaches about diversity, puts it this way:

Diversity is a largely nebulous idea in this arena, but I do not find it much better understood in higher education, where it is generally understood as the body of services and programs offered to students, faculty, and staff that seek to ensure compliance with non-discrimination and policy law, and to affirm social member group differences (broadly considered) in curricular, co-curricular, and workplace contexts. (p. 117)

It has been evidenced that qualitative data have been utilized extensively in writing on diversity to highlight disparities between institutions. Only a small number of scholars (such as Huisman, 2000) have examined methods for calculating institutional differences. The choice of variables and the significance given to them, however, is one of the crucial challenges for these

mixed studies. According to Huisman (2000), at one extreme, the HEIs system may theoretically be as diverse as feasible by choosing a large enough set of characteristics to make each institution distinct. Huisman argues that choosing the right analytical approach is another crucial matter and that different methods can provide various outcomes for the same data set. Huisman (2000) provides a theoretical framework to address these problems.

Existing research on diversity suggested that since diversity implies various things to different interest groups, choosing variables and measuring diversity as a result presents some fundamental challenges. From a practical standpoint, it is necessary to determine which stakeholders the concept of diversity has relevance for before defining what it is (Gurin et al, 2002). The choice of variables should therefore be suitable. For instance, the government is a major player in any nation's HEIs system, and as was previously said, many governments base their policies on the idea of diversity in HEIs (Bollinger, 2003) For the government, this diversity is probably going to be decided by taking into account both the system as a whole and the variety of institutions within it based on broad, highly visible institutional factors including purpose, student load, program level, and research activity (Guo & Jamal, 2007).

Some studies have also indicated that students, another crucial party in a nation's HEIs system, on the other hand, sees diversity from a very different angle. Diversity is related to option for the student and is dependent on factors including availability, location, programs, reputation, and cost (Huisman et al., 2007). The concept of diversity only has significance for the institutions that students may easily access. Therefore, if the only institutions to which they realistically have access are all the same, they may not understand the significance of systemic diversity throughout a national system (Ramburuth & McCormick, 2001).

As shown in a study by Karkouti (2016) it was emphasized the value of diversity and multiculturalism in HEIs, stating that there should be no exclusionary and/or discriminatory practices that disadvantage minorities. Karkouti (2016), on the other hand, only took into account race and ethnicity in his analysis and definition of diversity, which reads, "Diversity is the engagement across racial and ethnic lines comprised of a broad and varied set of activities and initiatives" (p.54). However, diversity also refers to differences in culture, language, gender, religion, and social class.

It has been evidenced that HEIs should encourage the consideration of race, ethnicity,

gender, disability or national origin in order to support DLE and avoid prejudice (Holland & Ford, 2021). Problem with diversity management can be combated through a variety of professional development initiatives, including the affirmative action policy, academic curricula, extracurricular activities that place a strong emphasis on diversity in HEIs (Barrington, 2004).

Milem et al. (2005) argue that we need greater diversity in society, but educators and leaders have only just begun to grasp the benefits of diversity. In her presentation, Dr. Mobley introduced the notion of the "diversity wheel," which categorizes diversity into internal (ethnicity, age, gender, etc.), external (wealth, attractiveness, etc.), and organizational (management status, job content/field, etc.) aspects. Indeed, because of leaders' confusion between ethnic diversity and gender diversity, the equality issue has not yet been resolved (Mobley, 2013).

Generally, to ensure that students succeed, educators at HEIs should always strive for diversity and take steps to diversify their students, faculty, curricular and extra-curricular (Barnett, 2020; Smith & Schonfeld, 2000). The development of educational policies, strategies and teaching methods should involve both students and educational leaders in order to create diverse and inclusive learning environments. For Kezar & Eckel (2008), connections between student/student and student/faculty bodies can be encouraged by using specific diversity frameworks.

2.3 Gender and Disability Diversity

2.3. 1 Gender Diversity

Gender diversity, or the balance between the two genders, is frequently demonstrated to have a positive effect on innovation in various countries. In instance, gender diversity fosters innovation by enabling a more varied knowledge base and improved decision-making (Brahma et al., 2021). The findings of Ostergaard et al. (2011) evidenced that despite the importance of innovation for economic growth and the alleviation of poverty in developing countries, and in spite of the fact that more and more people are becoming aware of innovation in this context, gender diversity as a means of fostering creativity in developing countries has received little attention in the literature to date.

Existing research from industrialized to developing nations shows that gender diversity equality has a significant impact on how much institutions may benefit from gender diversity for

innovation (Amorelli et al., 2021). Gender diversity equality is firmly rooted in society and is reflected in national policies and regulations as well as in everyday actions like access to education. Institutions would allegedly be able to gain from gender diversity in terms of inventiveness as gender equality increased (Teruel et al., 2013). However, it should be stressed that the advantage of gender diversity is similar in that it will provide men and women everywhere an equal chance (Klein, 2016).

Authors such as Roberge et al. (2011) argued that it would be far more effective if education were supplied equally to boys and girls because it is such a crucial tool for acquiring knowledge. The most crucial component of big institutions' diversity management strategies is their attention to gender diversity issues since it has a direct or indirect impact on them. For example, Miller & Carmen (2009) highlighted that women's contributions to decision-making would be undervalued in a sociocultural context where they are seen as low-status people.

In conclusion, it could be noted that, in contrast to industrialized nations, where it has been demonstrated that GDM has a positive effect on creativity, gender diversity equality is far lower in developing countries in South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa than it is in those countries. The writers note that, however, GDM is vital for both any institutions since it is crucial for innovation in developing countries (Torchia et al., 2011).

It has been evidenced that HEIs commitment and quality for gender diversity equity can serve as a good barometer for a nation's socioeconomic progress (Bhopal & Henderson, 2021). Gender diversity in HEIs have a significant impact on the breadth and quality of public policies, in addition to their contribution to the development of knowledgeable and highly talented persons (Bhopal, & Henderson, 2021). As indicated in the most recent finding by Acosta et al. (2020), prominent area of concern is the active development of a gender diverse environment and the substantial representation of both men and women in HEIs environment. Reviewing the available literature particularly that of Fine & Handelsman (2010), around half of the world's population are women, yet they have a lower literacy rate than men. At times, due to a variety of factors in many regions of the world, females have stayed out of higher education (Altbach, 2019).

It could be argued that, any nation's economic development depends heavily on HEIs, yet female's economic contribution to the global economy is much lower than men's (Suresha & Mylarappa, 2012). Of course, the cost of preventing women from pursuing HEIs in general and

from lower levels of education, in particular, is more than the cost of providing them with an education (Shaukat & William, 2015). In addition, female in HEIs receives the least amount of attention in underdeveloped countries, in contrast to industrialized nations where education is prioritized equally for men and women (Mehmood, et al., 2018).

In their investigation of the obstacles to women's advancement in HEIs, Amin, et al., (2018) identified illiterate parents, cultural norms, low socioeconomic position, the lack of HEIs in distant locations, and stereotypical thinking in families as some of the key causes. Mehmood, et al., (2018) highlighted several challenges that affect female HEIs including physical security and the threat of sexual harassment, the lack of HEIs in an appropriate location, conservative and out-of-date local cultural norms and values, feudalism and its subsystems, poverty and deprivation, and early marriages. Numerous other studies have focused on the challenges that women face as they advance in HEIs (Ali, et al., 2015; Naeem & Dahar, 2016). Despite these challenges, it is intriguing to note that there are fewer gender disparities in the world when it comes to women's educational opportunities (UNESCO, 2012). According to a survey carried out in a public institution, "the number of female students in HEIs are rising in developing countries" (Kaleem & Rathore, 2017, p.37).

More recently, as noted by a number of researchers (Brahma et al., 2021; Amorelli et al., 2021), women benefit intellectually from education in general and from HEIs in particular. They are better able to think critically and logically, are better able to manage their homes and better prepare the next generation, and are better able to find their identities in societies that are still predominately male. The narratives revealed that, their skill, knowledge, and competence can be developed so they can enter and excel in a range of professions and businesses. In turn, this boosts the economy and gives people more power, which protects them against various forms of exploitation and violence (Bhopal & Henderson, 2021). Overall, having more education makes women's lives easier, raises their standard of living, and lessens their vulnerability to different societal, cultural, economic, and professional disadvantages (Amin et al., 2018).

Existing research on gender diversity suggests that female must educate themselves for the sake of themselves, their families, and the country, but they fall behind their male counterparts, in general, /school education (Cin et al., 2021). This divide grew even worse at the higher-level professional education level. This subject could be viewed from a variety of perspectives. Overall, this research provides an in-depth analysis of the perception, practices, and challenges associated

with GDM in HEIs, as well as the under-representation of females among students in Ethiopian public HEIs.

2.3.2 Disability Diversity

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA, 2008), a disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that materially impairs one or more of the person's major living activities. Over 20% of adults in the United States have a disability (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017), making them a significant part of our diverse society. Disability is commonly ignored in debates on diversity, despite the fact that frameworks for diversity are growing beyond non-ethnic qualities (Banks 2016).

Some researchers (e.g., Cin et al., 2021; Davis, 2001) found that it is illogical to exclude disability while discussing diversity. Or, to put it another way, variation is only possible if we overlook cognitive, emotional, and physical limitations. According to Davis, medical paradigms have made it difficult to view disability as a type of variation. While considering human variations from a medical standpoint, the word "normal" is helpful; patients frequently appreciate to hear it when getting advice about their own health from a doctor. For instance, the phrase "typical ethnicity" wouldn't be appropriate in diversity studies, which emphasize individual variances.

In brief, disability diversity will be perceived as aberrant and outside the healthy, dynamic bodies commonly shown in variety celebrations as long as it is viewed in this medical meaning (Davis, 2011). A great deal of the existing research evidenced that the need that students provide medical documents in order to be included in this category from an IHE's perspective may serve to further emphasize the use of a medical model of disability in HEIs (Smit., et al 2021; Newman et al., 2021). In his study, Shallish, (2017), on his part, demonstrates: the exclusion of disability diversity from debates about diversity is also noticeable at the postsecondary level. spoke with individuals involved in diversity initiatives at HEIs.

Building upon the above considerations, in their analysis of application essays for a faculty diversity position, Lee Baker et al., (2016) found that applicants emphasized gender, color, class, and ethnicity. The absence of language referring to disabilities in candidate speeches demonstrates that this is not a crucial aspect of diversity for them. Despite being a significant and crucial issue, disability diversity as a part of diversity was never highlighted in the lectures. Empirical research in the field indicates that the process of identifying persons with disability diversity is crucial because it determines who among the general individual is entitled to special and distinctive legal

and human rights, as well as additional resources and services (Newman et al., 2021). These rights, as previously mentioned, include robust procedural procedure protections intended to ensure basic fairness in all matters relating to the identification and placement of PWDs diversity as well as preventing misclassification (Shallish, 2017).

On the other hand, some researchers (for example, Woodhams & Danieli, 2000) view that by treating all applicants and individuals fairly and allowing them to do their responsibilities without trouble, an organization may show that it values equality and diversity at institutions. It might be surprised to learn that not every institution is free from discrimination, and recruiting individuals with disabilities is regularly ignored (Kreitz, 2008). Although it can seem expensive to pay for a disabled employee, the advantage of lowering inequality at a given institution might make it worthwhile (Muyor-Rodríguez et al., 2021).

Many researchers (for example, Smit et al., 2021; Newman et al., 2021) have investigated that for those with psychological issues, it could be crucial to provide content in other formats and extra time for assignments. Evaluation of diversity management's bigger objectives, practices, and results is critically dependent on fundamental concerns like the one mentioned above. However, it says nothing about how different settings build and manage diversity's many qualities, such as disability diversity. In this regard, Janssens and Zanoni (2005) make some progress.

Why little attention has been paid to discussing DDM in relation to for-profit diversity management programs may be explained by the conflict between disability and the commercial case for diversity management as articulated by Woodhams and Danieli. It has been evidenced that instead of promoting disabled person's participation in institutions, for-profit DDM initiatives contribute to their initial exclusion from paid work (Foster, 2007). This may also be the reason why for-profit diversity management initiatives supported by a business case for diverse individuals are not the main focus of the majority of DDM studies.

Concerning disability diversity in HEIs, there are changes in HEIs. Students are becoming more diverse, and disability is a part of that diversity, which is a significant development. And, disability diversity in HEIs serves as the "the final battleground" of student equity and inclusion, even while policy calls for expanded access for students with disabilities and outlaws' discrimination against them (Aquino, 2016). Understanding the role of disability diversity in the campus climate and including students with disabilities in academic and social settings may be a challenging task for fellow students, faculty, and administrators due to the current perception of

student disability as a form of impairment at the HEIs level, rather than as a part of diversity (Aquino, 2016). However, this study might lay the groundwork for incorporating SWDs diversity into the HEIs sector's present perceptions of disability as diversity.

The study of Thurlow (2001), too, stated that, prior to the 1990s, the majority of HEIs were essentially inaccessible to staff members and SWDs. Disability diversity and associated difficulties were viewed almost solely as individualized medical concerns and the sole domain of HEIs-based medical institutions and those involved in the teaching and training of what was referred to as "professionals allied to medicine." But as the 21st century progresses, there are more SWDs diversity and more support services for students with specific access needs, and disability diversity is increasingly seen by many social scientists and academics as a socio-political issue.

In a bit old study, (NCSPES, 2002), it has been found that relatively substantial advances in the methods used to educate SWDs diversity for success after high school, including their preparation for HEIs, have been documented by several nations throughout the world for almost two decades. Among the fruitful outcomes for SWDs diversity, the proportion of SWDs receiving a high school diploma has been steadily increasing recently, and between 1986 and 2000, a significant increase was seen in the percentage of SWDs reporting having finished high school. Meanwhile, the proportion of SWDs diversity dropping out of high school has started to decline. (NCSPES, 2002).

However, in terms of readiness for post-secondary academics, SWDs diversity continue to fall behind their peers without disabilities. For instance, fewer SWDs diversity received high school degrees from 1996 to 1998 compared to students without disabilities, according to the US Department of Education's 21st annual report to congress on the implementation of the higher education act. SWDs diversity drop out of high school at a rate that is twice that of peers without disabilities, according to NCSPES (2002). Currently, the majority of high school dropouts have a disability (UNESCO, 1999); and when students were ranked according to how qualified they were for college admission, those SWDs diversity were "much less likely to be even minimally qualified" based on an index score of grades and class rank (NCES, 1999).

In the work of Kiernan (2002) evidenced that in practically every nation in the globe, there are obstacles for SWDs diversity in secondary and postsecondary educational settings as well as in the provision of government-funded support services. Social, economic, and educational

barriers have frequently made progress exceedingly sluggish. Over the past 10 years, there has been constant but modest improvement for SWDs diversity (Kiernan, 2002).

For Yuen (2003), as SWDs diversity attempt to enroll in, stay enrolled in, and finish their education in HEIs settings, current policies continue to impede their success. Yuen (2003) also lists the issues as variations in service delivery models and terminology, a lack of internal agency cooperation, and insufficient financing for staff development and resources. Finally, there are little options for students to find jobs.

2.4 Gender and Disability Diversity in Ethiopian HEIs

2.4.1. Gender Diversity in Ethiopian HEIs

Since the early 2000s, there has been a steady rise in the presence of women in public universities in Ethiopia, mostly as a result of the significant growth of the HEIs system and the impact of equality policies and initiatives (FDRE, 2009; MoE, 2004; TGE, 1994). Only 7% of post-secondary enrollment in 1986–1987 was made up of female students, and only 6% of academic women worked in public HEIs in 1998–1999, according to UNESCO, (1988). Since then, these figures have continuously increased, reaching 28% and 9.5% for female academic staff and students, respectively, in 2011/2012. (MoE, 2013: Wondimu, 2003).

Even Nevertheless, inequality in access to and achievement in HEIs still poses a significant concern two decades after the establishment of preferential admission criteria for socially and historically disadvantaged groups. Despite being widespread throughout several educational ladders (Alemu, 2003), the topic of gender imbalance in HEIs in Ethiopia has only lately begun to get official attention. The gender gap in favor of men grows as one moves up the country's educational ladder (MoE Statistical Abstract, 2011). However, the types and causes of gender diversity inequality in the nation's HEIs received insufficient scientific evaluation. What's noteworthy is that women's socialization and the low expectations they've been subjected to at home and in society as a whole prevent them from succeeding in higher education, even when they do (Worku, 2001).

Male and female medical students performed differently academically throughout the early stages of their school, according to research conducted at the Gondar College of Medical Sciences (GCMS) in Ethiopia. It was revealed that female students reported higher feelings of loneliness

and discomfort than their male classmates, in addition to the social and psychological issues that were listed as causes (Demise et al., 2002).

Gender equality is not yet a contentious topic in Ethiopia. It has been codified in policy papers and educational, legal, and political programs. The Constitution (FDRE, 1995) acknowledges the degree of gender disparity and institutes affirmative action in the workplace and other social services, such as education and training (Molla, 2013). The Education and Training Policy (TGE, 1994) also emphasizes the value of encouraging equitable representation of women in the educational system. The Higher Education Proclamation (2019) reiterates the significance of giving "disadvantaged groups," particularly women, a differential entrance advantage. The Government's Strategic Framework for Gender Equality (GSFGE) in HEIs (MoE, 2004) highlighted a variety of methods to encourage the involvement of women HEIs in accordance with these legal and regulatory provisions.

2.4.2 Disability Diversity in Ethiopian HEIs

Concerning disability in Ethiopia's HEIs, there are five subsections of Article 41 of the Higher Education Proclamation No. 1152 (2019) that deal with accessibility issues. These are: 1) HEIs must make their facilities and programs as accessible to SWDs as possible. 2) To the extent that circumstances and resources allow, HEIs must relocate classrooms, institute alternate testing procedures, and provide various educational auxiliary aids in the interest of SWDs diversity and learning disabilities. 3) Building designs, campus physical environment, technology, and other institutional infrastructures must take into mind the demands of SWDs diversity. 4) HEIs must guarantee that SWDs diversity get academic aid, such as tutorial sessions, test duration extensions, and submission date deadline extensions. 5) In light of the Minister's exceptional decision to admit the outstanding student, extra resources are necessary to maintain the pace and quality of instruction.

Additionally, despite the FDRE constitution and HEIs declaration giving adequate consideration to disability concerns, research shows that Ethiopian HEIs are not well-equipped to accommodate students with a range of disabilities (Tirussew et al., 2014). This implies that many Ethiopian SWDs encounter academic and other challenges in public institutions as a result of a lack of suitable special support services, supplies, etc. (HEIs manual., 2014). The Ethiopian Education Development Road Map (MoE, 2018), for instance, suggested disability centers and other service centers that help SWDs diversity need to be run by experts who are up to the task. So

that they can comprehend the issue, it is preferable to designate leaders and professionals who face similar difficulties. In light of the issue of managing disability diversity in HEIs.

Local studies also reveal that a number of barriers prohibit SWDs diversity from effectively participating in society. The good number of Ethiopian HEIs continue to have built-in conditions that pose major barriers that force SWDs diversity to seek help from others (Almaz, 2011). Thus, it follows that considerable challenges still stand in the way of SWDs diversity academic successes are not making much progress because to a lack of appropriate teaching resources, computers, and assistive technology, as well as a lack of curriculum or material modifications (Abdulfettah, 2018; Yared, 2008).

Tedla et al (2022) claims that Ethiopian HEIs offer little to no support for SWDs diversity and don't have a set policy for them. Additionally, Almaz (2011) found in her research that Ethiopian HEIs students had a negative attitude toward peers who are clearly disabled. Birhanu (2015), in his examination of three HEIs, found that that SWDs diversity face challenges such as a lack of knowledge of disability diversity, misperceptions by professors and students, adverse attitudes, and a lack of effective training tools. Universities and professors have a difficult time accommodating SWDs diversity because they make them adapt to institutional rules rather than their needs (MoE, 2006).

2.5 Diversity Management

Diversity management refers to the practice of creating and maintaining an inclusive work environment that values and leverages the differences among individuals. It involves recognizing, respecting, and appreciating individual and group differences in order to maximize the potential of all individuals so as to bring success (Bizri, 2018). According to Ivancevich and Gilbert (2000),

Diversity Management is an institutional or managerially initiated strategy. It can be proactive and is based on operational reality to optimize the use and contributions of an increasingly diverse national individuals. Affirmative action is reactive and based on government law and moral imperatives. The improper or underutilizations of a diverse individuals is not a legal issue but it is a managerial and leadership issue. (p. 88-89)

Writers like Hurtado et al (2012), argue that managing diversity and maintaining organizational success are challenging tasks. The need for methods of demonstrating the economic advantages of diversity management is growing as organizations try to make it a standard problem

in order to get the upper hand over rivals and comply with regulatory responsibilities. It can be noted that managing the increasing diversity of institutional individuals has developed into a strategic challenge that firms looking to gain and/or maintain a global competitive edge can no longer ignore, claim Barbosa and Cabral-Cardoso (2007).

The work of Ivancevich and Gilbert (2000) sheds lights on the definition of diversity management as institutions' conscious and intentional commitment to creating and maintaining a good environment that attracts, retains, rewards, and advances a diverse mix of individuals. It must be recognized that the following description from Arredondo (1996) captures the broad concept of diversity management and everything it entails:

Diversity Management refers to a strategic organizational approach to individual diversity development, organizational culture change, and empowerment of the various individuals. It represents a shift away from the activities and assumptions defined by affirmative action to management practices that are inclusive, reflecting the individual's diversity and its potential. Ideally it is a pragmatic approach, in which participants anticipate and plan for change, do not fear human differences or perceive them as a threat, and view the institutions as a forum for individual's growth and change in skills and performance with direct cost benefits to the institutions. (p. 17).

In a way, it could be argued that, the need for a program that goes beyond having a basic understanding and knowledge about diversity itself arises from the fact that diversity management is not only a difficult academic and expressive topic to grasp, but also from the need to make a difference in such a way that organizations identify, value, and manage these differences to bring forth success and add value to institutions effectiveness (CIPD, 2005). For Bizri (2018), the fundamental idea of diversity management, is accepting that the institution is made up of a heterogeneous population. In other words, they go on to say that the foundation of diversity management is based on the idea that taming these differences will ultimately lead to a productive environment where individuals feel valued and their talents are fully utilized, as well as an environment in which the institution's objectives are met (Nishii & Özbilgin, 2007).

All in all, today's diversity management practices emphasize bringing all of these differences together, no matter what they are, in order to process collaboration, dynamism, and creativity holistically. This approach does not necessarily perceive disparities as fixed entities that exclude one another (Madera, 2013).

2.5.1 Perceptions of Diversity Management

Diversity management, according to Valentine and Godkin (2017), and Bizri (2018), can be understood as managerial practices that ensure positive atmosphere, equality, respect, appreciation, and engagement among majority-minority affiliated members in a way that contributes to the accomplishment of their institutions' set of strategic and tactical goals. The study of Ashcraft et al., (2012), for example, stated that diversity management promotes not only justice and productivity but also a majority-minority balance by fostering institutions trust and fairness. As shown in a study by Alas and Mousa (2016), a variety of positive institutional outcomes, including satisfaction, institutional citizenship behavior, loyalty, trust, and performance, are constantly perceived as being motivated by accepting people for who they are and ensuring that they receive fair treatment.

The findings of Barak and Levin (2002), evidenced that the impact of diversity management on individuals' well-being is discussed. Mousa (2017b) elaborates on its link with responsible leadership and organizational commitment while also illustrating its impact on individuals' levels of organizational cynicism. Niederle, et al (2013) concentrated on its association with the various benefits individuals get. While attempting to reduce cultural clashes, institutional marginalization, and institutional discrimination resulting from differences in religion, gender, age, political ideologies, and other factors, the concept of diversity management has been heavily criticized for its emphasis on minority members and the straightforward practices (such as training, communication, coaching, mentoring) it calls for (Knights & Omanovic, 2016). Accordingly, it should be underlined that diversity management has been implicated in certain studies as a cause of division, bias, stereotyping, and in-out group categorizations, according to Lorbiecki & Jack (2000) & Ylostalo (2016).

As noted by a number of researchers (for example, Holck et al. 2016; Hennekam et al., 2019) diversity studies focus on confronting, debating, and outlining how people perceive and handle their physical and psychological differences. Various individuals have different social expectations, which in turn affect their self-image and perception of institutional justice. As seen above, the interaction between their social identity and their perception of justice affects how they evaluate diversity management practices at various institutions, according to research by Hennekam et al (2019). The findings of Bacouel-Jentjens & Yang's work (2019), evidenced that settings like individual composition and power are significant when studying diversity

management and the sense-making process because they affect how various people perceive diversity.

2.5.2 Diversity Management in HEIs

Writers like Harvey (2011) evidenced that globalization's promotion of access to HEIs around the globe gives institutions a larger market and customer base. This growth creates possibilities as well as difficulties, one of which is diversity, which, when managed well, may be a competitive advantage (Harvey, 2011). The impact of human traits and the perception of institutional features on diversity management in institution is significant. The management of diversity in regard to access to HEIs involves a number of difficulties (Turner, 2013). Diversity management at HEIs should encompass, but not be limited to, a student's race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, citizenship status, age, language, culture, region, and economic position (Yang & Konrad, 2011). As a result, diversity management plans must seek to provide entry to their institution for students from multiple backgrounds, as well as to establish and maintain a positive atmosphere in which these students from diverse backgrounds perform to the best of their ability and have the best possible chance of graduating. (Scholten, 2018). In brief, findings suggest that, the type of approach adopted by an institution in managing diversity is determined by the institution itself. However, for a strategy to operate as anticipated, several variables must be met, such as time, communication, trust and openness, supporting leadership, and access to supportive information (Scholten, 2018).

Yang & Konrad, (2011), examined those institutions, and leaders in particular, have become eager to understand the realistic strategies, theories, and procedures, as well as the models that make up the multifaceted field of diversity management. Practitioners in the field of diversity management have developed a fairly strong desire to manage diversity and make an effort to confirm the relationship between diversity management, organizational performance, and the organization as a whole in recent years, as has been shown by research in human resources (Yang & Konrad, 2011).

Stewart & Carpenter-Hubin's (2000), on their study argued that due to the distinctive characteristics of HEIs, where the consumers - students - are under comparatively much larger control and influence of the institutions, diversity management is developed differently in the HEIs

context than in a corporate setting. Additionally, there will be diversity among the faculty, staff, and students. Therefore, it can be claimed that diversity in this particular environment has an even bigger influence and, as a result, is of even more relevance. This leads to the idea that research on diversity management in HEIs is both very relevant and necessary.

In a study related to diversity in HEIs, Naidoo, (2015) on his part, found that the notion that HEIs must adequately address issues of tolerance, inclusion, access, and structural inequities in order to graduate students with the capacities and skills required to be tolerant and responsible citizens in a diverse democracy is ingrained in the call for HEIs. This is theoretically feasible, in the opinion of Hurtado et al., (2003), by exposing and pushing students to new ways of thinking about themselves and the society in which they live. In short, by providing chances for students to connect with various peers inside the classroom through conversation, discourse, and role-playing, it is possible to challenge students' ideas. Must be compensated for HEIs is seeing an increase in the diversity of its student body (Turner, 2013).

According to a hypothesis regarding diversity and learning proposed by Gurin, et al., (2002), diversity on HEIs can offer students the kind of challenge they require for more active thinking and growth. In their interactions with classmates who have diverse worldviews, viewpoints, and arise from varied origins and experiences that create a lived experience in an unequal society, students' familiar ways of thinking or comfortable worldviews may be challenged. Thus, it comes as no surprise that students are profoundly forced to confront the fact that some of their peers' encounter prejudice, have fought to remove historical obstacles to equality, and that social justice concerns require more attention (Barnett, 2020).

2.6 Policy Documents that Promote GDM & DDM in HEIs

In light of the aforementioned research, it can be claimed that diversity in general and GDM & DDM in particular related concerns are now handled in the nation as a whole and in HEIs in particular through the following frameworks: international, regional, domestic documents, policies and institutional proclamations, and codes of conduct; curriculum; and co-curricular activities (Gobena, 2016; Manaze, 2020).

2.6.1 International Policy Documents on GDM & DDM in HEIs

A number of international documents prepared by United Nations (UN) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) stipulate that HEIs must be equally available to all people by all acceptable ways, and that no one should be denied access to HEIs or their study subjects, degree levels, or types of institutions because of their gender (UN 1948 Article 26.16; UN 1966 Article 13.2.C; UNESCO 1998 Article 1.a). Similarly, the United Nations (1979 Article 10 and 10.a) state that States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women the same conditions for access to studies and achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories, with the most pressing priority being to ensure access to education for girls and women (UNESCO 1990 Article 3.3).

In addition, according to UN (1995 Article 80.c), leaders vowed to collectively commit themselves to eliminating gender disparities in access to all areas of tertiary education by ensuring that women have equal access to professional growth, training, scholarships, and grants, and by taking initiatives that are beneficial when appropriate. In this sense, aside from ensuring an equal and non-discriminatory higher education system, addressing hurdles which continue to limit women's full access to this level of education remains an essential goal (UNESCO 1998, Article 4.a).

For a long time, the topic of disability has been on the United Nations (UN) agenda. Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that "everyone has a right to an adequate standard of living [...] and a right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood [...]" (UN, 1948). The United Nations General Assembly established the World Programme of Action for Disabled People in 1982, and also declared 1983-1992 the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, with the goal of emphasizing the subject of disability rights (Bezawit et al., 2018). Aside from such broad objectives, the educational needs of people with disabilities have received special attention through a number of international statements (UN, 1983a, 1983b; UNESCO, 1994) and agreements on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006).

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which was approved on December 13, 2006 and entered into effect on May 3, 2008, aims to ensure the actual enjoyment of the rights already given by international treaties and make them meaningfully available to PWDs (UN-CRPD, 2006). The UN-CRPD (2006) clearly addresses equality issue for PWDs diversity. Article 13 of the convention states:

[...] for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, including through the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommodations, in order to facilitate their effective role as direct and indirect participants, including as witnesses, in all legal proceedings, including at investigative and other preliminary stages.

The UN-CRPD (2006) also clearly addresses accessibility issue for PWDs diversity. The Preamble of the convention states that

“Recognizing the importance of accessibility to the physical, social, economic and cultural environment, to health and education and to information and communication, in enabling persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms”.

2.6.2 African Policy Documents on GDM & DDM in HEIs

The theoretical struggle against gender educational injustice and inequality is not restricted to the international arena. African leaders, too, have chronicled countless instruments over the years, motivated and at times driven to do so. Every individual has the right to education (OAU, 1981 Article 17.1), States Parties must ensure equal opportunity and access to education and training at all levels (AU 2003, Article 12.1), and they must take action to promote education for women in all disciplines, particularly in science and technology, which have traditionally been dominated by men (AU 2003, Article 12.2.b). According to the AU (2006), State Parties shall make higher education equally accessible to all (Article 13.4.f), establish scholarship and bursary programs to encourage entry into higher education for outstanding youth from underprivileged communities, particularly young girls (Article 13.4.l), and ensure equal access to and completion of higher education in order to effectively address the existing imbalance between young men and young women (Article 23.1.e). Furthermore, African leaders agreed to promote women's economic independence from an early age by ensuring that young women have access to secondary, tertiary, and professional education and training (UN-ECA 2009, Article 1.1.2), and inadequate access to education, training, science, and technology is one of the critical areas of concern that form the core of the African platform (OAU 1994, Article 22.b).

Efforts were made at the continental level to promote and improve the protection of the rights of PWDs, and the period 1999-2009 was designated as the African Decade of persons with Disabilities, which was extended in 2009 to the Second African Decade of People with Disabilities (Pretoria University, 2013). The African Union (AU) established the Continental Plan of Action for PWDs diversity in 2002 to guide member countries in reaching the decade's goals of ensuring PWDs' diversity full participation, equality, and empowerment in Africa. The African Union has

ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of PWDs diversity in Africa, which addresses PWDs' diversity rights comprehensively (AU, 2002).

2.6.3 Domestic GDM & DDM Promoting Policy Documents

Policy Document 1: Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Constitution

Equality and respect for gender and other diversity dimensions is acknowledged and legalized as a principle and a right in Ethiopian constitutional framework, from the preamble through the actual sections of the Constitution. On the preamble of the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Constitution (FDREC, 1995), the following equality and respect concept for gender and other diversity dimensions stated “We, the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia: ...[f]irmly convinced that the...full respect of individual and people’s fundamental freedoms and rights, to live together on the basis of equality and without any sexual, religious or cultural discrimination...”.

The above article from the constitution is the foundation of a healthy society. Thus, gender discrimination violates the constitution's fundamental pledge to develop a society based on equality. (Gebiremichael, 2010). The gender issue is also explicitly articulated in all significant policy texts. Additionally, the Ethiopian Constitution of 1995 has governing laws on the right to equality of all persons in Article 25. It states:

All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection without discrimination on grounds of race, nation, nationality, or other social origin, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, property, birth or other status.

Therefore, considering the above articles from the constitution it can be said that the 1995 Constitution of Ethiopia guarantees gender equality and integrates the key UN Conventions on human rights and the abolition of all types of discrimination against women. On top of providing affirmative action, the FDRE Constitution recognizes the State's obligation to protect women from the effect of harmful customary practices, declaring that all laws, stereotypes, beliefs, and traditions that oppress women or otherwise adversely affect their physical and mental well-being are forbidden (Timmoneri, 2017).

Concerning Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) diversity, in accordance with international

declarations, conventions, and policies, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's (1994) Constitution urges all Ethiopians to have access to public health and education, and emphasizes the importance of allocating resources and providing assistance to disadvantaged groups: “The State shall, with its available means, allocate resources to provide rehabilitation and assistance to the physically and mentally disabled”. (Art. 41, p.5)

Policy Document 2: Ethiopian Education and Training Policy

The Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (TGE, 1994), which attempted to meet the demands of faculty, staff and students' diversity, was developed and implemented in accordance with the constitutional laws and precepts. The strategy caused a dramatic transformation in every aspect of the educational system, including HEIs and the use of many languages as a teaching tool. Higher education proclamations were translated and added to the Education and training policy's implementation in the HEIs. Within the constitutional framework, the Education and Training Policy highlighted the need to address the persistent unfairness and discrimination faced by Ethiopian women as follows: ““Special attention will be given to women and to those students who did not get educational opportunities in the preparation, distribution, and use of educational support input” (TGE, 1994; Article 3.7.7).

Policy Document 3: The New Ethiopian Education Development Road Map

By attempting to create unity from the variety already there, the new Ethiopian Education Development Road Map (MoE, 2018) gives face to diversity in Ethiopian HEIs. Concerning the gender diversity issue in HEIs, this policy document specifically stated:

Though there is an increment in the female students' enrolment and the share of female academic staffs, there is still significant gender gap. To narrow the gender gap, it is important to further strengthen the affirmative action already in place. (p.50)

In general manner, considering the importance of diversity management in HEIs, this road map asserts that since the adoption of the nation's constitution in 1995, Ethiopia has accepted a federal system that recognizes unity while valuing variety. People, Nations, and Nationalities were exercising their right to free expression in politics and other fields. Even while HEIs have emphasized diversity, there are no institutions in Ethiopia that offer programs to promote unity.

Policy Document 4: Higher Education Proclamations

Article 41 of the Higher Education Proclamation no 1152, (2019), has five sub-articles addressing accessibility issues for SWDs:

1/ Institutions shall make, to the extent possible, their facilities and programs amicable to use with relative ease students with physical disabilities. 2/ Institutions shall, to the extent that situations and resources permit, relocate classes, develop alternative testing procedures, and provide different educational auxiliary aids in the interest of students with physical disabilities and learning disabilities. 3/ Building designs, campus physical landscape, computers and other infrastructures of institutions shall take into account the interests of physically disabled students. 4/ Institutions shall ensure that students with physical challenges get academic assistance, including tutorial sessions, exam time and submission date deadline extensions. 5/ based on the special decision of the Minister regarding the admission of the gifted student, the need to provide additional resources, as necessary, to maintain the speed and need of education, the allocation of additional resources, is necessary. The details shall be determined by a directive.

The Higher Education Proclamations Nos. 1152/2019 also added to gender issue by stating that affirmative action should be implemented for women, students with disabilities, and local students from underprivileged areas.

Entry assessment or admission procedures designed for any female, disabled student, a student who completed high school education in a developing region and who is native of the nationality of such region or student from nationality whose participation in higher education is low shall be different from others. They shall, during their stay in the institution, get special support; particulars of such support shall be determined by the “Ministry”, (Article 6: 3)

According to claims, the policy has established an equitable education strategy that addressed GDM & DDM issues at HEIs by offering corrective and affirmative measures for disadvantaged regions, social groups, and individuals. The aforementioned affirmative provision is intended to increase student composition at various HEIs (Manaze 2020; Teshome, 2005). Additionally, according to institutional policies and procedures, faculty members must encourage multiculturalism in the teaching and learning processes as stated in the Higher Education Proclamation No. 1152/2019 (FDRE, 2019).

In addition to their professional responsibility for providing equal access to learning opportunities for all students, faculty members also have a social responsibility to support and foster a diverse and democratic community including both gender and SWDs diversity. The laws of HEIs instruct them to abstain from any discriminatory actions against students based on diverse factors including, gender, disability, ethnicity and religion (Manaze, 2020).

Policy Document 5: Education Sector Development Programs (ESDPs)

ESDP I

The Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) addresses the issue of female access to higher education at many stages. ESDP, I stated that private sector investments in HEIs, both domestic and foreign, will be encouraged (FDRE 1998). As the number of HEIs (public or private) grows, so will female access opportunities. Although the ESDP I addressed the issue of female access to HEIs at various phases, it did not place a significant priority on the education of SWDs diversity.

ESDP II

Among the main goals to be pursued in ESDP II was the provision of high-quality higher education to a wider number of people in an equitable manner (FDRE, 2002). The program's emphasis on equity is a good predictor of female HEIs' attendance. Aside from that, admission rates for girls were to be equalized with those for boys, locally relevant measures to prevent social and cultural barriers to girls' education were to be implemented, and affirmative action for female students to join HEIs was to be maintained (FDRE, 2002).

Although the ESDP II's emphasis on equality is a good predictor of female HEIs attendance, it does not prioritize SWDs diversity education. It is crucial to remember, though, that within ESDP II, particular initiatives aimed at advancing the integration model have been noted. These initiatives include creating unique classrooms or units to house special needs students in regular classrooms, providing courses in teacher training colleges, and setting up short-term teacher training programs (Tirussew, 2023).

ESDP III

One of the purposes of the education sector in ESDP III was to take affirmative action to guarantee parity of female participation in all education and training programs (FDRE, 2005). Female students were supposed to be assigned based on their preferences, and those who are married and have children were supposed to be enrolled in HEIs closer to their residence. While ESDP III offers a helpful examination of the lessons learned from ESDP (I) and ESDP (II), gender continues to be a focal point. It indicates that:

In order to meet the EFA goals, ESDP III paid careful thought to expanding educational

options for SWDs diversity. The education of SWDs was given special emphasis in ESDP III (2005–2010). For the first time in our nation, the purpose of making education more inclusive was stated outright. Interventional policies that sought to create Inclusive Education Resource Centers (IERCs) in cluster schools, offer teacher training programs, teacher aid, and continued professional education courses followed these initiatives (Tirussew, 2023).

ESDP IV

One of the intended program goals of ESDP IV was increased access to HEIs for traditionally disadvantaged populations such as females (FDRE, 2010). This is a further explanation of the Constitution. Among the primary result objectives of ESDP IV was to raise female overall enrolment from 29% in 2009/10 to 40% in 2014/15, as well as female postgraduate enrolment from 10% in 2009/10 to 25% by 2014/15. The worldwide aim for gender equality under ESDP IV was meant to be fostering equal access and achievement in education and training for women and girls (FDRE, 2010).

After evaluating the execution of Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) III, the Ministry of Education established ESDP IV. Unlike the other three projects, this one has paid close attention to improving the situation of SWDs diversity in Ethiopia (Tefera et al., 2015). It intends to carry out three basic operations in this regard: increasing enrollment, teacher professionalism, and school institutional capacity.

According to the Education Sector Development Program IV (ESDP-IV), the biggest challenges limiting special needs and inclusive education include a limited grasp of the notion of disability diversity, a negative attitude towards SWDs diversity, and a hardened opposition to change (FDRE, 2010). Evidence, however, indicates that in practice, the suggested initiatives to raise awareness of the education of SWDs were neither evident nor successful (Tirussew , 2023).

ESDP V

Because the education system faces a variety of obstacles that are not restricted to one sub-sector such as elementary or secondary education but are prevalent across the system, The ESDP V incorporated particular cross-cutting concerns such as gender and disability. (FDRE, 2016). By providing emphasis to the disability agenda, In ESDP V the Ministry of Education introduced the 10-year Master Plan for SWDs diversity. Extracting SWDs diversity concerns from the ESDP

IV as cross-cutting issues into a separate plan shines light on them in a more comprehensive and realistic way (FDRE, MoE, 2016). In this program on page 13, the place given to SWDs diversity and gender diversity stated as:

Disparities in participation among disadvantaged groups will be addressed. Increased participation in higher education by female students and greater involvement of female staff in teaching, research, leadership and management are key policy objectives. Initiatives to increase participation in higher education by students with disabilities will also be undertaken.

According to the FDRE Ministry of Education (2016), the Master Plan for SWDs is supported by six pillars: the establishment of a policy framework; a guaranteed autonomous organizational structure; the development of human resources (such as specialists, teachers, and leaders); access to high-quality education; the establishment of trustworthy reporting mechanisms; and the budgetary allotment for the program. This time frame may be viewed as a turning point in Ethiopia's education system's visibility and transition toward inclusivity (Tirussew ,2023).

ESDP VI

Gender and disability diversity issues were portrayed as cross-cutting issues in ESDP VI, as they had been in prior programs. According to this document on the gender diversity parity index in education: “*The target for all levels of schooling was a GPI of 1.00, or full gender parity, which will not be met*” (p.21). It was also found that the GPI differs by region. The document also said that challenges to girls' education in Ethiopia are caused by a variety of institutional, socioeconomic, and cultural issues (FDRE, 2021).

In terms of SWDs diversity, overall, SWD diversity enrollment is increasing at all levels. It was also mentioned that data on SWDs diversity is difficult to get, and that there is a shortage of good tools for identifying children with special needs. In the ESDP VI, the primary problems for SWDs diversity include substandard facilities, a lack of community awareness, a lack of trained instructors for their level, distance, and other socioeconomic and cultural hurdles (FDRE, 2021).

Policy Document 6: Growth and Transformation Plans (GTPs)

GTP I

The Growth and Transformation Plan I (GTP I) is a national five-year development plan established by the Ethiopian government, especially by the FDRE Ministry of Finance and

Economic Development (MFED) in 2010, to improve the country's economic well-being and aim for poverty elimination. Among The four overarching objectives, concerning education it stated as *“expanding access and ensuring the qualities of education and health services and achieve MDGs in the social sectors (p.1).*

According to this plan, females were to compose 40% of the undergraduate program by 2014/15 (up from 29% in 2009/10) and 25% of the postgraduate program (up from 10% in 2009/10) (FDRE 2010). Because the GTP I was developed in response to the conclusions of ESDP III and in tandem with ESDP IV (FDRE, 2010), it was entirely dedicated to gender diversity equity in HEIs.

Taking up disability diversity concerns is a major priority for the GTP I. It emphasizes the significance of meeting the needs of SWDs in particular by putting in place an all-encompassing education plan that meets the various needs of SWDs. Based on a document from the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) in 2010, this recognition has been granted. An efficient education strategy that encourages diversity and inclusiveness for SWDs is vital, as highlighted by the GTP I.

GTP II

Following GTP I, GTP II was created in 2016 by Ethiopian National Planning Commission (ENPC) with the goal of improving citizens' lives through improving the quality and relevance of education with equitable access and engagement of citizens. According to the Ethiopian Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II), females should make up 45% of undergraduate programs in HEIs by 2019/20 (up from 32% in 2014/15) and 25% of postgraduate programs (up from 19.5% in 2014/15) (ENPC, 2016). This paper clearly shows that gender diversity parity in Ethiopian public HEIs was prioritized.

The Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II) decided to increase the overall enrollment percentage of SWDs diversity in elementary education to 15%. In 2015, the total number of students enrolled in primary school for SWDs diversity, including children with impairments, was just 4.4% (ENPC, 2016). The policy change implies that inclusive education has been supported in Ethiopia generally.

Policy Document 7: Master Plan for Special Needs Education in Ethiopia

For ten years duration (2016-2025), the ministry of education created a special needs education plan during Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) IV to ensure that all children SWDs diversity, including those with exceptional educational needs, have access to and receive a high-quality education. The strategy needs to be altered because there is still a gap in enrollment (MoE, 2016). The master plan's goals include increasing awareness of inclusive and special needs schooling and fortifying the systems and surroundings that support inclusion. The ESDP V incorporates core components of special needs education as cross-cutting issues across priority programs and components. Therefore, since special needs education incorporates HEIs students with disabilities diversity, in this research, this document will be analyzed as a policy paper while interpreting both quantitative and qualitative data.

2.6.4 Institutional Level GDM & DDM Promoting Policy Documents

Institutional Policy Document 1: University's Strategic Planning

The strategic plan for HEIs serves as direction for institutional decisions, both long-term and short-term, and ensures that choices and operations: the purpose, vision, and values of the organization be carried out. Obey governmental orders and rules as well as those of accrediting organizations. Maintain the institution in good operating and financial standing both today and in the future, etc (SCUP, 2023).

Due to the more dynamic nature of HEIs in Ethiopia in dealing with GDM & DDM issues as a result of the diversity of their student bodies and staff, these institutions must have a well-thought-out strategic plan. The GDM & DDM in particular, as well as the topic of diversity in general, must be taken into consideration when HEIs design and enforce strategic plans. Considering the diversity issue in its ten-years strategic plan the Addis Ababa University (AAU) (2020) stated like this:

Improve gender equality and inclusion; and create all-inclusive learning environment (irrespective of sex, age, race, color, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property or birth, as well as persons with disabilities, migrants, indigenous peoples, and children and youth, especially those in vulnerable situations or other status). (p.38)

Institutional Policy Document 2: University's Senate Legislations

HEIs in Ethiopia have evolved into more dynamic institutions when it comes to addressing challenges related to diversity as their student bodies have become more diverse. HEIs are required

to establish and enforce internal rules and regulations within the terms of Article 8(5) of the Higher Education Proclamation number, 1152/2019 (FDRE, 2019). The Higher Education Proclamation 1152/2019 and the Education and Training Policy (TGE, 1994) both contain directives for achieving diversity and the multicultural provision. For this purpose, HEIs have implemented a variety of legislative rules and guidelines that inform the management practices of the administrative units that provide service (FDRE, 2019). These are outlined in the university's laws, regulations, and conduct rules. The Ethiopian Education Development Road Map (MoE, 2018: p.52), which recognized the significance of managing diversity in general and GDM & DDM in particular on HEIs tasks, suggested the senate implement the following reforms: “The universities need to have senate standing committee that oversees the implementation of the policy on unity in diversity and advise the senate on the matter”. (p.52)

Institutional Policy Document 3: Students’ Code of Conduct

A guidebook designed to manage and supervise student behavior is created and distributed by Ethiopian public HEIs, particularly the Office of Student Service Directorate. The principal aim is to create a cohesive and tranquil atmosphere within the academic community, facilitating all individuals in carrying out their assigned roles and obligations. Students are given this guidebook when they first arrive on campus. Rather than concentrating only on sanctions for misbehavior, the code of conduct teaches students the values of cohabitation in a kind and thoughtful environment (Manaze, 2020). As a result, several Students' Code of Conduct documents which are comprehensive policy documents at the micro level, such those pertaining to GDM and DDM were considered in this study. When assessing and analyzing the study's conclusions, several of these materials were taken into account.

Institutional Policy Document 4: Curriculum Modules

The term "curriculum" has a broad definition that encompasses objectives for student learning (skills, knowledge, and attitudes), content (the subject matter in which learning experiences are embedded), sequence (the order in which concepts are presented), learners, instructional methods and activities, instructional resources (materials and settings), evaluation (methods used to assess student learning as a result of these experiences), and modifications to the teaching and learning process (Nelson & Thomas, 2014).

In Ethiopian public HEIs, to improve interpersonal communication, group learning, and

social skills, the curriculum now includes classes like Civics and Ethical Education and Communicative English Skills, Anthropology etc (MoE, 2005). These courses, which promote good citizenship and multiculturalism, have been offered across all disciplines at all of the nation's institutions (MoE, 2005; Saint, 2004). Common belief holds that civic education would result in intelligent individuals who would confront moral challenges in their societies (Manaze, 2020).

Civics and Ethical Education also aim to promote a culture of peace and acceptance of others for well-being and diversity management including GDM & DDM. Therefore, it is important to create learning environments, content, and facilities for Civics and Ethical Education in line with the universal values in education (Sakallı et al., 2021). According to Hidayat, and Nasution (2020), a HEIs curriculum, is crucial in raising people's ethical standards and ideals so they can have more fulfilling lives. Developing young people's abilities for DDM & GDM perception, autonomous judgment, critical thinking, and ethical reasoning is regarded as tolerance education in this context. Therefore, since various curricular materials are micro level GDM & DDM promoting policy, such documents were considered while analyzing the finding of this study.

2.7. Curricula for GDM & DDM

A course that has clear, deliberate, and formal planning with predetermined goals and outcomes is referred to as curriculum. Discussing the gender-related courses in the curriculum is necessary to raise students' knowledge of gender diversity equality. Courses or modules on gender diversity equality should be scheduled when HEI curricula are organized. However, curriculum and course materials ought to have elements that promote gender diversity equality, hence it may be argued that educational institutions (or education systems in general) that are in need of help should not encourage the perpetuation of historical gender diversity roles (UNICEF, 2003). The gender diversity prejudice in textbooks shouldn't be made more obvious, especially when the words and images are scrutinized (Siyez & Beycioglu, 2020).

Curricula for DDM can be diverse in three ways, as described in multicultural teaching models (Sciame- Giesecke et al., 2009): by learning about disability diversity (as described above); by adopting teaching strategies that consider the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities; and by including disability diversity in course content. Although universal design is

one pedagogical approach that specifically considers the needs of learners with disabilities diversity, many other inclusive teaching and learning strategies (e.g., culturally responsive teaching, backward design, feminist pedagogy) can be easily modified or combined with universal design (Yuknis & Bernstein, 2017). Most studies focusing on inclusiveness across the curriculum have placed a strong emphasis on disability. As demonstrated by Croucher & Romer (2007), inclusive design appreciates opportunity, respects diversity, and encourages more engagement.

Inclusive pedagogical practices can help improve the accessibility of online or remote learning courses (Stewart et al., 2013). Instructors may utilize disability studies to think critically about ableism in their classes as an alternative to these pedagogical practices (Browning, 2014). Disability and disability diversity studies can be infused into course content in a variety of ways, including using disability diversity in case studies and projects, creating assignments that require students to use online disability diversity resources, recognizing SWDs who have made significant contributions to fields of study, and critiquing how disability and illness are portrayed in existing course content and materials (Campbell, 2009). The curriculum needs to prioritize the various needs of SWDs in order for it to be inclusive.

In order to accommodate a wide range of diverse SWDs, an inclusive curriculum design encourages student-centered learning. According to Davies and Elliott (2009), this is advantageous not only just for SWDs but also for the diverse student body at HEIs. An inclusive curriculum for disability diversity management frequently saves time and lessens the need for revisions down the road. Disability diversity should be a topic of discussion at different committee sessions, according to Morgan et al. (2011). However, Florian (2012) emphasizes that instructors lack the tools and resources necessary to implement inclusive teaching methods, even if it could be legally required to make reasonable accommodations for SWDs.

2.8 Extra-curricular Activities for GDM & DDM

Extracurricular diversity management initiatives are programming initiatives with a clear institutional framework that support students in interacting with a range of perspectives and individuals. Club activities and involvement in cultural awareness seminars are two ways that students come into contact with this kind of diversity (Denson, 2009).

There is evidence on students of both gender that participating in extracurricular activities that are social or cultural can improve grades (Little, 2006). Evidence suggests that involvement in various kinds of extracurricular activities can be significantly impacted by one's social and cultural background (Brown & Evans, 2002).

Dimaggio (1982) proposed that cultural activities are culturally mandated for teenage girls in high school, but less firmly prescribed possibly even socially reprimanded for teenage boys. Her findings showed that students' engagement in "high-brow" extracurricular activities (such those involving literature, the arts, and classical music) predicted their grades more accurately than their assessed aptitude. In addition to being more engaged and enthusiastic in these activities than males, girls from higher socioeconomic status backgrounds benefited more academically from their involvement in these activities than did boys from lower backgrounds and students of either sex (Stuart et al., 2009).

Certain extracurricular activities have been shown to improve the students of both gender experience more than others, according to research. According to Lamont, et al (2000), academic achievement and students' participation in civic engagement activities like volunteering are positively correlated. They describe how prize-winning both gender students learn to emphasize on their applications the cultural repertoires made available by their life experiences that depict features of the ideal moral self because of the priority that the educational system places on morality (Jones et al., 2015).

Create chances for extracurricular disability diversity management and involvement. Campuses should promote and support the creation of disability and Deaf culture student groups as a method to build community, boost campus involvement, and stimulate conversation around disability (Agarwal et al., 2014;). Students with disabilities, in particular, may benefit from chances to connect their cultural and disability knowledge while learning about all aspects of their identities (Arbona & Jimenez, 2014; Banks, 2013). Student clubs and disability-related activities can help create wider campus climate change by encouraging students to participate in disability activism and advocacy (Cory et al., 2010; Fox, 2010).

2. 9 Commitment to GDM & DDM

According to Cambridge Dictionaries Online, commitment is defined as "willingness to give your time and energy to something that you believe in, or a promise or firm decision to do something." In short, it discusses "the binding of the individual to behavioral acts" (Kiesler & Sakamura, 1966, p. 349, cited by Meineri, et al., 2015). For example, according to Goodman et al. (1980), commitment is described as "behavioral acts that bind the individual to the social object of energy conservation, such as buying a small car, reducing fuel usage, shutting lights" (p. 221).

A review of academic work shows that in the management of a given diversity, the commitment of the top leadership molds people's mindsets and keeps them acting in a certain way even when there aren't any material benefits or encouraging feedback. It is essential for accomplishing demanding goals because it balances the negative correlation between setting and achieving ambitious objectives (Klein, et al., 1999). As pointed out by Salancik, (1982), because commitment is commonly regarded in terms of an individual's psychological links to organizations, this study focuses exclusively on individual actors who demonstrate commitment to the GDM & DDM. This is due to studies showing that institutionalizing gender and disability diversity management requires more than simply individual enthusiasm and effort; it also requires time, additional resources, and commitment (Hurtado et al., 2012). Thus, policies, structures, activities, procedures, publications, plans, top management qualities, and policies will all be utilized to assess compliance with the GDM & DDM (Fox, et al., 2011).

One obvious component of the diversity management plan is the level of commitment or lack thereof to diversity. According to Clayton-Pedersen et al. (2007), an institutional mission statement must express this dedication. Students are likely to value it most when there is openness and a sense of trust is fostered (Pepper et al. 2010). As long as symbolic action is consistent with institutional, financial, and political resources, it can contribute to the development of perceptions of institutional commitment to diversity (Williams et al. 2005). Administrative inaction on climate change is all too common in institutions (Yosso et al., 2009). This could be due to a mismatch between resources and symbolic action, or it could be a result of an artificial commitment to diversity.

Additionally, research tells us that a university's publications and the speeches given by its president; vice president & faculty deans can be used to determine an institution's level of commitment towards diversity management. In contrast, commitment is concerned with the presence or lack of fundamental "institutions," or "infrastructure and procedures that are hard to undo once established," according to Fox et al. (2011). So, commitment is a crucial kind of dedication that goes beyond making declarations of intent and involves setting up systems that actually a behavior or habit (Fox et al. ,2011). However, without actual resources dedicated to bolstering public statements and policy enactments, verbal commitment alone cannot provide a comprehensive picture of dedication (Fox et al., 2011). Since commitment is signaled by more than just promises, in this instance it is measured by how well resource commitment matches verbal rhetoric and institutional obligations towards the management of gender and disability diversity at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs.

The commitment of any HEI is primarily demonstrated and framed by organizational variables, such as the policies, structures, and programs of that institution, according to a study of the literature on the subject (e.g., Beere et al., 2011). Accordingly, while there are many instruments available to evaluate commitment such as checklists, indicators, and benchmarks, they all highlight, in part, the significance of a university's mission, sincere faculty support and involvement, a wide range of opportunities for student participation, and a supportive institutional infrastructure (Furco & Miller, 2009).

2.10 Satisfaction on GDM & DDM

Diverse definitions of student satisfaction are frequently offered by researchers. "*The perception of enjoyment and accomplishment in the learning environment*" is how Sweeney and Ingram (2001) described student satisfaction (p. 57). According to Schreiner (2009), student satisfaction is the degree to which students find the experiences and results connected to the institution favorable in their own subjective assessment. Empirical research by Borden (1995), evidenced that there exists a correlation between student satisfaction and the alignment of student goals with the campus atmosphere. Students are satisfied when their perceived performance is on par with or better than their expectations (Elliott & Shin 2002). Studies by (Cole et al. 2014; Martinez 2001) identified that there is a correlation between student satisfaction and health, academic progress, perseverance and retention, success, and general quality of life on campus.

Various authors have raised concerns that to more effectively meet the needs and goals of their students, educational institutions employ certain approaches to gauge how satisfied their students are with the services and programs they provide (Qureshi et al., 2011). Finding the answers to questions about how satisfied students are with diversity management services, how much confidence they have in such services, and whether or not current students would recommend the institution to prospective students are all components of determining the elements influencing student happiness (Garcl, 2009).

Research indicates that since student satisfaction is comparable to profit-and-loss accounting in commercial organizations, measuring student satisfaction is seen as a strategic concern for educational institutions. If student satisfaction is high, the institution is likely turning a healthy profit from its efforts to equip students with the information, skills, and talents they need. Since student happiness is the ultimate aim and high levels of service quality represent the ultimate goal, students will be satisfied with their academic performance and university life and will speak highly of the institution (Majeed et al., 2008).

Numerous studies suggest that students' satisfaction may be influenced by a number of different factors. overall satisfaction was found to be correlated with students' expectations of their college experience (Arambewela & Hall 2009), the quality of their instruction (Sears et al. 2017), their socializing and sense of community (Andrea and Benjamin 2013), and their perceptions of stress, humor, and social skills (Rezaei & Jeddi 2020). In one of the most important early works, Elliott and Shin (2002) discovered that the ability to enroll in classes that one wants to attend, the quality of the instructor, and the course topic itself are major predictors of students' satisfaction. As argued by Webber et al. (2013), high levels of student satisfaction were linked to higher frequency of interactions with faculty and higher amounts of time spent on academic activities.

Furthermore, it was discovered that students' overall satisfaction with their HEIs' experience was positively impacted by their diverse experiences (Milem & Hahuta 2000). Umbach and Kuh (2006) discovered that involvement in diversity related events increased students' satisfaction with their college experience at HEIs. Similarly, after adjusting for the impact of course learning experience and research practice experience, Lin et al. (2019) discovered that the atmosphere for diversity is the most significant predictor of student satisfaction.

2.11 Theoretical Framework of the Study

Recently, academics have begun to examine the diverse learning environment for diversity management and have begun to use the diverse learning environment model. For instance, Hurtado et al. (2012) assert that the Diverse Learning Environment (DLE) model was intended to have a positive learning environment for diversity. "Positive Learning Environment for Diversity": what does that mean? Using four aspects of campus life that significantly influence diversity-related concerns, Hurtado et al. (2012) characterize the atmosphere for diversity at HEIs. A HEI's structural diversity, or the number and proportionate representation of diverse groups on HEIs, its psychological climate, or the attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions surrounding diversity, its behavioral climate, or the ways in which diverse groups interact on HEIs, and its historical legacy of including or excluding different groups are some examples of these. How well HEIs fosters diversity management depends on how much each of these four factors helps varied students feel like they belong and are welcomed members of the HEIs' community's (Hurtado et al., 2012; Hurtado & Carter, 1997).

2.11.1 Perception of Diverse Learning Environment Model

According to Whitt et al, (2001), HEIs are tasked with fostering social development and preparing individuals for leadership and living in a diversified society. Diversity-related concerns are now part of HEIs' core pedagogical and civic missions. Diversity presents various opportunities and challenges that HEIs must address, as was mentioned in the introduction. Understanding the DLE for diversity is crucial before attempting to overcome challenges and fully capitalize on the opportunities of diversity. There was, however, no standard framework for assessing the DLE for diversity management in a way that helps generate policies and practices that may be applied to improve the campus climate for diversity management until the late 1990s (Hurtado et al. 2008). Hurtado et al. (2012), based on above 31years of empirical study, created a framework for comprehending the DLE model in order to address this issue. This concept is based on the idea that recognizing various circumstances and components that could have an impact on the campus climate for diversity management is necessary for establishing and preserving a pleasant learning and living environment.

The fundamental advantage of this model is that it is empirical and based on the results of studies on how campus culture affects students' academic performance. It also "treats campus

environment as a multifaceted phenomenon that is formed by the interaction of internal and external variables," according to the second point (Milem et al., 2005). It is also simple to adapt and apply to comprehend the DLE model for diversity management in various geographic and diverse circumstances (Hurtado et al., 2012). Researchers that study diversity-related issues in HEIs as well as colleges who evaluate their own campus environment for diversity management have both made extensive use of this model.

Understanding respondents' perceptions is essential for developing strategies to enhance gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. It helps identify challenges faced by students, such as discrimination, lack of accommodations, or limited access to resources. By addressing these issues, universities can create an environment that fosters equal opportunities, promotes diversity, and ensures the success and well-being of all students.

Taken as a whole, in Ethiopia's HEIs too, since there are various staff and students managed under the already established fashion, such DLE model for diversity management is appropriate to examine the perceptions, practices and challenges of gender and disability diversity management. Therefore, through this lens, the researcher decided to examine the perception, practices and challenges of gender and disability diversity management by adopting the basic framework of DLE model for diversity management in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs context.

2.11.2 Diverse Learning Environment Model

The idea that students receive an education in diversified contexts where socializing and learning take place is fundamental to the understanding of DLE model (Hurtado, et al., 2012). The four primary settings that these researchers identified two exterior environmental contexts and two internal environmental contexts affect campus climate for diversity management and are interconnected in various ways. The exterior sociohistorical context, the internal institutional and individual context, and the external government/policy context were among them.

The external government/policy context includes, for instance, federal policies, programs and laws that have had an influence on HEIs and will continue to have an impact on the campus climate for diversity management. More aspects of human experience connected to our past are included in the external sociohistorical context; examples include when there is war or other

societal problem which prohibit the entrance of HEIs community to campuses. This also includes society's perceptions, beliefs and actions in relation to significant social issues.

Four dynamic characteristics of DLE are included in the internal environmental institutional context for each individual HEIs. Although there will be variations in how each HEIs interprets these factors over time and across institutions, they offer a comprehensive framework from which to evaluate the state of the current DLE for diversity management and to identify challenges that require planning and programmatic change.

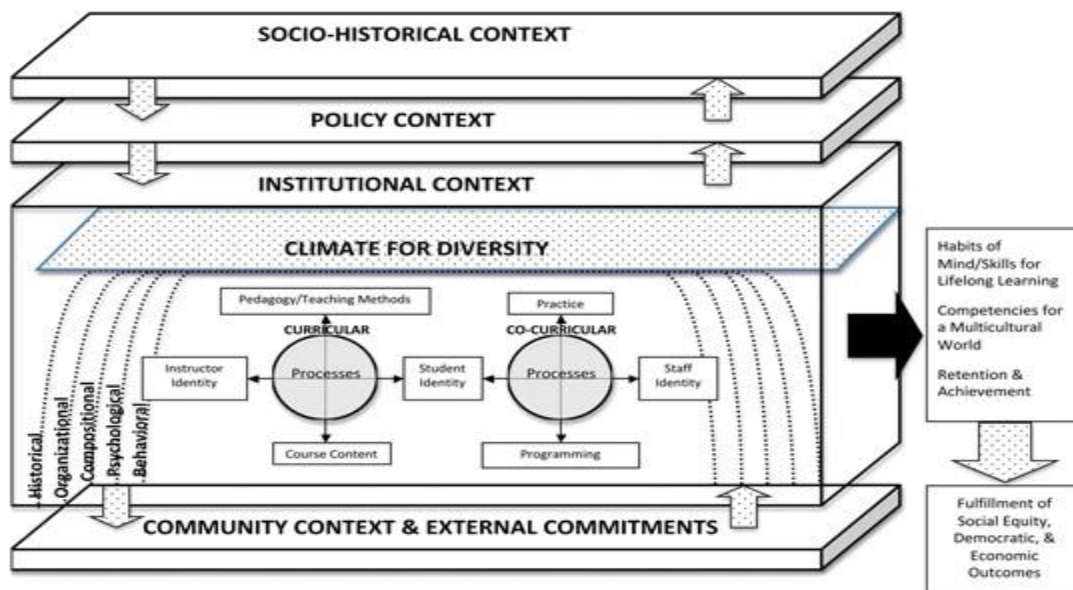


Figure 1. Diverse Learning Environment Model (Source: Hurtado et al., 2012)

2.11.2.1 The Historical Legacy Dimensions of DLE Model for GDM & DDM

HEIs must recognize the difference between integration as a means to an end and as a reason to appreciate diversity in HEIs. Identifying if the current system in any way encourages unfair treatment is a critical exercise in comprehending university policies and processes. This tells us that, a very important part of the HEIs everyday operations is its mission to manage diversity well, which is quite important. HEIs administrators may find it challenging to address the issue of diversity management satisfactorily. However, before we acknowledge that gender, disability, ethnicity and inequality are real societal issues that pervade HEIs. And we cannot attain meaningful diversity management diversity without strong determination to do so on HEIs.

Despite the fact that many who work at HEIs profess a dedication to inclusiveness, it is systemic and is sustained by organizations that function in the typical manner. Yes, it is possible for people with good intentions to make poor decisions (Hurtado, et al., 2013). The foundation for comprehending the campus environment for diversity management is based on various studies, most of which were done in the setting of America's HEIs, where there was an inclusion and exclusion policy and practice in admissions. The Model makes the assumption that the historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion still influences the HEIs environment's tolerance for diversity.

Ethiopian public HEIs have a historical legacy of both inclusion and exclusion diversity in terms of gender and disability which is rooted from socio cultural norm. Gender inclusion continues to face obstacles and challenges. Cultural prejudices, conventional wisdom, and societal conventions can impede women's development and full participation in HEIs. Gender-based violence, discrimination, and uneven access to opportunities and resources are still serious problems that require attention.

There is still a continuation of historical legacy of both inclusion and exclusion to disability inclusion. Resources, infrastructure, and public perceptions of disability. Accessibility is still an issue, and both the availability of assistive technology and physical infrastructure need to be improved. Furthermore, prejudices and social stigma surrounding impairments might limit the options accessible to students with disabilities and create hurdles to inclusion. Because of this, it is important to consider how the historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion has influenced the environment on HEIs now some other countries HEIs like Ethiopia.

2.11.2.2 Structural Dimensions of DLE Model for GDM & DDM

It can be challenging to overcome HEIs enrollment history, particularly if the institution has a tough time attracting students of color. A pleasant first impression of students of color entering the campus by the university is frequently what leads to success. Although increasing student enrollment is the initial step toward enhancing the campus atmosphere for diversity, improvements in HEIs structural diversity are also considered important. The structural diversity of HEIs have a range of effects on students' experiences (Aguirre & Martinez, 2002).

Limited possibilities for cross-racial and cross-ethnic interaction are provided by a university with a high percentage of white pupils, which affects student learning (Hurtado, et al

2012). Students of color believe that they have just a small selection of social alternatives, which may make them feel lonely. Low numbers of students of races frequently cause tokenism on campus and make those students feel as though they are just symbols and aren't respected as people. The number of different students is growing, but there are obstacles as well. Conflict and some amount of discontent might result from competing for resources among student organizations and other stakeholders. In light of this, importantly, HEIs must cultivate an atmosphere that is as focused on the needs of the students as feasible. Students are less likely to experience anxiety about their race or ethnicity when they believe that their individual worth is truly acknowledged (Hurtado, et al., 2012).

Relating the model in Ethiopia's case, examining the fundamental elements and circumstances that influence the inclusion and representation of students of various gender identities and disabilities in Ethiopian public HEIs is known as "structural dimensions of gender and disability diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs." It also digs into the structural components of these organizations, including rules, resources, and cultural norms, that affect how people with disabilities and people of varied gender identities participate in and experience these institutions. It tries to identify the current obstacles and problems that prevent these groups from having equal opportunity to thrive in higher education and to get entry.

2.11.2. 3 Psychological Dimensions of DLE Model for GDM & DDM

Students' perceptions of intergroup connections on campus are part of the psychological environment for diversity. Individuals and other groups will experience this differently. A part is played by ideas about how HEIs handle diversity, perceptions of prejudice, and attitude toward individuals who are different (Hurtado et al., 2012). Peer groups and faculty members play crucial roles in the socialization process, which cannot be overstated.

In order to enhance the circumstances for the achievement of varied teachers, students, and staff, climate research focused on the psychological component is still essential for comprehending the experiences of various social identity groups. When universities face intergroup conflict, institutional evaluation circles review the psychological dimension, which accounts for a large amount of the research on campus environment for diversity (Hurtado et al. 2008). Various students perceive and experience their educational environments differently than their peers, and these perceptions can impact student outcomes, according to key findings from these research findings

(Harper & Hurtado 2007; Hurtado et al. 2008; Museus & Maramba 2011; Museus et al. 2008).

Recognizing the connection between the literature on broad perceptions of campus climate and the campus environment for diversity is also crucial. (Navarro et al. 2009; Worthington et al. 2008). Perceptions and attitudes toward members of these HEIs are included in the psychological aspects of gender and disability diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs. The experiences and possibilities that are accessible to staff and students are greatly influenced by perception. Ethiopian public HEIs may promote a culture that respects and promotes the multiplicity of gender identities and disability identities by critically examining myths and biased perceptions. HEIs may provide an inclusive environment that enables people to succeed both personally and intellectually by encouraging positive views of gender and disability and offering suitable support services.

2.11.2.4 Behavioral Dimensions of DLE Model for GDM & DDM

HEIs' interactions and experiences between different student groups are all included in the behavioral aspect of DLE model. Without a doubt, the quality of the learning process as a whole depends on student participation in both formal and informal interactions. Formal encounters take place, among other places, in the classes students take and the student groups they join. Despite some claims, a number of research contradict the idea that co-curricular programs and diversified student groups are responsible for campus segregation (Hurtado et al., 2012).

Studies maintain that students' feelings of engagement in their HEIs are considerably enhanced by casual encounters between them and instructors (Hurtado et al., 2012). Administrators and other important people were urged to give out clear messages about the expectation that interactions between and among all groups be held in high regard in order to promote continual improvements in interactions between individuals and groups (Hurtado et al., 2012). The inclusion of diversity-related subjects in course content was one of the important faculty responsibilities. Administrators are responsible for informing new instructors on their campuses about the best teaching and learning techniques since faculty members were urged to conduct cooperative, active learning activities. It is necessary to offer faculty members the assistance they need to become familiar with, create, and execute student-centered teaching and learning strategies in their classrooms. Consideration and encouragement must be given to the value of faculty-student relationships, both within and beyond the classroom (Hurtado et al., 2012).

It is crucial to promote and encourage students' groups and services. HEIs' multicultural centers play a significant role; it was suggested to take mentorship programs into account that would stimulate widespread participation from students on campus as well as interactive problem-solving activities. To resolve any potential concerns, it is also crucial to have policies and processes involving judicial affairs that are clearly specified. Consideration should be given to deliberate planning and the provision of frequent and consistent chances for HEIs students to connect with diversified individuals (Hurtado et al., 2012).

The behavioral dimensions of gender and disability diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs primarily revolve around interactions between individuals and how they engage with one another. Interactions play a crucial role in shaping the inclusivity and sense of belonging within the educational environment. In terms of gender diversity, behavioral dimensions involve promoting respectful and equitable interactions. This includes fostering open dialogue, active listening, and valuing diverse perspectives. It also means challenging and addressing gender stereotypes and biases in interpersonal interactions. By promoting inclusive interactions, Ethiopian public HEIs can create an environment where all individuals feel heard, respected, and included.

Regarding disability diversity, behavioral dimensions involve fostering inclusive interactions that accommodate diverse needs. This includes creating a supportive and respectful atmosphere where individuals with disabilities are treated with dignity and provided with reasonable accommodations. It also entails promoting understanding, empathy, and collaboration among students, staff, and faculty. By facilitating positive interactions, Ethiopian public HEIs can create a welcoming environment that supports the full participation and engagement of SWDs.

2.12 Conceptual Framework of the Study

A conceptual framework is a diagram of independent and dependent variables together with the relationship between them. It shows a summary of the variables the researcher uses to address the specified study objectives (Regoniel, 2015). The dependent variable and independent variable are linked by it. It serves as an example of the main factors of the current study and how they are thought to be related (Rajablu et al., 2017).

This research was guided by Hurtado et al., 2012's explanations for diverse learning environments (DLE) model. DLE model referred to students real or perceived observations of their

campus atmosphere as it relates to interpersonal, academic, professional interactions, perceptions, behaviors, and expectations around race, ethnicity, gender and disability diversity (Hurtado & Guillermo-Wann, 2013; Hurtado et al., 2012; Hurtado et al., 2003). In other words, it's a framework for evaluating the campus environment to see how well it supports different students whether it fosters the kinds of structures, attitudes, and behaviors that lead to a beneficial impact on teaching and learning for all students (Hurtado et al., 2012).

Hurtado, et al., (2012) proposed a four-dimensional framework for describing the DLE, model which are: 1) an institution's historical legacy of including or excluding various groups; 2) structural diversity, or the numerical and proportional representation of diverse groups on campus; 3) the psychological climate, including perceptions and attitudes between groups; and 4) and the behavioral climate which is interaction within HEIs members and having personal experiences.

According to the DLE model, literature cited in the background and review section, the degree to which students are satisfied with their universities depends on the HEIs' GDM & DDM related policy practice, and the curricular and co-curricular activities they offer that address issues of gender and disability diversity on Ethiopian public HEIs. As a result, the following categories for the entire study were determined.

Based on studies & DLE model, it is asserted that there was an association between GDM & DDM practice and GDM & DDM perceptions. A healthy GDM & DDM practice can change the students' GDM & DDM perceptions. As a result, the GDM & DDM perception was regarded as an important category in this study since it is dependence the result came right after what is being done on GDM & DDM practice at Ethiopian public HEIs. Based on studies, it is asserted that there was an association between GDM & DDM practices and satisfaction. A healthy GDM & DDM practice can foster students' satisfaction. As a result, the satisfaction was also regarded as another key category since it shows how much dependence on GDM & DDM practice on Ethiopian public HEIs.

Another category of the study was GDM & DDM practices and the top leadership commitment. It was discussed in the background, DLE model and literature sections that curricular and extracurricular diversity programs and policy practices will serve the purpose of managing gender and disability diversity by reducing their prejudice toward other students from different backgrounds, and by opening up discussion about diversity issues such as the disciplinary

procedures for anyone and the usage of affirmative action policy. It was regarded as an important category for this study because of these factors. Since the commitment of the top leadership at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs are a cause for having a certain type of perceptions and satisfaction, the commitment of top leadership for GDM & DDM was also considered as variable. The conceptual framework for this research is depicted in the diagram below. This conceptual framework illustrates the current interrelationship between the various variables.

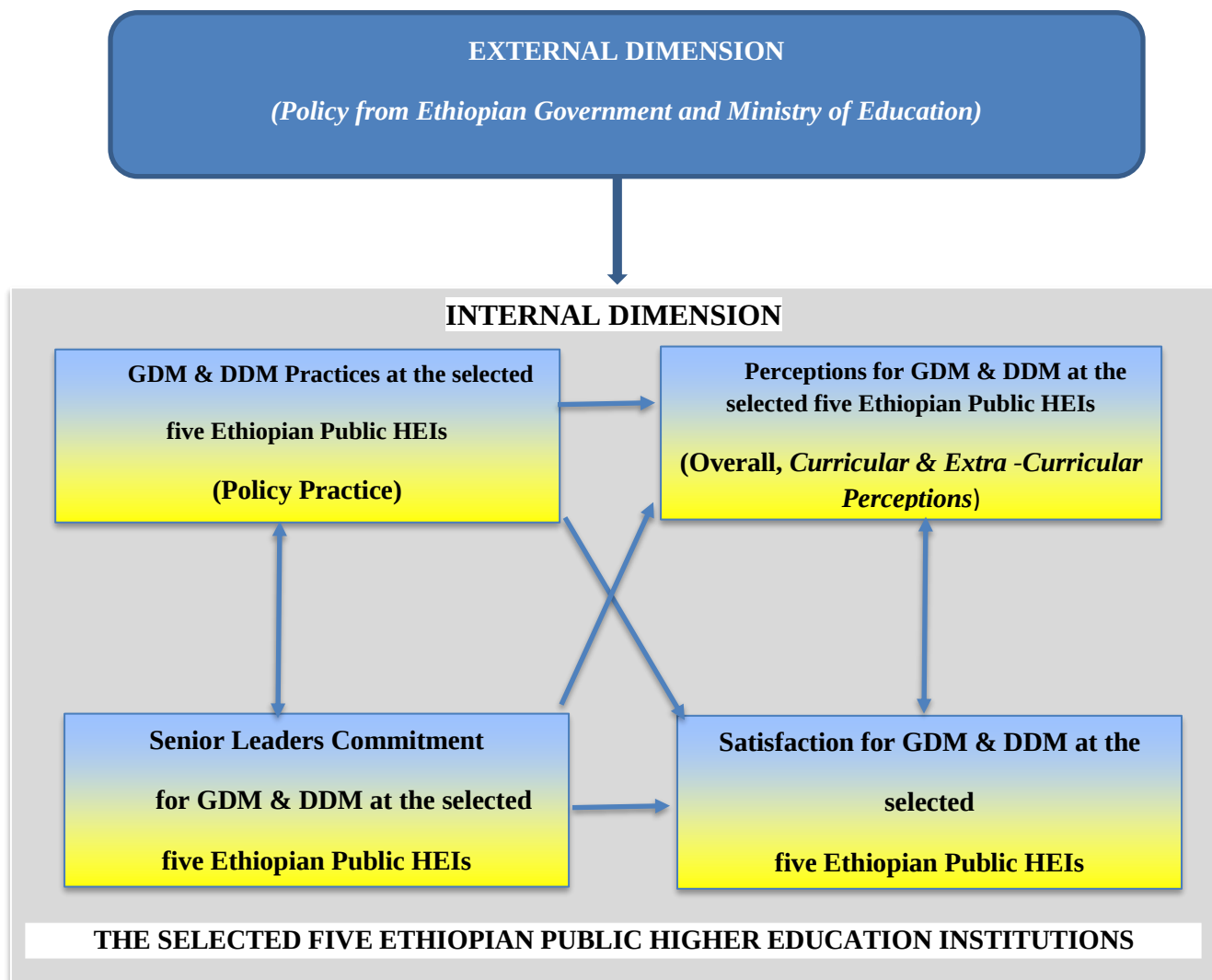


Figure 2: Conceptual framework of the study (Source: Developed by the researcher)

As it is presented in the above diagram, the external and internal dimension are the two categories of this study. The conceptual framework at the top makes it abundantly evident that HEIs do not operate in a vacuum but are rather influenced by government policy as well as the

ministry of education's policy, strategy, and program of the larger framework, which falls under the category of external dimension. This is particularly true for countries like Ethiopia where the government creates policies for public HEIs. Therefore, the effectiveness of the external environment on the management of gender and disability diversity management at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs was assessed using data gathered from the government & MoE's macro GDM & DDM promoting documents in answer to essentially related research questions.

The study's (see figure 2); GDM & DDM practices at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs and top leadership commitment for GDM & DDM was examined from the institutional level point of view of Hurtado's DLE model. According to the literature, this area of the institution talks about the structural existence of varied members of HEIs in this study case gender and disabilities diversity in public HEIs in Ethiopia. In doing so, institutional policies, strategies and initiatives used to manage the existing gender and disability diversity were assessed. Utilizing the other dimension known as behavioral environment, it was investigated that how realistically the Ethiopian public HEIs gender and disability diversity students were managed practically by including the personal experiences of respondents.

Similarly, institutional commitment in terms of top leadership commitment was investigated. The individual level dimensions, in contrast to the institutional level dimensions, are primarily concerned with the perceptions of students and faculty in relation to gender and disability diversity management, diversity relating curricular and co-curricular activities perception, as well as the satisfaction from GDM & DDM at the selected five public Ethiopian HEIs (see figure 2). These two issues are the dimensions of the study since they are the effect on the GDM & DDM practice as well as on the top leadership commitment. Similarly, as views regarding the selected five public Ethiopia HEIs, inclusion and exclusion of gender and disability diversity matters most, the perceptions and attitudes across groups students were investigated by drawing on concepts from the psychological DLE model.

2.14 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this convergent parallel mixed research (QUAN + QUAL) study was to critically examine and provide insight into the perception, practices, and challenges of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. By using Hurtado's et al., (2012), Diversified Learning Environment (DLE) model as a the conceptual framework foundation, more

specifically, the study was intended to: assess the regular undergraduate students' perceptions on curricular and extracurricular activities for GDM and DDM; investigate the policy practices for managing the diversity of gender and disability; evaluate the commitment of Ethiopian public HEIs' top management to GDM & DDM of its students; determine to what extent HEIs' regular undergraduate students satisfied with the GDM & DDM and finally, explore the challenges that the regular undergraduate students with gender & disability diversity faced in Ethiopian public HEIs.

In this chapter, literature related to gender and disability diversity management in various countries was reviewed. It revealed that GDM & DDM is about improving learning quality. The literature reviewed was covered under the following subheadings: the concept of diversity, dimensions of diversity, types of diversity, respecting diversity, diversity in HEIs, gender and disability diversity, benefits and challenges of diversity, diversity management, perceptions of diversity management, diversity management in HEIs, diversity in Ethiopia, diversity in Ethiopia's educational system, overview of diversity in Ethiopian HEIs , policies that promote diversity in Ethiopian HEIs, gender and disability diversity in Ethiopian HEIs', theoretical framework of the study (DLE model), conceptual framework of the study. It also showed how the several variables under study are connected. In an empirical analysis of pertinent literature, the prior study on the selected two diversity variables (gender and disability) and its diversity management in HEIs' is highlighted. The methodology used in the study is presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the study's research philosophy, the research design, target population and sampling, sample selection criteria, data collecting tools, data collection procedure, data analysis, and the ethical considerations related to the study followed by a summary of the chapter.

"Professionals who know what they are doing can be counted on to follow a well-thought-out methodology"

—Raymond Khoury, The Sign.

3.1 The Study's Research Philosophy

This PhD dissertation used a scientific, methodical approach to obtain and analyze data in order to critically examine and provide insight into the perception, practices, and challenges of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. Pragmatism served as the overarching philosophical paradigm, which views the issue in light of the circumstances and current state of the "real world," necessitating the use of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2014; Bhattacharjee, 2015).

The study adopted an eclectic methodology, combining inductive and deductive information acquisition methods to interpret the data and develop overarching laws and principles (Morse, 2016; Greene & Hall, 2016). Axiologically, the researcher used a methodical strategy to define, evaluate, and understand the notions of good and bad conduct related to GDM and DDM, considering the significance of various analysis-related factors, participants, data, and the audience (Charles & Ahmed, 2017; Bada, 2015).

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, using both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative component adheres to the positivist paradigm, which assumes that knowledge is gained through scientific procedures and the objective assessment of variables (Creswell, 2014; Pinto, 2010; Scotland, 2012). Surveys were used to collect hard data and draw reliable conclusions about the perceptions, practices, and challenges of GDM and DDM in the selected Ethiopian public HEIs, based on the DLE model (Hurtado et al., 2012).

The qualitative methodology was grounded in constructivism, which holds that "meaning" is generated through the interaction of consciousness with the external world (Scotland, 2012;

Morrison, 2017). To gain in-depth insight into the issues with GDM and DDM, the study combined interviews, observations, and document analysis using a bottom-up, inductive theory-generation approach. This integration of quantitative and qualitative methods allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena, balancing the shortcomings of each approach (Flick, 2011; Greene & Hall, 2016).

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Mixed Research Design

In a mixed-methods study, the quantitative approach asks focused, limited questions, gathers quantitative data from a large number of respondents, uses statistics to analyze the findings, and performs the research in a neutral, impartial manner (Creswell, 2014). When a question has to be quantifiable, it tries to quantify the variables of interest (Creswell, 2012). The process entails gathering numerical data that may be analyzed statistically. It is a deductive, post-positivist method with a single reality that is both objective and systematic (Morgan, 2007). The qualitative approach in mixed research methods, on the other hand, is a style of study in which the researcher relies on the opinions of participants, poses broad, general questions, gathers information largely from participant words or text, describes and analyzes these words and themes, and conducts the investigation in a subjective, biased manner (Creswell & Clark, 2008). Consequently, when both quantitative and qualitative data together give a greater knowledge of our study topic than each kind by itself, the mixed research technique design is applied. Also, it is employed when a single form of study (qualitative or quantitative) is insufficient to solve the research issue or provide satisfactory results (Creswell, 2012; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). The mixed research design is a pragmatic paradigm with different views that are both prejudiced and impartial, subjective and objective in character (Gibbs, 2007). It is also utilized to provide a qualitative element to a study that is mostly quantitative. It is employed to continue a quantitative study after it has been completed in order to gather additional in-depth qualitative data (Karasar, 2009).

The study used a convergent parallel mixed design which is a hybrid approach in which quantitative and qualitative information regarding the same occurrence is examined, combined, and evaluated (Gay et al., 2012; Creswell & Clark, 2008). This QUAN+QUAL approach was chosen because it allows gathering both types of data at about the same time and then combines

the data in the overall findings' interpretation (Johnson et al. 2007). The survey approach was used to perform the quantitative portion of the study. Survey models analyze a problem in its particular context, whether it be historical or current (Karasar, 2009). In the framework of the research, quantitative analytic techniques were used to examine the variables.

The study's qualitative part employed a phenomenological research approach. The goal of phenomenological research is to uncover experiences that students are aware of but do not fully comprehend, as well as the meaning they assign to these experiences (Titchen & Hobson, 2005; Neuman, 2007). Therefore, in order to answer the basic research questions, by applying both quantitative and qualitative research methods, a mixed method research method with an emphasis on QUAN+QUAL a (convergent parallel mixed design) was used. Additionally, the Pearson approach was used to determine whether there is a connection between perceptions of gender and disability diversity management practices and challenges at Ethiopian public HEIs.

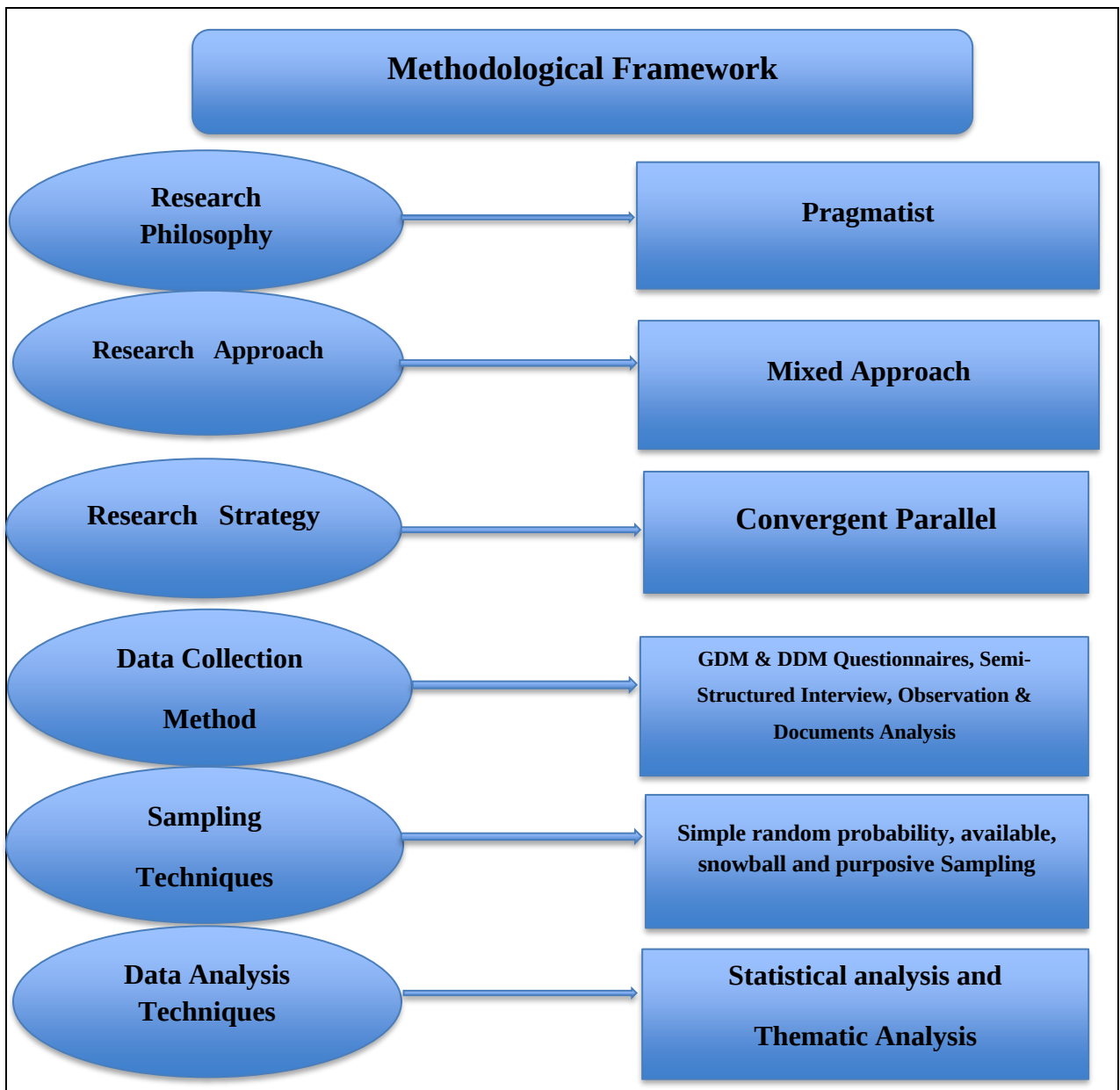


Figure 3. Methodological framework used in the study

3.3 Target Population and Sampling

3.3.1 Target Population

All undergraduate and SWDs enrolled in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs made up the study's population. Plus, Academic vice deans, student deans, gender office heads, disability center heads and instructors were involved while collecting qualitative data. Taking a comparatively greater number of sample units was crucial for this study for two reasons: the nature of the survey's methodology and educational studies. A comparatively higher number of sample

units are taken into consideration while designing surveys. When conducting educational studies, researchers in the field of education advise using a lot of sample units. As a result, to choose a suitable number of samples for the quantitative portion of this research, a mix of several probability and non-probability sampling approaches were applied.

3.3.2 Sampling

3.3.2.1 Selection of Sample Universities

The MoE differentiated public HEIs into three categories based on their mission and focus. These differentiated HEIs are Research Universities, University of Applied Sciences (UAS), and Comprehensive Universities. Adama Science and Technology University and Addis Ababa Science and Technology University are considered as science and technology universities but this was not among the categories of differentiations (MoSHE, 2020). Kotebe Metropolitan University was also categorized as Kotebe Education University by proclamation no 1263/2022 (FDRE, 2022). Base on this categorization, five universities (i.e., one from each category) were selected based on geographic proximity to the capital city where the researcher study and lives. Accordingly, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa Science and Technology University, Debre Berhan University, Selale University and Kotebe Education University were selected. It would be good to include more universities in the research but as a self-funded student, the researcher can only accommodate one university from each category.

No	Categories	List of Categorized HEIs	Total
1	Research Universities	Bahir Dar, Jimma, Gondar, Haramaya, Addis Ababa, Hawassa, Mekelle and Arba Minch	8
2	Applied Sciences Universities	Ambo, Aksum, Arsi , Asossa, Debre Berhan , Debre Markos , Dilla, Dire Dawa , Jigjiga , Samara , Wolaita Sodo , Wolkite , Wollega and Wollo	14
3	Comprehensive Universities	Adigrat . Bonga Bule Hora Borena Debark Debre Tabor, Dembi Dollo Gambella, Injibara, Jinka Kebri Dahar ,Mekdela Amba, Madda Walabu Metu . Mizan-Tepi Oda Bultum, Raya, Selale Wachemo,Worabe and Woldiya	21
4	Science and Technology Universities	Addis Ababa and Adama	2

5	Education University	Kotebe	1
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Table 1: The list of differentiated Ethiopian public HEIs

3.3.3 Selection of Students

Research scholars advise that a sample size should be sufficient to acquire acceptable data for the study and should take into account the population's size, homogeneity, cost, and needed level of precision (Kothari, 2004). Various researchers, on the other hand, Yamane (1967), for instance, used the following formula to establish a sample size:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n= Sample Size

N= Population Size, and

e= Degree of accuracy

The degree of accuracy, also known as sampling error, demonstrates how closely the sample accurately predicts the real values in the population (Kothari, 2004). 95% is the typical degree of confidence for social science research ($p=0.05$). In any event, it was decided to use the aforementioned method in this study to estimate the precise number of students who would participate in the quantitative analysis of this research. Therefore, by using the above Yemane formula, the proper sample size was calculated and taken after knowing the number of undergraduate regular students in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs.

There is a total of 39,962 (25,081 male & 14,881 female) undergraduate regular students enrolled in programs at the selected five Ethiopia's HEIs. Additionally, there are 409 undergraduate regular students with disabilities (239 male and 170 female) in the mentioned five Ethiopian public HEIs. As a result, the population for the research consisted of 15,683 (9,409 male & 6,274 female)

regular undergraduate students in Addis Ababa, 10,117 (6,321male & 3796 female) regular undergraduate students in Debre Birhan, 3,974 (2,412 male & 1562 female) undergraduate students in Kotebe University of Education, 3,799 (2,389 male & 1,410 female) regular undergraduate students in Selale universities and 6,389 (4,550 male & 1,839 female) regular undergraduate students in Addis Ababa Science and Technology University. The representative sample size from undergraduate regular students was then determined as follows using the above Yemane formula with 0.05 degree of accuracy:

$$n = \frac{39,962}{1 + 39,962 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 395 \text{ Regular Undergraduate Students}$$

Taking into consideration the number of male and female students in each HEI, the sample size calculation of the Yamane formula was distributed proportionately, as five HEIs were chosen for the studies. Thus, 79 regular undergraduate students from Addis Ababa University, 79 regular undergraduate students from Debre Birhan, 79 regular undergraduate students from Kotebe University of Education, 79 regular undergraduate students from Selale universities, and 79 regular undergraduate students from Addis Ababa Science and Technology University participated in the study to generate the proportion by dividing 395 into five equal parts. From the five public HEIs in Ethiopia that were chosen, 395 (216 male and 179 female) undergraduate students in total took part.

Students were selected as the main source of data because, first, they have first-hand experience of the challenges and practices related to GDM within the HEIs setting. They can also provide valuable insights into issues such as gender-based discrimination, unequal treatment, and the effectiveness of existing policies and initiatives. Their perspectives can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the current state of GDM in Ethiopian public HEIs. Secondly, since students are the key stakeholders in the HEIs system, their experiences and perceptions on GDM directly impact their educational journey and overall development. By involving them in the study, researchers can gain insights into how gender diversity is perceived and managed within the Ethiopian public HEIs context. Thirdly, involving them as respondents in a study on GDM can

also raise awareness and consciousness about the importance of gender equality and inclusivity, encouraging them to become advocates for positive change within their HEIs and society at large.

Gay, et al., (2012) claim that after the population exceeds 5,000, the population size is essentially unimportant and a sample size of 400 was sufficient for research. Similarly, since there are 409 regular SWDs (239 male and 170 female) in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. As a result, the population for the research consisted of 223 (125 male & 98 female) undergraduates regular SWDs in Addis Ababa, 49 (29 male & 20 female) undergraduates regular SWDs in Debre Birhan, 55 (34 male & 21 female) undergraduates regular SWDs in Kotebe University of Education, 44 (28 male & 16 female) undergraduates regular SWDs in Selale universities and 38 (23 male & 15 female) undergraduates regular SWDs in Addis Ababa Science and Technology University. And by applying identical sample size calculation formula with 0.04 degree of accuracy the representative sample size from SWDs diversity were then determined as follows:

$$0.04 \times 0.04 = 0.0016$$

$$0.0016 \times 409 = 0.6544$$

$$1 + 0.6544 = 1.6544$$

$$409 \div 1.6544 = 247.2 \sim 247$$

$$n = \frac{409}{1 + 409 (0.04)^2}$$

$$n = 247.2 \sim = 247 \text{ Undergraduate Regular SWDs}$$

Given that there are five HEIs selected for the current study, the Yamane formula's sample size calculation was distributed proportionately by taking the number of SWDs in each institution into account. Thus, to provide the proportion, 112 (76 male & 36 female) regular SWD undergraduate students from Addis Ababa University, 35 (23 male & 12 female) regular SWD undergraduate students from Debre Birhan, 35 (23 male & 12 female) regular SWD undergraduate students from Kotebe University of Education, 35 (23 male & 12 female) regular SWD undergraduate students from Selale universities, and 30 (20 male & 10 female) regular SWD undergraduate students from

Addis Ababa Science and Technology University participated in the study. Totally, 247 SWDs (165 male and 82 female) were participated.

As it is calculated above, 395 regular undergraduate and 247 SWDs totally 642 regular students were taken the survey. From the sample five Ethiopian public HEIs, five colleges ($5 \times 5 = 25$) were also once chosen by applying purposive sampling techniques due to the fact that SWDs diversity may not be found if you use simple random sampling. Consequently, it was divided the total number of selected students and SWDs diversity from regular undergraduate participants for each institution by five to find the number of participants in each college. From each HEI, since the research objective was to explore the perceptions and policy practices of the GDM in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, purposive sampling allows for intentional selection of institutions that are known for having a diverse student population in terms of both genders. This approach ensures that the sample includes five colleges (i.e.; College of Social Science, College of Humanities, College of Education, College of Business and Management, and College of Law at Kotebe, since there is no law college, college of natural science used) where gender diversity is more likely to be observed, providing a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. However, at Ababa Science and Technology University, since it is technology university, College of Biological and Chemical Engineering, College of Applied Science, College of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, College of Natural and Social Science and College of Architecture and Civil Engineering selected purposively. This was carried out because, according to Gay et al. (2006), Lodico et al. (2006), and Berg (2001), the inquiry pertaining to the issue of study requires a research group that balances the participants (in the current study's case, those colleges/faculties having proportional number of male and female participants as well as SWDs). The students who took part in the quantitative study were then chosen at random from each purposively selected college's department. The justification of purposively choosing was those colleges with SWDs needs to be incorporated well. For instance, in some engineering and natural science colleges there are only few or no students with disabilities who are the main respondents of this study.

3.3.4 Qualitative Data Sources

Qualitative data was gathered from students, academic vice presidents, deans of student's, disability support center heads, gender office heads. Documents were also used as source of data.

Students' participation is specifically intended to investigate their perceptions toward GDM & DDM, experiences with discrimination, harassment, and conflicts arising from gender and disability issues, satisfaction with the way their campuses accommodate their gender and disability diversity, comprehension of the institutional commitment to managing students' gender and disabilities diversity, and involvement in various extracurricular and curricular activities. Student participants were chosen using a snowball sampling technique. With the guidance and assistance of other students and deans of students, students who have strong communication skills and have personal accounts to share about their experience with gender and disability diversity problems were addressed.

Instructors were selected to obtain data about students, behave in class when interacting and cooperating with peers from different gender and disability diversity, backgrounds, the suitability of the curriculum to expose students to GDM & DDM issues, and whether gender and disability diversity is an opportunity or a challenge for the teaching-learning process. A purposive sampling technique was used in selecting instructors from various fields whom potentially provide the necessary data.

Academic vice deans were included to get data concerning the attention given to female and disabled students in their strategic plan and students' code of conduct as the DLM model request to examine the institutional policies and directives. Academic vice deans were selected by applying the available sampling techniques.

Disability center heads were involved in the study to obtain data regarding physical care, personal care, and emotional support for SWDs. Three disability center heads were involved in this study because the other two universities do not have disability center heads.

Gender office heads from the five universities were selected to generate information regarding the provision of legal protection from abuse, harassment, and violence, provision of advice and counseling services, enhancement of female students' academic competence by providing them with additional tutorial classes, and facilitation of economic and material support for needy female and male students.

Deans of students were also included in the study on the grounds that they are important sources of data regarding the diversity of their students in terms of gender and disability, institutional commitment to GDM & DDM, the focus placed on co-curricular activities, current

events at their university, the accessibility and implementation of institutional diversity policies, conflicts resulting from gender and disability issues, losses suffered and students quitting the campus due to gender and disability diversity management problems, and outside influences on how gender and disability diversity management is handled among their student body. Student deans were also selected using available sampling technique.

Generally, four vice Academic president (one from each HEIs & one not willing), ten undergraduate students (two from each HEIs, ten instructors (Two from each HEIs), five gender office heads, three disability center heads (only three are available) and five student deans (one from each HEIs) were included as sources of qualitative data.

No	Qualitative Participants	Sample Representative	Sampling Techniques	Instrument
1	Undergraduate Students	10	Snowball Sampling	Interview
2	Vice Academic Presidents	4	Available Sampling	Interview
3	Students' Deans	5	Purposive & Available Sampling	Interview
4	Instructors	10	Purposive Sampling	Interview
5	Gender office Heads	5	Available Sampling	Interview
6	Disability Center Heads	3	Available Sampling	Interview
	Total	37		

Table 2: List of qualitative data sources from HEIs

3.4 Data Collection Tools

3.4.1 Quantitative Data Collection Tool

Questionnaire was used to gather quantitative information from respondents. Using data from questionnaire has many advantages, including objectivity. It uses less variables and more precise numbers. This can help in cleaning up research biases and improving the accuracy of the results. It is frequently simpler to collect big sample sizes, which is an additional advantage (Creswell, 2012). Questionnaire are also an efficient data collection tool when the researcher knows exactly what is wanted and how to quantify the variables of interest (Creswell, 2003; Morgan, 2007).

3.4.1.1 Questionnaire Development

Two types (one for gender diversity management and the other for disability diversity management) of questionnaires were developed based on the empirical and theoretical literatures as well as Hurtado's et al. (2012) DLE model. The researcher used the nine different stages listed below while developing the GDM & DDM questionnaire: Select the information needed, define the target respondents, and select the necessary method(s) for contacting the respondents. Establish the substance of the questions, how they should be worded and ordered, and how long they should be and create the final questionnaire after pre-testing it. It contains both a biographical part and GDM & DDM. Respondents were asked about their gender, disability and age in a biographical questionnaire.

Description of the GDM & DDM Questionnaire

Gender Diversity Management Questionnaire

For the GDM questionnaire (See Appendix-1), fifty-seven (57) questions were asked. Here the fifty-seven questions were divided into the five basic research questions which are categorized into 8 main gender diversity management variables i.e., 12 questions about general perceptions of gender diversity, 9 questions for curricular perceptions for gender diversity management, 6 questions for extra-curricular perceptions for gender diversity management, 7 questions for diversity-related policy practice for gender diversity management, 6 questions about top leadership commitment for gender diversity management, 8 questions about challenges of GDM and the remaining 9 questions were to the satisfaction in gender diversity management. Questions were answered on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, with 1 denoting strongly disagree, 2 denoting disagree, 3 undecideds, 4 denoting agree, and 5 denoting strongly agree.

Disability Diversity Management Questionnaire

Similar to the above, fifty-one (51) items were asked for DDM questionnaire. The fifty-one questions were divided into five fundamental research questions, which are then subdivided into eight main DDM variables, including six questions about general perceptions of DDM and eight questions about curricular perceptions of DDM. Five questions for DDM in extracurricular activities, seven policy practice questions for DDM, seven inquiries on the commitment of top leadership to DDM, nine inquiries on the challenges to DDM. The last nine questions were focus on how satisfied the regular undergraduate students are with DDM after the nine questions on

challenges. A Likert *scale* of 1 to 5 were used to rate responses, with 1 suggesting severe disagreement, 2 denoting disagreement, 3 denoting indecisions, 4 denoting agreements, and 5 denoting highly agreement. Below was a quick discussion of eight questionnaire dimensions (See Appendix-2).

Dimensions of the GDM & DDM Questionnaire

The researcher puts the behavioral, psychological, structural dimension of gender & disability diversity management in the listed below eight sub groups so as to holistically comprehend what was needed in the DLE model by Hurtado et al. (2012).

Overall Perceptions for GDM & DDM

According to DLE model for diversity management study, touching the psychological dimension, is important to examine the perception of respondents towards diversity management (Hurtado et al., 2012). Therefore, in order to evaluate the students GDM and DDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, it is important to understand how overall the regular undergraduate students perceive about having a diverse student body who are of a different gender and disability than they are. This is why this section of the questionnaire is designed to do just that.

Curricular Perceptions for GDM & DDM

Since the DLE model in its structural dimension, strongly recommend to examine the curricular perceptions for diversity management study, this component evaluates the regular undergraduate students' perceptions of gender and disability diversity-related concerns in the classroom. Students should also get the chance to learn about the positive interactions between teachers and students in Ethiopian public HEIs curricula and the development of a learning environment that conveys the significance of recognizing GDM & DDM reflected in this dimension, which assesses how instructors encourage students of all genders and disabilities to engage in discussions and ask questions in class.

Extra-curricular Perceptions for GDM & DDM

Considering the behavioral dimension of DLE model, this section of the survey measures how the Ethiopian public HEIs students perceived about the existence of events, panels, clubs, and organizations that support the diversity of students' genders and disabilities. These co-curricular activities are essential to the development of an environment that is truly inclusive and diverse

(Hurtado et al., 2012). It assesses students' participation in institutional gender and disability diversity-related programming which is also recommended by DLE model while studying diversity management.

GDM & DDM Related Policy Practice

Touching the structural dimension, this component examines the practice of the university's formal policies such as its mission statement, applicable laws, and students' handbook that reflect diverse issues related to GDM & DDM. Some items in this dimension are also used to gauge respondents' understanding of anti-discrimination and anti-harassment regulations.

Top Leadership Commitment for GDM & DDM

From the structural dimension's point of view of DLE model, the HEIs top leadership are responsible for establishing the institution's strategic vision and mission, this section of the questionnaire is meant to gauge how much support they are giving to GDM & DDM initiatives. The adoption of certain procedures by the university was either encourage or discourage the development of GDM & DDM.

Challenges of GDM & DDM

This section of the instrument assesses the problem what respondents observed plus the universities' financial budget shortage, perceptual barriers, lack of GDM & DDM related research, inadequate gender and disability diversity management training, excessive workload, and other challenges that may arise as a result of issues with GDM & DDM on their HEIs.

Satisfaction of GDM & DDM

From the psychological dimension view of DLE model, the satisfaction of regular undergraduate students with their experiences connected to diversity on their HEIs, especially linked to their GDM & DDM was evaluated in this section of the instrument. It evaluates their satisfaction with the top leadership's handling of them when they encounter discrimination, harassment, or damage to their personal property, as well as on their composition's diversity in terms of gender and disability.

3.4.1.2 Pilot Testing of the Instrument

Adama Science and Technology University was chosen as the pilot test site due to its

proximity to the researcher and its similarity to one of the selected universities for the study. Thirty undergraduate students without disability and another thirty undergraduate SWDs from Adama Science and Technology University were participated in a pilot test to maintain the reliability of the two instruments (one for both male & female undergraduate students and the other for undergraduate students with disabilities). Some questions from both the sixty-eight (for gender) and the sixty-three (for disability) items in the DDM & GDM survey was eliminated right away if any are discovered to be of poor quality. As a result, for both types of survey, it was determined that the whole scale's internal consistency reliability coefficient was larger than 0.70, since the general rule of thumb is that a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 and above is good, 0.80 and above is better, and 0.90 and above is best.

This dissertation's advisor, two gender expert, two special needs and inclusive education specialists were commented to enhance the face and content validity of the two instruments. Below is both the pilot tested (pre-test) and the main data (post-test) result for both instruments kept in the tables.

Instrument	Cronbach alpha for pilot test	Cronbach alpha for main data	Number of Items	Reliability
Overall Perceptions for GDM	.759	.789	12	Acceptable
Curricular Perceptions for GDM	.788	.812	9	Acceptable
Extra-curricular Perceptions for GDM	.872	.891	6	Acceptable
Diversity Related Policy Practice for GDM	.781	.799	7	Acceptable
Top Leadership Commitment for GDM	.863	.886	6	Acceptable
Challenges of Gender Diversity	.801	.892	8	Acceptable
Satisfaction on GDM	.734	.799	9	Acceptable
Total			57 items	

Table 3. *Reliability of the Scales in the GDM survey Instrument*

Instrument	Cronbach alpha	Cronbach alpha for main data	Number of Items	Reliability
Overall Perceptions for DDM	.910	.921	6	Acceptable
Curricular Perceptions for DDM	.886	.876	8	Acceptable
Extra-curricular Perceptions for DDM	.754	.798	5	Acceptable
Diversity Related Policy Practice for DDM	.868	.854	7	Acceptable
Top Leadership Commitment for DDM	.843	.755	7	Acceptable
Challenges of Disability Diversity	.888	.823	9	Acceptable
Satisfaction on DDM	.760	.783	9	Acceptable
Total			51 items	

Table 4. *Reliability of the Scales in the DDM survey Instrument*

3.4.2 The Qualitative Data Collection Tools

The researcher used three data collection tools including interviews, observation and document analysis to collect the necessary qualitative.

Interview

A semi-structured interview is a research method that combines elements of both structured and unstructured interviews (Johnson & Turner 2012). It provides a flexible framework for gathering qualitative data by utilizing a set of pre-determined open-ended questions while also allowing for spontaneous follow-up questions and exploration of specific topics (O'Leary, 2004, Merriam, 2009). In this study, in-depth interviews were used to collect data from students, instructors, academic vice presidents, student deans, gender office heads, and disability center heads. The purpose of the interviews was to gain insights into the various aspects of gender and disability diversity management within Ethiopian public HEIs. It focusses on the perceptions, practices, and challenges related to GDM & DDM. The interview guide was developed based

literature review previous research (Manaze 2020; Adamu, 2014; Gobena, 2016).

Observation

Combining observation with other research methods, such as interviews or surveys, can provide a more comprehensive understanding of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. Therefore, one of the instruments used to collect data for this study was non-participant observation. Data regarding accessibility of different buildings (e.g., dormitories, offices, classroom, libraries and facilities) and availability of resources (e.g., readers, brail, audiobooks, audio recorder, etc.) were collected through non-participant observation.

Documents Analysis

Document analysis was valuable tool for studying gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. By examining various documents, policies, and reports, the researcher gained insights into the institutional practices, approaches, and challenges related to gender and disability diversity and inclusion. Here are some documents that are analyzed:

1. **Policy Documents:** Master plan for special needs education, higher education proclamations, the new Ethiopian education development road map, affirmative action policy, Ethiopian education and training policy and Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic Constitution. From these policy documents, the depth given to gender and disability management practice at the selected five HEIs was analyzed.

2. **Institutional Policies:** The institutional policies related to gender and disability diversity like students' code of conduct, university senate legislations were observed. This includes policies on equal opportunity, non-discrimination, sexual harassment, reasonable accommodations, and inclusive practices. The content, scope, and implementation strategies outlined in these policies was also assessed.

3. **Strategic Plans:** The strategic plans or development frameworks of the institutions was analyzed. Specific goals, targets, or initiatives related to gender and disability diversity management was analyzed by the researcher. How these plans address diversity, inclusion, and the promotion of equitable opportunities for all students, faculty, and staff was also analyzed.

4. **Student Enrollment and Support Documents:** Documents related to student

enrollment, admissions criteria, and support services was analyzed.

By analyzing these documents, the researcher gained a comprehensive understanding of the approaches, challenges, and efforts made by Ethiopian public HEIs in managing gender and disability diversity. These documents are obtained through ethical means and that any sensitive or confidential information is handled appropriately.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

3.5.1 The Quantitative Data Collection Procedure

After the data collection instrument were modified in light of the findings of the pilot research, the actual data collection was taken in each sampled university after obtaining permission and providing a letter of support. An official letter from the Department of Educational Planning and Management, Addis Ababa University was presented to the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. Contacts with college deans were made when the appropriate sample processes are completed in order to distribute the surveys to randomly chosen students. Twenty (20) extra questionnaires were sent out at each sampled HEIs to increase confidence as it was anticipated that some surveys would be faulty or not returned.

3.5.2 The Qualitative Data Collection Procedure

Participants were made aware of the purpose of each interview, their right to leave at any time during the discussion and the guarantee of confidentiality by being told that anything that was allowed others to identify them, including their names, was not be mentioned during transcription, analysis, and write-up, before the interview even starts. Interviews were taken place in either Amharic and translated in to English by the researcher. The interviews were recorded using digital voice recorder. In order to get first-hand information, the researcher was also observing the participants in their regular setting as a non-participant observer.

To give depth to the quantitative data, studies of pertinent documents were referenced in addition to interview. In order to do this, the accessibility, substance, and application of documents such as those linked to strategic plans, senate legislations, and student conduct codes were examined as they pertain to the study's goal. The education development road map, a recent large research output that included HEIs was presumed to have information pertinent to the goal of this

study were also examined.

3.6 The GDM & DDM Questionnaire Reliability

Questionnaire dependability describes how impartial a measurement is and guarantees constant measurement throughout time and across various measuring equipment components. A fundamental prerequisite for attaining a successful universal quantification of commitment, according to Morgan, (2007), acquiring trustworthy data from a wide variety of respondents in different institutions. According to Leedy & Ormrod (2010), consistency refers to how reliably measuring tools produce a certain result while the object being evaluated stays reliable. Anything we try to measure needs to be consistent for us to measure it effectively. In other words, while dependability is required for validity, it is not sufficient. According to Swanepoel et al. (2008), the consistency of a metric may be used to determine dependability. To prove that a certain predictor (selection instrument) can be utilized with confidence, consistent data must be collected several times. Therefore, a reliability test was conducted to see if the items on the GDM & DDM survey consistently measured the seven dimensions. SPSS Version 25 was used to get the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha score for each dimension. According to De Meuse et al (2007), if the survey items assessed a single unidimensional concept, a high coefficient alpha score (greater than 0.7) would be expected. The current survey has a total (for the seven dimensions) reliability score of 0.84 (for GDM) & 0.83 (for DDM) indicating that the variables of GDM & DDM are assessed in an internally consistent manner.

3.7 The GDM & DDM Questionnaire Validity

According to Swanepoel et al. (2008), accuracy and validity are connected, therefore a measure is valid if it provides accurate estimates of the subject under study. Sekaran (2001) defined validity as the extent to which an empirical measure accurately represents the true meaning of the concept being studied. Three different categories of validity are discussed by Babbie et al (2001).

(i). The validity of a collection of criteria is described by the phrase "criterion validity," which is also known as "predictive validity. "Third-party standards are used to establish this validity. This is established when a measure separates individuals based on a criterion that is expected to predict. To verify validity, test scores are compared to one or more independent criteria.

(ii). Construct validity is determined by the logistical link between variables. It ensures that the instrument provides a reasonable, adequate, and representative sample of responses that are assessed to be reflective of the test's domain.

(iii). The construct validity of a measure relates to how well the test's results reflect the ideas on which it is based. According to Foxcroft and Roodt (2005), the diversity management survey was judged to have great face value, which refers to how well an instrument seems to measure what it is intended to assess. The questionnaire was tailored to the selected five public HEIs' environment in Ethiopia, and because of this, it was reliable and valid in both current and upcoming research studies.

3.8 Data Analysis

3.8. 1 The Quantitative Data Analysis Procedure

A computer was used to code and input the data that was gathered through questionnaires for further analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS - version 25) was used to examine the data since it can do simple descriptive and inferential statistics. To examine the quantitative data, descriptive statistics like percentages, means, and standard deviations as well as inferential statistics like the independent t-test, Pearson correlation, and multiple correlation were employed. Results were simultaneously presented, discussed, and interpreted. Descriptive statistics was used to understand and analyze respondents' background data (Creswell, 2012).

The respondents' demographic information, namely their sex, age, disability, academic standing, and qualification, were given. Then, as suggested by researchers, several descriptive and inferential statistical methods were utilized for analysis of the quantitative data, mostly dependent on the nature of the research questions (Babbie et al., 2001). As a result, the key statistical methods that were utilized to analyze the quantitative data are presented below based on the fundamental queries posed.

Independent Samples t-test

A t-Test determines if there is a significant difference in the means of two groups, which might be due to a change in particular parameters or could have occurred by coincidence (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). According to Sekaran (2001), the benefit of a t-Test is that it considers

the means and standard deviations of the two groups on the variable and evaluates if the numerical differences in the mean in the research are significant from zero. The t-test was employed in the study to investigate if gender differences in student opinions of GDM & DDM in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs were significant.

Multiple Linear Correlation Analysis

Multiple linear correlation analysis examines the relationships between multiple variables. It determines the strength and direction of the linear associations between the variables, as well as the relative importance of each variable in explaining the overall variation. The insights gained from this analysis can provide valuable information about complex phenomena, identifying the key factors that influence specific outcomes. This can inform decision-making and guide further research. (Creswell, & Tashakkori, 2007). The combined influence of GDM & DDM perceptions & practices on each dependent variable, which are perception & satisfaction were examined using multiple regression analysis.

Pearson Correlation

A Pearson-moment correlation coefficient was utilized to examine the association between variables (perceptions & Satisfaction) and factors (GDM & DDM practices and senior leaders' commitment for GDM & DDM) at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. The correlation coefficient values (r) show the statistical link between variables. Accordingly, a value of +1 denotes a perfect positive correlation, whereas a value of -1 denotes a perfect negative correlation between variables. The variables are hence strongly positively correlated, and vice versa, the closer the value of (r) is near 1. This technique was chosen since it was suggested for studies with more than thirty cases by academics like Creswell, & Tashakkori, (2007).

3.8. 2 The Qualitative Data Analysis Procedure

After the qualitative information from the interviews, document review and observation has been acquired, data analysis was done to interpret the data and evaluate the stated fundamental questions. Making meaning of the words and pictures gathered is necessary for qualitative data analysis, according to Creswell (2014), cited by Manaze (2020), in order to provide fundamental answers. As he continued to offer suggestions for how to make sense of qualitative data, Creswell offered six steps: gathering and organizing the data for analysis, investigating and coding the data,

coding to create descriptions and themes, representing and reporting qualitative findings, interpreting the findings, and validating the findings. In this study, a theme approach was used to examine the qualitative data that was collected from the in-depth interviews and relevant materials.

According to the identified major themes related to each GDM & DDM perceptions, practices, commitment, satisfaction, and challenges of Ethiopian public HEIs in managing their students' diversity as advised by scholars (Creswel, 2014), the qualitative data was then be methodically transcribed and translated (for the interviews made in Amharic), categorized, reduced, and organized thematically. In order to provide the qualitative data from the in-depth interviews more validity, information gathered from the document review was also be structured and interpreted.

3.8. 3 Mixed Data Analysis Procedure

Although data on GDM & DDM perceptions, practices, commitment, challenges and satisfaction of the sampled five Ethiopian public HEIs was collected from a large number of respondents for this study, the study's perception and experience issues were make it difficult for the researcher to obtain an accurate and comprehensive picture. The inclusion of qualitative data was therefore necessary given these features. In order to gain a better knowledge of the components of the quantitative data that need for more justification and comprehension, the qualitative data was used. It follows that the qualitative data was mostly employed in this study to increase the quantitative data's depth and breadth, complementarity, and confirmation of results or triangulation throughout analysis.

The issues faced by Ethiopian public HEIs in managing their gender and disability diversity was, of course, also addressed by the qualitative data on their own. As a result, the specific method used in this study can be referred to as convergent parallel mixed design, also known as QUAN+QUAL, taking the primary purpose of the qualitative data, the simultaneous data collection of both forms of the database into consideration and the weight of both forms of data to address the fundamental questions that guide the study.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical consideration in research is concerned with the moral component of research, or what is right and wrong when conducting study. Procedures such as informed permission (*See*

Annexes- 10 -18), no danger or damage, privacy, and anonymity are frequently regarded as beneficial in resolving ethical quandaries. Research involving human subjects, in particular, must consider ethical considerations that may have an impact on the persons being studied. One of the most important concerns related to respondent protection is the protection of their privacy. As the present research involved human subjects (GDM & DDM), ethical guidelines for conducting the research were followed. Efforts were made to ensure that the highest level of ethical responsibility was employed to safeguard the interests of the respondents and the researcher.

To begin, authorization to gather data was requested and received from each university using a permission letter acquired from Federal Ministry of Education (MoE). Selected respondents are more likely to participate in research enquiries if they may participate anonymously (Dillman, 2007). Anonymity means that the researcher cannot identify any specific data with the individual who gave the data (Neumann, 2004). As a result, the researcher first secured anonymity; respondents were advised not to add any identifying markers on the survey. Furthermore, for survey participants, a cover letter describing the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their responses was prepared (*See Annexes 1, 2*).

Following that, the personal observation and interview session began by reminding the participants about the background and purpose of the research, as well as explaining that everything they say would be treated confidentially and that their names would not be revealed in the report. Pseudonyms were employed, and the material provided was merely for research reasons.

They were also informed that their involvement was entirely optional and that they might leave at any point during the process. Finally, the participants totally embraced voice recording as a method of gathering information. The participants were assured that each audiotape would be securely preserved and destroyed when the dissertation was completed and accepted. After all of the above conditions were met, individual observation, interviews, and survey were conducted at each of the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs.

3.10 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this convergent parallel mixed research (QUAN + QUAL) study was to

critically examine and provide insight into the perception, practices, and challenges of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. By using Hurtado's et al., (2012), Diversified Learning Environment (DLE) model as a the conceptual framework foundation, more specifically, the study was intended to: assess the regular undergraduate students' perceptions on curricular and extracurricular activities for GDM and DDM; investigate the policy practices for managing the diversity of gender and disability; evaluate the commitment of Ethiopian public HEIs' top management to GDM & DDM of its students; determine to what extent HEIs' regular undergraduate students satisfied with the GDM & DDM and finally, explore the challenges that the regular undergraduate students with gender & disability diversity faced in Ethiopian public HEIs.

The justification for employing mixed methods research, which combines quantitative and qualitative techniques, was discussed in this chapter. In the study, research using qualitative data was given less importance than research using quantitative data. The data-collection methodologies, sample methods, and data-population tactics for the study were all stated by the researcher. Several techniques for collecting information from chosen participants and responders including questionnaires, interviews, and document reviews were also discussed. Validity and reliability were addressed in the selection, processing, and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data.

This chapter also discussed the conceptual foundation of the investigation. It explained the procedures used in the study process, how participants were chosen and identified, and the standards used to assure reliability and credibility. Also provided were the phases in the data analysis process. Ethics pertaining to informed consent, privacy, self-determination, and secrecy were discussed. The analysis of the results is presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

In this chapter, data presented, interpreted, and discussed in relation to the primary research questions. Following the presentation of the demographic data from the respondents, an item-by-item analysis of the gender and disability diversity management survey and interview conducted to better understand the perceptions, practices, and challenges of GDM & DDM at the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen for the study and finally the chapter summary presented.

" Presentation skills are the key to unlocking that potential." - Richard Branson

4.1 Characteristics of Quantitative Respondents by Sex and Disability

The purpose of this study was to critically examine and provide insight into the perception, practices, and challenges of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. It was carried out utilizing convergent parallel-mixed techniques using quantitative and qualitative approaches (QUAN+QUAL). Thus, by looking at five research questions (RQ) with their sub questions, this PhD dissertation builds on an expanding body of knowledge associated with this GDM & DDM debate in the higher education arena. Based on data from the quantitative survey respondents' replies, the study group's demographics were assessed for this purpose in terms of sex, age, and handicap. Table 5 provides a summary of the pertinent data for the study participants.

No	Items	Results	
		No	Percent
1	Students without Disability (For Gender Study)	Male	216
		Female	179
		Total	395
2	Students with Disability	Male	165
		Female	82

		Total	247	100%
3	Total	Male	381	59.34%
	Respondents	Female	261	40.66 %
	Sex	Total	642	100%

Table 5: *Characteristics of Quantitative Respondents by Sex and Disability*

In terms of gender distribution (261), 40.66 percent of the responders were female. The (381) 59.34 percent representation of male respondents in the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen was deemed appropriate for the study's objectives. As a result, males predominated among respondents in the study's sample locations. Additionally, SWDs diversity were mostly male (165), 66.8 % at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs.

4.2 Characteristics of Qualitative Respondents

The demographics of the research group sex was assessed using data gathered from the qualitative respondents' replies. Table 6 contains a list of the study individuals' specifics.

No		Items	Results	
			No	Percent
1	Sex	Male	22	59.45%
		Female	15	40.54%
		Total	37	100%

Table 6: *Characteristics of Qualitative Respondents by Sex*

Males comprised 59.45% of the responses, according to gender distribution. The chosen five public HEIs in Ethiopia had a 40.54% female presence, which was thought to be a little underwhelming. Men were more likely to reply than female in the qualitative study's sample sites. The data suggests a gender imbalance in the study, with males comprising 59.45% of the responses and the selected public HEIs in Ethiopia having a 40.54% female presence, which was considered underwhelming. The qualitative study also found that men were more likely to respond than women in the sample sites, indicating potential barriers to female participation that should be further investigated and addressed to ensure more equitable representation.

4.3 Overall Perceptions for Gender Diversity Management

Research Question 1: *What are the respondents' overall perception regarding gender diversity management at Ethiopia public HEIs?*

The research group's response on overall perceptions for managing gender diversity was evaluated in terms of mean and standard deviation values based on the data acquired from the quantitative survey responses. The data that pertains to the research subjects are provided in Table 7.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	There is respect and support for gender diversity.	395	2.57	1.077
2	This university makes gender diversity management a priority.	395	2.56	.973
3	Both genders treated fairly and equitably in this campus in general.	395	4.25	1.046
4	I believe that both genders have the same opportunities on campus regardless of their identities.	395	4.04	.980
5	I believe that this university has an inclusive environment for people of all gender.	395	3.89	1.138
6	Students value making friends with other students who have a different gender than them.	395	3.99	1.098
7	I feel uncomfortable around students whose gender is different from mine.	395	3.24	1.089
8	If I raised a concern about gender diversity discrimination, I am confident that my university would do what is right.	395	3.78	1.040
9	At this campus, gender diversity equality means that female and male enjoy the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities.	395	3.18	1.076
10	Protecting and assisting female students is the only responsibility of specialized departments such as gender office.	395	2.54	1.05
11	I feel that due to my gender, in this university, I have to work harder than others to be valued equally.	395	3.08	1.076
12	Overall, I feel as both genders opinion is valued by this university's community.	395	3.07	1.105
Overall Average		395	3.34	

Table 7: *Respondents Overall Perceptions for Gender Diversity Management*

Perceptions on respect and support

In the above table 7, all the responses of the survey items for the overall perceptions of the GDM questioner were analyzed with descriptive statistics. And, item 1 had a mean and a standard

deviation score of ($M= 2.57$, $SD= 1.077$) suggesting that the majority of respondents had a low perception as there is less respect and support for gender diversity. Despite the DLE model suggesting that having respect and support for gender diversity contributes to a positive psychological climate, this finding implies the existence of a less favorable climate and a lack of willingness to embrace and advocate for gender diversity, equality, and inclusivity. HEIs can leverage these findings to encourage further initiatives and policies that foster gender diversity and create respect and support which is part of an inclusive environment for both genders. This result is consistent with Wondimu's (2004) finding: "the tutorial services and various support mechanisms being provided, particularly to girls, is inadequate and the overall academic environment is not supportive" (p.12).

In response to this question the interviewees felt that, while there is some trial in offering respect and assistance, it is insufficient in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. Here are samples:

Yes, it is true that respect and support are essential in a given HEIs. The support is based on the capacity and budget of our university. We support with what we have and it may not be satisfactory. ... since the need is elastic, it may not be of course sufficient. Anyhow, we have a number of supports packages.

(Interviewee #22, May 2023)

The following quote highlights the participant's lived experience of university's support: "There is various support for females like in the form of tutorials providing. They also give for females' hygiene protection materials through the gender office. And they each other [females themselves] support in their academic issues" (Interviewee, #24, April 2023). Concerning the needed support, the researcher attempted to observe how female students received support; it was observed that tutorials for lower performing female students were being provided. On top of that, a library for female students was built near to their dormitory at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. The researcher also observed females from low-income homes receiving pocket money from these HEIs' gender offices. In this regard, this investigation replicates the recommendations of educational psychology in other countries contexts where because substantial student achievement gaps are tied to learners' socioeconomic situation, respect with support helped educational success at all levels (Sternberg & Williams, 2002). The issue of respect and support was similarly emphasized in the Growth and Transformation Pan (GTP I) document, which stated that as a result of active affirmative action (admission criteria, as well as financial support such as a pilot

scholarship program and tutorial support programs) and general expansion, the gender parity index (GPI) has significantly increased in favor of females (FDRE, 2010).

This suggests that there is a discrepancy between the expectations set by quantitative respondents and policy documents regarding the necessary respect and support for both genders. It appears that the current state of respect and support is deteriorating and not receiving the attention it requires in order to establish and sustain an environment of respect and support for both genders, as expected in the GDM process at HEIs. This is consistent with studies in other situations where respect and support for gender diversity management are not proven to be the most prominent expressions of HEIs (Shaw, 2021).

Perception on Prioritizing GDM

The quantitative respondents were asked about their perception concerning whether their HEIs make GDM a priority or not, as indicated in Table 2, item 2, and the results indicate that the majority of them perceived that their HEIs failed to make GDM a priority highly having the mean and standard deviation value of ($M= 2.56$, $SD=.973$). This finding reflects the historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion of DLE model by indicating that the university has not prioritized GDM, suggesting a less commitment to addressing past exclusionary practices and promoting inclusivity. Based on these findings, it can be also said that the majority of respondents perceived their HEIs to have failed in making GDM a priority. This also indicates a concern among the respondents regarding the level of attention and effort dedicated to promoting gender diversity within their HEIs. It is significant for the HEIs to acknowledge these perceptions and take appropriate action to address the concerns, such as implementing policies and initiatives that prioritize and promote gender diversity, fostering an inclusive environment, and providing support for underrepresented genders within the HEIs. In this sense, Read et al. (2003) contend that a lack of accommodations for diversity as priority leads to the continuation of social injustice.

For instance, here is the qualitative response from two respondents, which matched the quantitative value, as follows:

To be completely honest, the handling of gender diversity at this university is no different from other issues. I mean, I can't claim that the campus's primary goal is managing gender diversity. By the way, I don't see giving GDM an excessive amount of importance as there isn't really a big problem.

(Interviewee, #5, May 2023)

However, as opposed to the above, the following was added by interviewee # 22:

“Here diversity management is the part of our strategic plan [...] for the past three years, our female students are the cap award which shows our priority towards GDM. We have also structure and each office will perform it accordingly”.

(Interviewee, #22, May 2023)

Referring to priority to gender diversity, interviewee number 1 commented:

“We consider them since they are in the system. It is not a matter of priority. Rather, the system will accept or reject you. [...] Then considering their case, the needed support will be given”.

(Interviewee, #1, April 2023)

Consistent with the findings, the Ouagadougou Declaration and Framework for Action (1993) documents stated that among various regional (African) instruments, regional, bilateral, and international organizations, as well as nongovernmental organizations, are advised to make girls' education a high priority in their development efforts (UNESCO & UNICEF, 1993). The inclination to not prioritize GDM aligns with previous research findings (e.g., Semela, 2006), where despite qualitative respondents acknowledged the presence of prioritizing gender issues, it was revealed that GDM relied on a lower position on the list of priorities for HEIs' agenda. This deviates from the intended goal of creating and maintaining an environment that prioritizes GDM for both genders as an integral part of the GDM process.

Perception on Ensuring Fairness and Equity

All survey responses for the overall perceptions of the GDM questionnaire were examined using descriptive statistics. The mean and standard deviation score for question 3 in Table 2 was (M=4.25, SD=1.046), indicating that the majority of respondents perceived that both genders were treated fairly and equitably on their campus in general. From DLE model's categorical point of view, this finding suggests that both genders are treated fairly and equitably on HEIs, indicating efforts to achieve structural diversity. Based on these findings, it can be interpreted that the majority of respondents perceived that both genders were treated fairly and equitably on their HEIs in general. This indicates a positive perception among the respondents regarding the treatment of both genders within the HEI environment. It also suggests that there is a level of confidence in the fairness and equity of policies, practices, and interactions related to gender on the campus.

However, Ethiopian public HEIs need to continue monitoring and addressing any potential disparities or issues to ensure ongoing fairness and equity in the campus environment. Previous research by (Kurtz-Costes et al., 2006) indicating a few students reported unequal treatment of male and female students does not corroborate this finding. For example, similar to the qualitative finding interviewee # 22 discussed it as follows:

Still now, I have never heard a question of fairness in this university. The system and structure what we have will not allow everyone to be unfair. But as human needs are unlimited, we may not fulfil every need of our students. We are limited in budget. Perhaps, from the accessibility point of view, we have limitation.

(Interviewee, #22, May 2023)

A bit opposite to the above quantitative and qualitative finding, for example, one participant discussed his opinion on the issue of fairness with the following words,

When we see these things, we need to see two things. As a campus what is being planned and as human being what we are practicing. Because the practicability of what comes from the university management depends on the staff's personal willingness. As a university, there is a theoretical motto but practically on the ground is too less. Because, the infrastructure and other existed situations will not allow us to make it practical. And from individual to individual there are also variances on fairness.

(Interviewee, #9, June 2023)

The following quote highlights the participant's lived experience of this fairness and equitable issue:

Since what we are doing for them is not enough, of course, there are complaints. They expect much things to be done without considering the capacity of the country. We did as per the budget what we have only. We would be glad if we provide luxurious life for them. [...] . Of course, what we did not sufficient.

(Interviewee, #1, April 2023)

This shows in Ethiopian public HEIs, although it was expected to create and maintain an environment where both genders were treated fairly and equitably as one of the GDM tasks, there is still a long way to go towards achieving gender equality atmosphere in HEIs which is anticipated to be performed well in the GDM process.

Perception on Equal Opportunities for All Genders

The responders' average score and standard deviation for item 4 in Table 2, was (M= 4.04, SD= 0.980), As a result of this, it is highly reasonable to assume that the selected five Ethiopian

public HEIs respondents highly perceived both genders have the same opportunities on campus regardless of their identities which was expected by HEIs to create and maintain an environment where both genders have the same opportunities as one of the GDM tasks. This finding reflects the belief in equal opportunities for both genders, which can foster a supportive psychological climate from DLE model's point of view. This appears to be no obvious violation of Article 26.1 of the United Nations (UN) human rights statement, which states that HEIs should be equally accessible to everyone (UN, 1948). In line with this, the worldwide aim for gender equality under ESDP IV has to include fostering equal access and achievement in education and training for women and girls (FDRE, 2010). Supporting the idea of equal opportunity for both gender diversity, McDuff et al., (2020) also suggested that HEIs develop more inclusive processes and curricula to enhance equality of opportunity for all students. There is a growing recognition that developing an inclusive curriculum necessitates a multi-institutional approach. For example, interview number 22 stated:

Yes, I think that we are providing same opportunities. Even legally, it is strictly forbidden not providing same opportunities. We are good in this regard. I never heard a complain on this agenda. Perhaps in the lower office may be raised.

(Interviewee, #22, May 2023)

However, another participant described opposite response on same opportunity provision with the following example:

Since we do have budget problem, on some things we may not provide identical opportunities. We may favor some groups by considering the seriousness of the problems and the budget what we have at hand. Resources are scarce, so same opportunities may not be provided. Managers may use various strategies at distributing materials, they are not making to create dissimilarities rather due to the scarcity. As you know, in management strategy, you cannot say this is best and that is bad. It depends.

(Interviewee, #1, April 2023)

The finding generally shows that in spite of budget constraints potentially limiting identical opportunities in certain areas, it is exposed that respondents at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs strongly perceived equal chances for both genders on campus, irrespective of their identities. This evidence suggests that there is an intentional effort at these institutions, as part of the GDM tasks, to foster an environment where both genders are provided with equitable opportunities.

Perception on Inclusive Environment for All Genders

The respondents' mean and standard deviation score was ($M= 3.89$, $SD= 1.138$) as shown in Table 7, item 5, demonstrating that respondents highly perceived as their university has an inclusive environment for people of both genders. This finding suggests that the university actively fosters an inclusive environment for individuals of all genders, which relates to behavioral components of the DLE model. One respondent in the survey's qualitative section provided the following responses, which matched with the quantitative value.

I think there is an environment at this campus that is welcoming to persons of all genders. As you can see, both gender groups are present here, which is the very best proof that all genders are included. Naturally, individuals admitted to HEIs are a prerequisite for entry. So, I see that an inclusive environment exists here.

(Interviewee, #8, May 2023)

The empirical material from the interview number 22 is more revealing:

On this regard, we need to understand the country's direction. Starting from student admitting we accept as per the choice of students similarly for female students too. In all parameters, I can say that our university is inclusive. Every service here are integrated to reflect to what extent our university is inclusive. For each center we have assigned focal person structurally.

(Interviewee, #22, May 2023)

Regarding the inclusivity of HEIs, the researcher observed the extent to which these institutions fostered inclusivity. Based on the researcher's observations, it can be concluded that almost all of the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs demonstrated inclusivity by accepting both genders. However, it is important to note that the number of female students' inclusiveness is influenced by the availability of female students in high schools and those who have successfully passed the entrance exams for HEIs, as determined by the country's education system.

However, it appears that the opposite is true in other nations, where there have been many studies that have concentrated on gender diversity stereotypes, and they have often indicated that there are situations of inequality when gender diversity is addressed. For example, in research conducted by Kollmayer et al., (2018) course materials were analyzed, and it was discovered that male characters outnumbered female characters in the texts. Men were found to be more represented while working outside the home than women, while women were connected with housework. This study also discovered that females were more obedient than boys (Kollmayer et al., 2018).

Drawing from the previously discussed qualitative and quantitative findings, it can be inferred that the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs foster an inclusive environment that accommodates individuals of all genders, consistent with the findings of other studies (e.g., Stentiford & Koutsouris, 2021). Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge that the number of female students to be included is influenced by factors such as the availability of female students in high schools and the success rate of female candidates in the entrance exams for HEIs. These determinants are governed by the country's education system.

Perception on Embracing Cross-Gender Friendships

Table 7, item 6 had a mean and a standard deviation score of ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 1.098$) suggesting that the majority of respondents had a high perception as students value making friends with other students who have a different gender than them in their HEIs. From the DLE model's point of view, this finding suggests a positive attitude towards making friends with individuals of different genders, contributing to an inclusive and accepting psychological climate. Here is an example from the interview who had similar concern, claiming that:

Yes, as such there isn't much individualism. Because we are on campus, everyone is engaging with his or her peers. But, in my experience, ladies need to be involved with their other females, and males need to be engaged with their fellow males. Mixed-up interaction is not viewed as such.

(Interviewee, #2, May 2023)

Regarding the benefit of students becoming friends with students of a different gender than themselves, one respondent to interview number five expressed a similar circumstance, stating that: *"I frequently observe students of different genders working together and having fun with one another to the point that it really helps them understand one another"*.

(Interviewee No. 5, May 2023)

The interviewee # 11 presented an important response like this:

Once they joined in our system, regardless of their gender diversity, they are one and the same. It is in my opinion. Students to make value across gender and disability, we have made the environment conducive for it. And since they are in the same environment, less likely there is discrimination. But human being naturally does have some attractive issues and needs. So, the grouping survival will be to what they know earlier. For instance, when I was fresh man years back, I asked one student and he said from Gojam and I was happy to be with him since I came from Wellega which is near to Gojam.

The researcher also observed that a large majority of students value establishing friends with classmates of a different gender than them. However, as closely observed, those students from cities were too readily making acquaintances of the opposite gender, which is maybe related to their urban thinking and upbringing style.

This demonstrates that in Ethiopian public HEIs the majority of respondents had a high perception of valuing making friends with students of a different gender in their HEIs. This indicates a positive attitude towards fostering friendships and social connections across gender lines within the higher education context. It also suggests that students in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs recognize the importance of diversity and are open to building relationships with individuals of different genders as a means of promoting inclusivity and expanding their social networks.

Perception on Managing Gender Discomfort

The respondents were asked about their perceptions concerning whether they feel uncomfortable around students whose gender is different from their or not, as indicated in Table 7, item 7, and the results indicate that the majority of them were highly perceived as they were not feeling uncomfortable around students whose gender is different from their having the mean and standard deviation value of ($M= 3.24$, $SD= 1.089$) in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. This finding indicates a personal discomfort around students of a different gender, which can impact DLE model's behavioral interactions within the HEIs. In the survey's qualitative part, one respondent submitted the following responses, which matched to the numerical value: *"For instance, in my class, we are 46(forty-six) but the number of females is only five. however, socializing with them was not challenging and was not also uncomfortable"*. (Interviewee, # 14, May 2023). Echoing an opposite concern, one participant from interview decried that: *"Yes, sometimes I feel discomfort when I be with other gender"*. (Interviewee, #2, May 2023). Similarly, one respondent stated his comfort/discomfort as follows: *"Earlier, I was uncomfortable to be with my opposite gender. I was sweating when I sit with opposite gender"*. (Interviewee, #5, May 2023)

From the observation data collection method, the researcher also confirmed that both genders were engaged in various activities in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs.

Considering the above findings, it can be said that the majority of respondents in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs had a high perception of feeling comfortable around students whose gender is different from theirs. This suggests that students in these institutions generally feel comfortable and at ease in interacting with students of different genders. Such a positive perception is essential for fostering an inclusive and supportive campus environment where diverse gender identities are respected and valued. This finding also indicates that the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs have made progress in creating an inclusive atmosphere that promotes positive interactions among students of different genders. In this regard, this inquiry mirrors the findings of comparable studies in other country circumstances where students were highly perceived because they did not feel uncomfortable with students of a different gender diversity than their own (McLoughlin, 2005).

Perception on Trust in HEI's Response

Table 7, item 8 had a mean and a standard deviation score of ($M= 3.78$, $SD= 1.040$) suggesting that the majority of respondents had a high perception as if they raised a concern about gender diversity discrimination, they were confident that their university would do what is right. From DLE model's point of view, this finding highlights the confidence in the HEI's responsiveness to concerns about gender diversity discrimination, indicating efforts to maintain a positive psychological climate. This also indicates that, generally speaking, respondents perceived their university responded quite well to complaints regarding discrimination based on gender diversity. In this case, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against females (1979) is exemplified. This treaty's Article 10 said the following:

(c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programs and the adaptation of teaching methods.

Interview respondents who answered to this question were sure that if students reported concerns about gender diversity discrimination, their university would do the right thing. For instance, one respondent submitted the following responses, which matched to the numerical value:

I am certain that my university would do the right thing if I voiced concerns about gender diversity discrimination because I am familiar with it. To your surprise, I

am aware of a situation that was reported to the appropriate office last year; the case was taken seriously, and a timely corrective action was done.

(Interviewee, #12, June 2023)

Interviewee number 22, on his part discussed as no discrimination there. Here is his record:

Sorry to say that, in our university, discrimination is not an existing reality. We have no discrimination report and more service takers may tell you. I do not think there is discrimination in this university since this university is highly diversified.

(Interviewee, #22, May 2023)

Similar to this finding, global agreements state that any necessary action shall be taken to ensure that girls and women, married or unmarried, have equal rights with men in education at all levels, with equal conditions of access to and study in educational institutions of all types, including universities (UN 1979, Article 10 and 10.a), and that no discrimination on the basis of gender diversity can be accepted in granting access to HEIs (UNESCO 1998, Article 3.a).

Other findings also reveal that respondents had a strong belief that if they reported a concern about gender diversity discrimination, their university would do the right thing. Prior study also revealed that students perceived that if they raised concerns about gender diversity discrimination, their university would take appropriate action. (Ali, 2016).

This demonstrates that in Ethiopian public HEIs, where it was expected to create and maintain an environment where students can raise concerns about gender diversity discrimination and the university can do what is right as one of the GDM tasks, there is a promising finding toward achieving where students can raise concerns about gender diversity discrimination and the university can do what is right as it was expected to be done in international and national policy documents.

Perception on Pursuing Gender Diversity Equality

The respondents were asked about their perception at their HEIs, whether gender diversity equality means that female and male enjoy the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities or not, as indicated in Table 7, item 9, and the results indicate that the average number of them were perceived as gender diversity equality means that female and male enjoy the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities having the mean and standard deviation value of (M= 3.18, SD= 1.076). From the DLE model, this finding emphasizes the importance of gender diversity equality,

indicating a focus on the demographic structure on these HEIs. Given that the mean value (3.18) is not high, it indicates the presence of a gap in gender diversity equality. In this respect, this investigation echoes the findings of previous studies conducted in Ethiopian contexts, which have identified the persistent issue of inequality of opportunities among various social groups in accessing higher education in Ethiopia (Wondimu, 2004). Furthermore, regarding the aspects of enjoyment, equal rights, and opportunities, Wondimu (2004) emphasized in his findings that providing equal opportunities to students, irrespective of gender, color, location, or other social categorizations, yields several benefits. This approach is not only a fundamental human right but also fosters unity amidst diversity, encourages civic and communal responsibility, and instills a sense of belonging among minorities and historically marginalized individuals. This also illustrates gender equality in education, which calls for equal access to and participation in education for both men and women as well as equal opportunity for high-quality, equitable learning experiences and results (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2018).

Perception on the Role of Specialized Departments in Gender Support

The respondents' mean and standard deviation score for item 10 in Table 7 was ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.05$), showing that the majority of respondents highly perceived that protecting and assisting female students is not the only responsibility of specialized departments such as gender office. This finding highlights the existence of specialized departments, such as the gender office, which are not the only responsible for protecting and assisting female students, indicating a behavioral component from DLE model that focused on support and assistance. Here is the respondent's instance: *"I do not think it has to be done only by one institution. Everyone should take responsibility. It is a common responsibility."* (Interviewee #14, May 2023)

As everyone is now aware of who will be in charge of handling gender-related matters, I don't think that the gender office or other specific departments are solely accountable for defending and supporting female students. In addition, I firmly believe that we should not postpone reporting problems affecting female students until we have a gender office or specialist department.

(Interviewee, #6, June 2023)

Similarly, the fifth interviewee said that:

I do not think GDM is only for a single organization. Most people think that gender issue is about females only but both male and females are belonging to the gender

issue. When we say gender equality, it is the equal status of both male and females, which needs every one's effort. Not a single institution like gender office.

(Interviewee, # 5, May 2023)

From the provided data, it can be deduced that at Ethiopian public HEIs, the gender office and other specialized departments should be tasked with more than only safeguarding and supporting female students, according to the majority of respondents. This finding also suggests that a sizable percentage of respondents understand the necessity for specialized departments to handle more than just gender-related issues. It is possible that they believe these departments ought to include a broader spectrum of topics about inclusion, diversity, and gender equality inside the college or organization.

Perception on Striving for Equal Recognition

The responders' average score and standard deviation for item 11 on: "working harder than others to be valued equally" in Table 7, was (M= 3.08, SD= 1.076). The mean (M) of 3.08, which represents the average score, indicates that respondents generally assessed their agreement or disagreement with the statement as being relatively in the middle of the scale. From the DLE model's point of view, this finding raises concerns about potential gender-based disparities, indicating a need for further attention to achieve structural diversity. In this instance, it also suggests that respondents were either very unbiased about the need to put in more effort than others in order to be treated equally, or they were split on the subject. The variety or dispersion of responses for item 11 is indicated by the standard deviation (SD) of 1.076. A moderate standard deviation suggests that respondents' perceptions of the statement varied somewhat. The wide range of results might be attributed to respondents who either strongly agreed or disagreed with the need to put in more effort. From these data, it can be deduced that respondents were unable to clearly agree on whether more effort was required in order to be treated fairly. It's possible that some respondents thought that in order to receive equal respect, one had work harder than others.

Interviewees who responded to this question were certain that in the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen, they do not perceive that they have to work more than others to be treated equally. As an instance, qualitative respondents' quick response is provided: "*I had never seen while they are devalued. Here they are valued.*" (Interviewee, #2, May 2023)

However as opposed to the above quote one respondent stated his view like this:

Yes, because of affirmative action, while females are getting priority, males need to go far beyond that equal line. This is I think more effort is needed because of my gender. Even to select department, the GPA of male and female is different. So, males are expected to perform higher than that of females. In my view, if we are talking equality, such different were not supposed to be used. Affirmative action could be given in other forms rather than in mark.

(Interviewee, #5, May 2023)

This finding contradicts prior research (e.g., Graf, 2005) that highlighted the additional effort required by female students to be taken seriously by their instructors, along with the greater time commitment they invest in class preparation, studying, reading, and conducting lab work. Based on the available data, it can be generally inferred that in Ethiopian public HEIs, the majority of respondents did not feel the need to exert additional effort solely based on their gender to be valued equally. However, it is important to acknowledge that qualitative data indicate the existence of instances where such disparities still persist.

Perception on Valuing Opinions of All Genders

The respondents' mean and standard deviation score was ($M= 3.07$, $SD= 1.105$) as shown in Table 7, item 12, on the perception of *“both genders opinion is valued by their university’s community or not”*. from the DLE model’s point of view, this finding emphasizes the perception that both genders' opinions are moderately valued, which contributes to a positive and inclusive psychological climate. This also indicates that the respondents perceived that the community at their university valued the perspectives of both genders. It also implies that some respondents firmly perceived that the community at their university values and respects the perspectives of people of all genders. However, considering that the mean value (3.07) is not significantly high, the data indicates that there are instances where the opinions of both genders may not be fully valued by the university community. It indicates a potential lack of equitable treatment and respect for the opinions of individuals from both genders in certain instances. Semela’s (2006, b) study findings, the similarly appears to be identical to this finding because males are the key players, particularly when it comes to sustaining the status quo through maintaining current power relations typified by male control. A respondent, (number 5), notes that fortunate enough the opinions of both gender is accepted. In the words: *“When I see, since I sometimes attend meetings, opinions from both gender is valued”*. (Interviewee, #5, May 2023)

In addition, respondent #14 reflected that although not fully there is an experience of somewhat. Here are his words:

“Although not fully, to some extent it was being valued. But it is perhaps due to individual difference. Not valuing equally was also seen. However, mostly we can say that it is good”.

(Interviewee, #14, May 2023)

Although not entirely, the remark from interviewee number 14 above admits that there is some value and recognition offered. According to this, respondents believe that their thoughts and contributions are respected in their setting to some level, but there may be opportunity for improvement. The phrase "individual difference" implies that different people may appreciate and be recognized to different degrees. It suggests that some people could feel more important than others, possibly as a result of unique traits or situations. This emphasizes how subjective the idea of having equal value is. The finding further noticed that individuals were not valued equally, suggesting that there are situations in which certain persons might not be accorded the same degree of significance or acknowledgment as others. This implies that there can be discrepancies or inconsistent treatment or appreciation of both genders.

Generally, respondents at Ethiopian public HEIs had an overall positive perception for GDM. Quantitative findings showed a grand mean score of 3.34 for GDM, indicating a relatively favorable view. Qualitatively, respondents perceived efforts by HEIs to accommodate and include both male and female students, but felt there were limitations in ensuring fair and equitable treatment across genders. The study suggests that HEIs should strengthen their GDM frameworks to promote greater respect and support for students of all genders, in order to foster a truly inclusive environment. While the perceptions were generally positive, there remains room for the HEIs to further enhance their diversity management policies, infrastructure and support systems to ensure equal opportunities and accessibility for all students.

4. 4 Curricular Perceptions for Gender Diversity Management

Sub Research Question 1.1: *How do respondents perceive the use of curricular activities in relation to GDM?*

Based on the information acquired from the quantitative survey responses, the research group's perceptions to curricular perceptions for GDM was assessed in terms of mean and standard

deviation values. Table 8 lists the details that are pertinent to the research subjects.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	For the most part, in this campus, course materials include both genders students' interest.	395	3.87	1.104
2	In classroom settings, I receive fair and equitable treatment (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.).	395	3.84	1.075
3	In this campus, there is a climate in which female students are comfortable on asking and answering diversified questions.	395	3.81	1.184
4	I have received adequate diversity training to engage with students in this campus.	395	2.39	.754
5	The university library has wide variety of reading materials on gender diversity issue.	395	2.37	1.09
6	In classes, the same amount of attention will be paid to all students regardless of their gender.	395	2.45	1.059
7	In class, instructors make students aware of the harm of stereotyping other students on the basis of their gender.	395	2.40	1.123
8	In class, instructors encourage both gender students to participate in discussions and ask questions.	395	2.43	1.11
9	Students get more personal attention from instructors who are similar to them in gender.	395	3.15	1.135
Overall Average		395	2.96	

Table 8: *Curricular Perceptions for Gender Diversity Management*

Perception on Inclusive HEIs' Curriculum

The majority of respondents had a high curricular perception as for the most part, on their HEIs, course materials cover the interests of both genders of students, according to Table 8's item 1's mean and standard deviation scores of (M= 3.87, SD= 1.104). The average score of 3.87 suggests that respondents thought the course materials generally covered the interests of both genders quite well. From the DLE model's point of view, this finding suggests that course materials on campus are designed to include the interests of both genders, indicating efforts to achieve structural diversity. This also indicates that a majority of the participants held the perception that the course materials available on their campus sufficiently cater to the interests of both male and female learners. Information on the variability or spread of answers is provided by the 1.104 standard deviation. There was some variation in the respondents' perceptions of the covering of interests in the course materials, as seen by the moderate standard deviation. A more moderate or different perceptions may have been held by some respondents, while others may have firmly agreed that the course contents cover the interests of both genders. It may be deduced from

this data that most participants thought their HEI's course materials were created with the interests of both genders in mind. The curriculum appears to be inclusive and to take into account the interests of both male and female students, based on this data. This finding is consistent with prior research (e.g., Engberg 2004; Engberg et al. 2007; Denson 2009), which found that interesting diversity curriculum may improve HEIs student's perceptions and eliminate bias. During the qualitative phase, two respondents made the following remarks, which were congruent with the quantitative finding:

“It is very subjective questions. Here, there are courses related to gender. But to say the course content considered the interest of both genders, it requires to see each. But generally, I think that is incorporated”.

(Interviewee, #16, April 2023)

Interviewee # 23 further added the following:

The course history from below since it incorporated the female issues, it has place on social history part. History instructors are sensitive in what you are saying. I guess it has a good place in our department the issue of gender.

(Interviewee, #23, June 2023)

Opposite to the above both quantitative and qualitative response, interviewee number 9 noted:

This question needs to evaluate the entire curriculum what we have. I believe that our curriculum is lacking in attracting the interest of both genders. I think even in the country, the curriculum has problem in this agenda. If the curriculum was interested, we will not have only two females in our department.

(Interviewee, #9, June 2023)

This finding suggests that in Ethiopian public HEIs, a majority of quantitative respondents reported that course materials on their campuses effectively address the interests of both male and female students. However, a minority of qualitative respondents (like interviewee number 9) expressed dissatisfaction with the representation of both genders' interests in the course materials. Nevertheless, this overall accomplishment aligns with the objectives of GDM tasks and demonstrates a positive outlook on curriculum development. It signifies a promising advancement towards the goal of creating inclusive course materials in HEIs that cater to the diverse needs of students across genders. The preceding finding is congruent with the finding of a local research by Semela, (2006, b) emphasizing that the indispensability of integrating gender diversity issues in all types of trainings and HEIs curricula should be capitalized.

Previous research by (Ahrens et al., 2018) contradict this finding by stating that it is evident that we are at a tough period for incorporating gender and feminist perspectives interest effectively in teaching gender in HEIs. This encompasses broader political tendencies in Europe and America that regard feminism as a danger and, as a result, strive to restrict gender diversity studies teaching in HEI classrooms. This also demonstrates that the respondents thought highly of the fact that the majority of the course materials included the interest of both genders of students in the Ethiopian public HEIs.

Perception on Classroom's Treatment Equality Assurance

According to Table 8, item 2, the respondents were questioned about their perceptions of whether or not they felt they received fair and equitable treatment in classroom settings (such as labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.). with mean and standard deviation value ($M=3.84$, $SD=1.075$). Based on the quantitative results, it appears that students—male and female alike—perceived they are treated equally and fairly in the chosen universities reflecting a focus on achieving structural diversity from the DLE model's category. This perspective is shared by both genders, which suggests that these institutions' classroom environments promote gender equality. The mean value provided by the students suggests that the task of managing gender diversity in relation to fair and equal treatment was seen favorably. This shows that the HEIs have put in place procedures, guidelines, or other rules that support giving students of both genders' equitable treatment and opportunity in the teaching learning process. In this regard, this finding replicates the recommendation of comparable study conducted in our nation, where the general educational/academic atmosphere must be supportive of both gender students and students from poor countries (minorities). This would include the supply of necessary resources as well as academic, social, and counseling services (Wondimu, 2004).

Interviewees who responded to this question were certain that in the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen, in classroom settings, students receive fair and equitable treatment (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.). For example, interviewee #16 present the equitable treatment as follows:

Yes, for sure we give. Even better treatment is existed by considering the problem and by having sympathy to it. From the perspective of human rights, since our staff is awarded, we will provide equitable treatment. If we can we provide different

treatment because different individuals should be treated differently. If not, equal treatment will be given. Equity may not be.

(Interviewee, #16, April 2023)

This indicates that in Ethiopian public HEIs, one of the expected tasks of GDM is to create and maintain an environment where both genders feel they are treated fairly and equitably in classroom settings. The students rated this aspect highly, suggesting that there is a promising path towards achieving a gender-equal atmosphere in HEIs, which aligns with the goals of the GDM process. This finding also aligns with the research of Avery and Thomas (2004), which suggests that while it may not always be possible for instructors to address all gender-related issues comprehensively in their classes, creating a climate where both genders feel they are treated fairly and equitably is of significant importance.

Perception on Inclusive Classroom Dialogue

The mean and standard deviation scores for the respondents for item 3 in Table 8 were ($M=3.81$, $SD=1.184$), indicating that the majority of respondents strongly perceived that “*their campus had a culture where female students felt at ease asking and responding to a variety of questions*”. This result implies that respondents perceived there is a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere at the selected five HEIs that motivates female students to actively participate in conversations and ask and answer questions. The majority of respondents' holding of this perception suggests that the participant group as a whole share this belief generally. It shows as there is an inclusive learning environment promoted by creating a campus culture where female students feel comfortable asking and answering a range of questions which is the presence of a supportive psychological climate from DLE model's perspective. It also implies that there is a psychologically secure space where female students may freely express their ideas, ask questions, and participate in thoughtful conversations without worrying about prejudice or condemnation. This favorable perception may point to the selected five HEIs successful efforts to advance gender inclusion and foster an environment of dignity and equal opportunity.

From the interviewee data, those who replied to this question were convinced that on the campuses of the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen, there is an atmosphere in which female students are comfortable asking and answering diverse questions. This is how the participant number 7 describes the welcoming climate of the campus:

Yes, in this university, we do have welcoming environment to both genders up to the extent of providing tutorials. And the university will pay for us. We personally treat them well which is the part of the welcoming climate sign.

(Interviewee, #7, April 2023)

It is highly plausible to assume that in Ethiopian public HEIs, where it was expected to create and maintain an environment where female students felt at ease asking and responding to a variety of questions as one of the GDM tasks, there is a promising finding (high perception) toward achieving where campus had a culture where female students felt at ease asking and responding to a variety of questions.

Perception on Diversity Training Preparedness

It is extremely likely that respondents at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs perceived they had not received adequate diversity training to engage with students on their campus. In Table 8, the average score and standard deviation for item 4 were ($M = 2.39$, $SD = .754$). This result indicates that the respondents at these universities, firmly perceived that they had not received enough training on diversity-related subjects representing a behavioral component from DLE model's focused on not promoting inclusivity and effective interactions. They saw a weakness in their ability to interact with individuals from different backgrounds on HEIs. The idea that diversity training is insufficient may have a number of effects. It raises the possibility that faculty and staff workers don't feel prepared to handle the issues and demands of students from various racial, ethnic, cultural, or other backgrounds. It could also suggest that the person is not fully informed about issues related to inclusion, equity, and diversity in the educational setting. Given how likely it is that this opinion would be highly held, it suggests that respondents generally feel that these institutions don't provide enough or adequate diversity training.

Similarly, according to the interviewee data, respondents who responded to this question were highly opposed that there was no specific diversity management training to connect with students on the campuses of the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen. For example, interviewee number 7 and 16 stated as getting low as follows:

“To be honest, I never get such training in this university. But someday when females were celebrating March 8, I have seen an invitation for training. But I did not attend that training”.

(Interviewee, #7, April 2023)

The other participant discussed the shortage of training with the following words, *“There was a training, but now somehow is low.”* (Interviewee, #16, May 2023)

A comment from an interviewee number 9 is not identical of responses among providers:

“I have seen some trials from gender office. From staff development directorate too, there are various trainings on what you mentioned area. Before one month, I have seen this. HDP too, is working well”.

(Interviewee, #9, June 2023)

This demonstrates that in Ethiopian public HEIs, although it was expected to create and maintain adequate diversity training to engage with students on their campus as one of the GDM tasks, there was no a promising spirit on students' high perceptions of no adequate diversity training to engage with students on their campus in HEIs, which was expected to be performed in the GDM process promptly (See Table 8). Concerning this, Warin & Adriany (2017) recommended that instructors have to receive training in gender diversity inclusive teaching before to entering the teaching profession as well as continuous training through in-service training.

Perception on Gender-Inclusive Library Materials

According to Table 8, item 5, the mean and standard deviation scores of the respondents were ($M=2.37$, $SD= 1.09$), indicating that: *“the respondents perceived that the university library had no a broad selection of reading materials on the topic of gender diversity”*. The finding indicates that the university library's reading list on gender diversity is thought to be quite limited indicating the historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion by signifying that the university library has made less effort to provide a wide variety of reading materials on gender diversity issues, reflecting a too less commitment to addressing DLE model's historical exclusion and not promoting inclusivity. This also shows that the respondents think there isn't a wide variety of resources available at the library that address various facets and viewpoints on gender diversity. The idea that there is a small amount of reading material on gender diversity can have several effects. It might mean that the library is not as concerned in getting a lot of materials on this subject, which could mean that the institution is not doing enough to solve the issue. The respondents' view may also suggest that they have certain requirements or expectations for the depth and breadth of resources accessible, and they believe such needs or expectations are not being addressed. During the qualitative phase, for example, three respondents made the following comments, which were consistent with the quantitative result:

“Here, there is engineering library, I do not see books, researches, fliers written directly to gender and gender diversity or GDM. No there is no”.

(Interviewee, #5, May 2023)

“Mainly, I have seen on female’s library. and at newspaper and magazine reading places only few GDM readings are found”.

(Interviewee, #14, May 2023)

This demonstrates that, while it was expected in Ethiopian public HEIs to create and maintain an environment in which the university library had a broad selection of reading materials on the topic of gender diversity as one of the GDM tasks, there is still a long way (low perceived) to go toward putting a broad selection of reading materials at library on the topic of gender diversity in HEIs, which was expected to be performed well in the GDM process.

Perception on Equal Attention for All

The majority of respondents had a strong perception that all students, regardless of gender, were not received the same amount of attention in class, as shown by the mean and standard deviation scores for item 6 in Table 7 ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 1.059$). This result suggests that there was a perception of students receiving different treatment or attention depending on their gender. The results also suggest that the respondents had strong opinions or beliefs on this matter. It implies that the respondents had strong feelings and that it was a major problem for them regarding the uneven distribution of attention in the teaching learning process across gender indicating too less efforts to promote structural diversity of DLE model. The finding doesn't go into specifics on the background or causes of this alleged unfair treatment. It could be caused by a number of things, including prejudices, cultural expectations, and variations in the conduct of the instructors. To comprehend the problem better, it would be crucial to look into the particular situations and elements that lead to this impression.

This finding also implies that observed inequalities must be addressed and corrected. It emphasizes how crucial it is to give every student, regardless of gender, equal opportunity and attention in order to create a just and inclusive learning environment. This finding is supported by several studies that have found that some instructors believe males are superior to females, according to Aikman & Unterhalter (2005). However, one participant stated his understanding equal attention provision as the following:

“As to me, I am providing equal attention. It will definitely come from experience. As you know, when we were fresh instructors, we may not do things properly but now, I got matured. So, I treat my students equally”.

(Interviewee, #7, April 2023)

This shows that in Ethiopian public HEIs, although it was expected to create and maintain an environment where in classes, the same amount of attention to be given to all students regardless of their gender as one of the GDM responsibilities, there is still a long way (has low perception) to go towards achieving the same amount of attention to be given to all students regardless of their gender in HEIs.

Perception on Combatting Gender Stereotypes

The respondents were asked about their perceptions concerning whether in class, instructors make students aware of the harm of stereotyping other students on the basis of their gender or not, as indicated in Table 8, item 7, and the results indicate that the majority of them were highly perceived as in class, instructors were not made students aware of the harm of stereotyping other students on the basis of their gender having the mean and standard deviation value of ($M= 2.40$, $SD= 1.123$) in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. This result suggests that respondents had a strong perception about this issue and that their instructors were not adequately addressing the harmful impact of gender stereotypes in the teaching-learning process contributing too less to a positive psychological climate from DLE's model. It also suggests that respondents felt that their instructors were not fulfilling their responsibility to create awareness about the harm caused by stereotyping. The result highlights the significance of addressing and challenging gender stereotypes in educational settings. Two participants' responses for the qualitative component of matched the quantitative value and were as follows:

“Shortly, there is no such act. But in the course called inclusiveness, I have learnt about the danger of gender stereotyping concept. in other courses, no instructor was trying to underline. I believe it was expected to be raised”.

(Interviewee, #5, May 2023)

“No, I did not see still now while instructors saying about the danger of stereotyping”.

(Interviewee, #14, May 2023)

Supporting the quantitative and the interviewee # 14 idea, interviewee #2 indicated that:

“Since this is technology university, we usually form groups but instructors by themselves I think create stereotyping and mix as what they like”.

(Interviewee, #2, May 2023)

This finding is also reinforced by recent research done by Siyez and Beycioglu (2020), who emphasize that educational institutions might address courses linked to the harm of gender stereotyping within the curriculum in order to raise the understanding of students regarding gender diversity and equality. When it comes to the curriculum, there are no courses or modules dedicated to the challenges of gender equality or the harm caused by gender stereotypes.

The respondents perceived that their instructors had not adequately educated them about the negative consequences of making generalizations or assumptions about others based solely on their gender. In order to promote a more inclusive and equitable learning environment, these findings highlight the necessity for educators to aggressively confront gender stereotypes and inform students of their detrimental effects.

Perception on Promoting Gender-Inclusive Participation

The majority of respondents had a low perception that instructors encourage both gender students to engage in discussions and ask questions in class, as indicated by the mean and standard deviation score of ($M= 2.43$, $SD= 1.11$) for item 8 in Table 7. This illustrates that the respondents' average rating of the instructors' degree of encouragement was comparatively low, as seen by the mean score of 2.43. This shows that the majority of respondents appeared to feel a lack of encouragement from instructors fostering non- inclusive and less supportive psychological climate from DLE 's model as seen by the mean being below the scale's midpoint, which is usually 3 on a Likert scale that runs from 1 to 5. Based on the available data, it can be said that the respondents perceived there might be more done to encourage male and female students to participate in class discussions and ask questions. The low mean score implies that most respondents thought there wasn't enough encouragement. On this regard, according to Gore (1992) & Muñgge et al. (2018), mainstreaming gender pedagogy that encourages both gender students can help students acquire the skills necessary to question and analyze ideas as well as epistemological tenets. It was also argued that no topic or piece of information will remain unchanged when seen through the lens of gender thinking (Davis et al. 2006).

During the qualitative phase, two respondents provided the following comments, which were consistent with the quantitative result:

“In classroom, the instructors will not focus on a limited student. Rather he/she will ask questions then students raise their hands & randomly chance will be given them to reflect on that”.

(Interviewee, #24, April 2023)

This was also echoed in comments by the number fourth and # 16 interviewee:

Instructors may randomly attempt to encourage and motivate students who need encouragement, regardless of the students' gender. Yet, even if they are attempting to instill a specific gender, they should not be seen as gender prejudiced because they may be aware that that particular students only require further reinforcement. This is, in fact, what is taking place at this university.

(Interviewee, #4, April 2023)

“Yes, we go an extra mile on encouragement for both genders”.

(Interviewee, #16, April 2023)

Another participant described her encouragement experience in the following manner,

“Specially the behavior of our course needs lab work and in this lab, every student will be encouraged to be participated. Each activity needs individual participation which needs high encouragement. Therefore, we do encourage both genders”.

(Interviewee, #7, April 2023)

The present study's findings are in line with earlier research. For instance, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE) (2004) notes that while attempts have been made to incorporate gender in the teaching process, work has to be done to ensure that curriculum and methodology in Ethiopian HEIs do not promote gender stereotypes. The findings of the present investigation are also consistent with studies carried out in Tanzania (Kahamba et al., 2017) and Swaziland (Lumadi & Shongwe, 2010). The results of this study showed that the methods and teaching-learning resources utilized to educate instructors were not gender sensitive. Instructors lacked the expertise to create gender-responsive teaching and learning resources.

Perception on Gender-Aligned Instructors' Support

According to Table 8, item 9, the respondents were asked whether they perceived that on their HEIs, students received more individualized attention from instructors who shared their

gender or not. The results show that the moderate of them held this belief, with a mean and standard deviation of ($M= 3.15$, $SD= 1.135$) indicating that they “*moderately perceived*” this to be the case. This demonstrates that some students perceived more individualized help or attention was given by instructors who shared their gender indicating a need for further attention to achieve structural diversity of DLE model. This also suggests that there may be a gender bias in the way instructors and students communicate. It also implies that according to the gender of their instructors, students perceived they are receiving different levels of attention. As tailored attention and assistance from instructors may significantly affect learning and academic achievement, this might have an impact on students' educational experiences and outcomes. HEIs ought to prioritize addressing gender prejudices and advancing equitable treatment and opportunity for every student. To ensure fair educational experiences and achievements, it is imperative to provide a welcoming and encouraging learning environment that offers each student, regardless of gender, customized attention. However, in the qualitative component, one participant provided the following response, which did not match the quantitative value:

“I didn’t see much gaps on this regard. This means students are allowed to share their ideas equally. And in all academic process. I have seen equal treatment”.

(Interviewee, #14, May 2023)

The above both finding was strongly opposed by one of the study's participants, who stated the following:

“I have observed them while inclining towards same gender. Especially when we were fresh student. And I heard as they are doing it not to be blamed by other interpretations”.

(Interviewee, #2, May 2023)

Underlining the view that inclination towards the opposite gender, respondent number 5 also stated:

“In this university, not for same gender, rather for opposite gender, I have seen more inclination. Male instructors incline more to females and female instructors inclined to male students”.

(Interviewee, #5, May 2023)

Overall, this demonstrates that, while it was not expected at Ethiopian public HEIs to create and sustain an environment in which students receive more personal attention from teachers who are gender-congruent with them. As one of the GDM duties, there is still a long way to go before

students at HEIs receive more personalized attention from teachers of all genders, not only those who are gender similar to them. This also shows that there is still work to be done and that gender-sensitive understandings in pedagogy and curriculum are crucial to HEIs teaching. (Hinton et al., 2022).

Generally, the findings from the qualitative responses, document analysis, and observational data, combined with the average score of 2.96 for GDM, suggest that respondents perceive the current curriculum in Ethiopian public HEIs does not adequately address issues of gender diversity. There seems to be a need to integrate more inclusive and diversity-focused content throughout the curriculum in order to better support students from both gender backgrounds. The data indicates that the present curriculum fails to sufficiently cater to the needs and experiences of these student populations.

4.5 Extra-curricular Perceptions for Gender Diversity Management

Sub Research Question 1.2: What do respondents perceive about the use of extracurricular activities aimed at promoting gender diversity?

Based on information acquired from the quantitative survey responses, the research group's reaction to extracurricular perceptions for GDM was assessed in terms of mean and standard deviation values. Table 9 lists the details that are pertinent to the research subjects.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	A life skills training with gender diversity topics was offered on this campus.	395	3.93	1.068
2	Lectures on gender diversity awareness were given on this campus by invited guests who represented various gender groups.	395	3.57	1.208
3	The programming, events, and co-curricular activities I have seen or experienced at this university have represented the interests of both genders.	395	3.69	1.160
4	At this campus, there are association and clubs that appeal to gender issues.	395	3.64	1.141
5	The gender club on campus hosts festivities and festivals for both genders.	395	3.73	1.154
6	This university's extra-curricular use leaflets, posters, university radio programs, etc for disseminating perceptions about gender diversity.	395	2.63	.954
Overall Average		395	3.58	

Table 9: Extra-curricular Perceptions for Gender Diversity Management

Perception on Gender-Inclusive Life Skills

According to the mean and standard deviation scores for item 1 in Table 9 ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 1.068$), the majority of respondents had a high extra-curricular perception as “*gender diversity concerns were covered in a life skills training program*” on their campus. This finding suggests that by introducing a life skills training program, the respondents thought their HEIs were actively addressing issues related to gender diversity reflecting a commitment to promoting knowledge and awareness of gender issues, encompassing the historical legacy of inclusion and exclusion from the DLE model. A favorable reaction from the respondents is shown by the higher perception ($M = 3.93$) of extracurricular activities linked to gender diversity issues. It indicates that they participated in events that promoted inclusion, respect, and understanding between students of various genders and felt supported by their peers. Overall, it can be said that the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs have endeavored to provide a setting that tackles issues related to gender diversity outside of the prescribed curriculum. Through the implementation of a life skills training program, HEIs have given students the chance to gain crucial information and abilities pertaining to gender diversity, fostering a more welcoming and encouraging HEIs’ community. Two respondents made the following remarks, which were congruent with the quantitative phase’s findings:

Here, we do provide. intensive training throughout the year. Particularly, in the structurally assigned offices dozens of trainings are being given. if I show you reports, main trainings are being given in what you are saying areas.

(Interviewee, #22, May 2023)

Added contributions from the other interviewee include the following:

Yes, there are dozens of trainings in this university. For instance, yesterday and today, training is being given for females. As you see, no females here now since they are in the training center. today’s training agenda is about mentorship for females. Girls are beneficiary from such trainings.

(Interviewee, #24, April 2023)

This data demonstrated that as GDM is the central approach of creating and maintaining a more positive learning environment where both genders get a life skills training with gender diversity topics was offered. (Mousa, 2021; Divirgilio, 2021; Lumadi, 2008), fortunately in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, the respondents had high perceptions of a life skills training

program that also covered gender diversity issues. This also illustrates the integration of training into a more comprehensive strategic diversity management program and the implementation of long-term training assessments to guarantee training transfer (King et al., 2010; Kalev et al., 2006).

Perception on Diverse Gender Awareness Lectures

The respondents were asked in Table 9 item 2 if they perceived that invited visitors who represented other gender groups gave talks on gender diversity awareness on this campus. Based on the mean and standard deviation of the data ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.208$), the majority of them perceived they did. This result suggests that the participants knew about and accepted the existence of invited guests from various gender groups who gave presentations on gender diversity awareness which contributes to the historical legacy of inclusion and exclusion of DLE model. Most people seem to think that these discussions were noticeable and had an effect on the HEIs' community. It might be argued that having invited guests from different gender groups present speeches on gender diversity awareness is a step in the right direction toward encouraging inclusion and a discussion on the subject. Students get the chance to learn from a variety of viewpoints, acquire new ideas, and participate in insightful conversations on gender diversity through these presentations. It appears from the majority of respondents' perceptions that the selected five HEIs have taken action to encourage discussion and understanding on this crucial issue that speakers representing various gender groups were asked to give speeches on gender diversity awareness. A more inclusive and knowledgeable HEIs' community can result from ongoing efforts to interact with varied voices and ideas.

Perception on Gender-Inclusive Extracurricular Activities

The majority of respondents highly perceived that the programming, events, and co-curricular activities they have seen or experienced at their university have represented the interests of both genders, according to the mean and standard deviation scores for the respondents for item 3 in Table 9: ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 1.160$). This finding suggests that the participants held the perception that their HEIs' had endeavored to develop programming that is both gender-neutral and inclusive indicating efforts to achieve structural diversity of DLE model by providing programming and activities that cater to the interests of all genders. It also implies that HEIs' events and programs were planned with a varied student body in mind, making them interesting and relevant. During the qualitative phase, one respondent made the following statements, which were consistent with

the quantitative phase results:

Here, we do have a number of clubs like, Art, Charity, peace forum & the like. And both genders are participating in it. But considering the peace condition of the country, for the time being, these clubs are not as such active. However, since not functioning such important clubs for longer months not good, as top management team we are discussing to make them more practical. One of the advantages of HEIs is to interact with various personalities as to know cultures of Ethiopia. Still now stadiums are closed, which is not good. We are reforming them as new.

(Interviewee, #25, May 2023)

The finding implies that the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs have shown a dedication to gender inclusion, as seen by the high perception of both genders' representation in programs, events, and extracurricular activities. Because they perceived that their interests and viewpoints are being recognized and taken into consideration, students may feel more engaged, equitable, and like they belong.

This finding is consistent with Kimengi et al., (2014) that engaging in interesting extracurricular activities outside of the classroom, such as sports, games, scouting, gymnastics, athletics, debates, and topic clubs, helps students of both genders to build relationships and socialize with peers and adults who share similar interests. Participating in extracurricular activities will improve students' academic achievement, self-discipline, citizenship, and personal hygiene.

Perception on Gender-Focused Campus Clubs & Associations

The average response and standard deviation for item 4 in Table 9 were (M= 3.64, SD= 1.171), showing that the respondents firmly agreed that there are organizations and clubs on their campus that cater to gender concerns. This result suggests that the participants are aware of and acknowledge the existence of groups and clubs on their HEIs that concentrate on tackling gender-related concerns suggesting the presence of DLE model's structural diversity and opportunities for students to engage with gender-related topics and initiatives. The high level of agreement indicates that the participants think these groups and clubs are actively involved in events and campaigns that advance gender equality, support, and awareness. Empirical data comes from interview number 22 by saying:

As an institution, we believe that students will not learn only in classrooms rather

by using integration and harmony in the form of clubs. [...] As university, student dean is working responsibly on this regard. We are really promoting it but we are not achieving it up to our expectation and we need to do more on this regard.

(Interviewee, #22, May 2023)

The finding shows that a welcoming and inclusive HEIs' community may be greatly enhanced by the existence of these groups and organizations. They can offer chances for students to interact, exchange stories, and speak out on issues pertaining to gender. For those who are interested into discussing a range of gender-related subjects, these groups and organizations can provide materials, activities, events, and a feeling of community. This result is in line with other studies (Denson, 2009), which discovered that co-curricular diversity initiatives do, in fact, reduce bias, and that the extent to which this influence is advantageous varies based on the specific characteristics of the program as well as the students. It also appears that the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs are giving students the chance to interact with and resolve gender-related issues, as seen by the respondents' high agreement that there are groups and clubs that handle gender concerns. An inclusive and empowered higher education climate may be achieved via providing these groups and clubs with ongoing support and resources.

Perception on Inclusive Gender Club Celebrations

The respondents strongly agreed that the gender club on campus offers events and festivals for both genders, as shown by their mean and standard deviation scores for item 5 in Table 9 ($M=3.73$, $SD=1.154$). This finding implies that the participants are aware of and appreciate the endeavors of the gender club to organize gatherings and celebrations that are intended to be inclusive and reachable by people of all genders contributing to the structural diversity dimension of DLE model by providing opportunities for social engagement. The respondents clearly recognize and appreciate the club's dedication to advancing gender equality and giving all students opportunity to participate and contribute, as seen by the strong agreement ($M=3.73$). One way to foster inclusiveness, celebration, and conversation is by hosting festivals and events hosted by the gender club that are open to people of all gender identities. These gatherings could provide forums for individuals to learn about and talk about successes, difficulties, and experiences relating to gender. Students who are interested in learning more about and supporting gender equality problems might also feel more connected to one another and supportive of one another. The gender club also appears to be actively promoting a varied and equitable HEIs environment, as seen by

the respondents' significant approval with the club's efforts to provide inclusive activities and festivals. A more welcoming and encouraging campus environment for people of all genders may be achieved by sustained support and involvement in these initiatives. During the qualitative phase, one responder made the following comments, which were not congruent with the quantitative phase results:

The students at this university do not appear to have a strong interest in participating in extracurricular activities. The existing clubs and organizations on campus already have a limited number of members. For example, the drama and theatrical arts club has its own dedicated performance space and administrative offices, yet its participation levels are relatively low. Though the administration has made efforts to encourage both male and female students to get involved in these optional programs, female students are still participating at lower rates compared to their male peers.

(Interviewee, #24, April 2023)

The information showed that respondents had positive opinions of the five Ethiopian public HEIs they chose because of extracurricular activity and clubs that address gender issues. Similar to this finding, a recent study by Denson & Chang (2009) found that HEIs with higher extracurricular activity participation rates had demonstrable beneficial impacts on all students, independent of the frequency at which a student personally interacts with diversity. Thus, it makes sense that offering extracurricular activities in HEIs is seen as a way to lay the groundwork for teaching social skills, competencies, and attitudes toward the growth of diverse student bodies (Lyoba, & Mwila, 2022).

Perception on Gender Diversity Awareness Campaigns

The mean and standard deviation scores for item 6 in Table 9 ($M = 2.63$, $SD = .954$) indicate that the majority of respondents had a high perception that their institution's extracurricular not uses as such leaflets, posters, university radio programs, etc. for propagating attitudes regarding gender diversity. The results indicate that, of the five HEIs that were chosen, none of them use flyers, posters, university radio shows, or other comparable means to spread awareness of gender diversity. This aligns with the unwanted behavioral component of the DLE model, by not encouraging engagement and promoting understanding of gender diversity. In order to create an inclusive atmosphere and advance gender diversity inside these organizations, this might suggest that traditional communication and promotion methods are not as effective as they

once were. During the qualitative phase, one respondent made the following statements, which were not consistent with the quantitative phase findings:

By using advert posters and fliers, mostly in the evening we females do have a discussion time called PIJAMA NIGHT. We talked by inviting senior females through coffee and breads ceremony. Yesterday evening for instance, we did that by advertising through posters.

(Interviewee, #24, April 2023)

In general, GDM involves the process of creating and maintaining a more positive learning environment through the use of extracurricular activities. Based on the sample of respondents surveyed, interviewed, document analyzed, and personal observations, it is evident that although extracurricular activities exist, they lack support through the distribution of pamphlets, posters, university radio programs, and similar means to promote attitudes regarding gender diversity. There is substantial theoretical and empirical evidence supporting the notion that disseminating information through leaflets, posters, university radio programs, and other mediums is necessary to foster attitudes promoting gender diversity (Lyoba & Mwila, 2022).

Overall, the study found that respondents generally had positive perceptions in grand mean of 3.58 and similar qualitative finding towards the use of extracurricular activities for promoting gender diversity at Ethiopian public HEIs. Although the HEIs made efforts to include both male and female students in extracurricular programs, respondents noted lower levels of female student participation compared to their male peers. Respondents expressed a desire for the HEIs to further strengthen their diversity and accessibility initiatives to enhance equal opportunities for extracurricular involvement.

4.5.1 Relationships Between GDM Related Coursework and Perceptions of Extracurricular Activities

Sub Research Question 1.3: *To what extent do respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM related coursework relate to their perceptions of extracurricular activities?*

As it is written above, one of the present study's sub fundamental research questions was to determine how respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM-related courses linked to their perceptions of extracurricular activities. It was attempted to answer such queries from the GDM point of view in the results shown below.

The relationship between perceptions GDM related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities	<i>N</i>	<i>Pearson Correlations</i>	<i>Sig.(2-tailed)</i>
	395	.150	.003

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 10: *The Correlations Between perceptions GDM related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities at The Selected Five Ethiopian Public HEIs*

As shown in Table 10 above, there is a low and positive relationship between perceptions of GDM related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, owing to a Pearson correlation value of ($p = 0.150$), which falls under the category of weak correlation.

A perfect negative correlation is represented by a Pearson correlation value of -1, a perfect positive correlation by a value of +1, and no correlation is represented by a value of 0. In this instance, the correlation value of 0.150 indicates a weak but positive link, suggesting that perceptions of GDM-related courses and extracurricular activities have little in common. The results suggest that, in the chosen Ethiopian public HEIs, students' perceptions of extracurricular activities—like involvement in clubs, sports, or social events—are somewhat influenced by their impressions of GDM-related coursework, such as classes on gender equality, diversity, or inclusion. The correlation is not high enough, though, to imply that coursework on gender diversity has a significant effect on students' participation in extracurricular activities. Similarly, as shown in the preceding table, the significant value between perceptions of GDM-related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities at the selected Five Ethiopian Public HEIs is likewise moderately significant, with a p value of 0.003. The statistical significance of the relationships examined indicates that students perceive the curricular and extracurricular components of the GDM program at the HEIs as interconnected, even though the strength of the association between these elements is relatively modest.

4.5.2 T- Statistics Between Male and Female Respondents on Perception for GDM

Sub Research Question 1.4: *Is there statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on perception for GDM?*

As stated above, one of the current study's sub basic research questions was to determine whether or not there is a statistically significant difference in perception for GDM between male and female respondents. The following results sought to answer such questions from the GDM point of view.

	Group Statistics				Independent Sample T-test			
	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Perception for GDM	Male	216	39.4722	4.92636	.33520	.335	393	.738
	Female	179	39.4722	4.92636	.35764			

Table 11: Independent Sample T-Test of Respondents Perception for GDM Based on Sex

As shown in Table 11, there was no significant mean difference between the sample population ($p=0.738$). This means that, because $p > 0.05$, there was no significant difference in perceptions of GDM between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen. The significance level, commonly represented as α , is a predefined cutoff point in hypothesis testing that determines whether the findings are statistically significant. The alternative hypothesis can be accepted in place of the null hypothesis if the p-value is smaller than the significance threshold, indicating that it is implausible that the observed difference happened by accident alone. In contrast, if the p-value exceeds the significance level, as it does in this instance, then there is not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis and the observed difference may have happened as a result of random fluctuation. Thus, we may infer from the given p-value of 0.738 that there was no statistically significant difference in respondents' perceptions of GDM at the chosen Ethiopian public HEIs between male and female respondents. This suggests that both male and female respondents generally held similar views about managing gender diversity.

4.6 Gender Diversity Management Related Policy Practice

Research Question 2: How are policies for GDM & DDM practiced at Ethiopian public HEIs?

The research group's answer to diversity related policy practice for GDM was evaluated in terms of mean and standard deviation values using data from the quantitative survey responses. The information that is relevant to the research subjects is listed in Table 12.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	This campus's mission statement specifically refers to the value of having gender diversity.	395	3.95	1.122
2	By the campus's legislation, related policies and internal code of conduct, it is clearly written that discrimination against gender is not allowed.	395	4.21	.946
3	This university has clear disciplinary procedures for anyone to report prejudice or discriminatory experiences on gender issues.	395	4.26	1.022
4	In this university, gender diversity related policies, legislations and guidelines are effectively communicated to both gender students.	395	2.51	.935
5	The implementation of policy, rules and regulation that protect gender diversity is weak in this university.	395	4.16	.969
6	This campus is using affirmative action policy to manage gender diversity fairly.	395	4.20	.996
7	This university has specific policies, programs or initiatives to help gender diversity.	395	3.85	.913
Overall Average		395	3.87	

Table 12: Gender Diversity Management Related Policy Practice

Policy Practice1: Inclusive Gender Diversity Mission

The majority of respondents stated that their campus's mission statement particularly mentions the benefit of having gender diversity a high answer, as seen by the mean and standard deviation scores for GDM-related policy practice item 1 in Table 12 (M= 3.95, SD= 1.122). This indicates that the majority of respondents perceived that their HEI's mission statement specifically highlights the benefits of gender diversity highlighting the historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion of DLE model. This also suggests that the mission statements of the respective institutions explicitly recognize and promote the importance of gender diversity in their overall vision and goals. It indicates a positive climate for fostering inclusivity and equity within the HEIs' community. This finding is encouraging, as it suggests that the institutions have taken steps to incorporate gender diversity as a core value and principle in their mission statements. This finding is consistent with the findings of a local qualitative study by Semela (2006, a) stated that following the fall of the military regime in Ethiopia, government policies began to explore the need to address gender diversity imbalance in socioeconomic and political arenas. This suggests that as GDM task. addressing gender diversity issues has garnered significant attention by recognizing its critical role

in poverty reduction, good governance, and democracy. As a result, all significant policy texts explicitly addressed the gender diversity issue in Ethiopian public HEIs. A comment from an interviewee number 1 is identical responses with quantitative data providers:

Definitely it gave it. This means in every plan of this university; you will get about gender diversity management mission statement. So, it is a big concern for gender diversity. For instance, when there is staffing process, the gender office has representation.

(Interviewee, #1, April 2023)

However, one responder made the following comments, which contradicted the quantitative phase's findings:

As this will be an academic study, I must be completely honest with you and say that I have never noticed the issue of GDM in this university' goal statement. Perhaps it may be included in particular documents at offices, but not boldly advertised by posting around campus, which would be wonderful.

(Interviewee, #6, June 2023)

The finding demonstrates to some extent there is a proactive approach towards creating an inclusive environment that values and supports diverse gender identities. It is also important for institutions to continue translating these mission statements into concrete actions and policies that promote gender diversity and ensure equal opportunities for all individuals within the campus community. The results are consistent with Krishnamurthi (2003)'s finding that universities are under pressure to integrate gender and other diversity into their mission, although it was one common justification being the necessity for an inclusive learning environment.

Policy Practice2: Gender Discrimination Protection Policy

In Table 12 to GDM related policy practice item 2, respondents were questioned about whether or not gender diversity discrimination was explicitly prohibited by the campus's laws, associated regulations, and internal code of conduct. Most of them thought so, according to the data's mean and standard deviation ($M= 4.21$, $SD= 0.946$). This finding reflects efforts to promote structural diversity of DLE model by having policies, legislations, guidelines, and programs that focus on gender diversity's discrimination protection. This inquiry also replicates what is stated in the mentioned policy papers, which claim that one of the objectives of Ethiopia's Higher Education Proclamation (FDRE 2019, Article 6.2) is to enhance HEIs services that are free of any sort of

gender discrimination. According to this agreement, entrance evaluation or admission techniques developed for any female student, among others, must be separate from the others (Article 6.33). This is in accordance with both the Constitution (FDRE, 1995) and the UNESCO Declaration on Higher Education (1998). Based on these findings, it can be said that the majority of respondents discussed that the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs' laws, regulations, and internal code of conduct explicitly prohibit gender diversity discrimination. It indicates a positive practice of the institution's commitment to promoting inclusivity, equality, and a safe HEIs environment for individuals of both genders. For HEIs, it is crucial to ensure that their laws, regulations, and internal code of conduct are comprehensive, up-to-date, and effectively communicated to all members of the HEIs community. Regular reviews and training programs can also help promote awareness and adherence to these policies, further strengthening the commitment to preventing gender diversity discrimination.

Policy Practice 3: Gender Discrimination Reporting Procedures

The vast majority of survey participants strongly agreed that their university had clear disciplinary processes for anybody to report prejudice or encounters with discrimination based on gender diversity concerns. The respondents' responses to GDM related policy practice item 3 in Table 12 had the following mean and standard deviation scores: (M= 4.26, SD= 1.022). From these findings, it can be interpreted that the vast majority of survey participants strongly agreed that their HEIs had clear disciplinary processes for reporting prejudice or encounters with discrimination based on gender diversity concerns fostering a positive psychological climate of DLE model where students feel safe and supported. This indicates a positive thing among the respondents regarding the institution's commitment to addressing and rectifying instances of prejudice or discrimination related to gender diversity. Replies from the following respondents during the qualitative phase were consistent with the quantitative phase findings:

Yes, as you are aware, there will be instances of disciplinary misbehavior while you work at HEIs. Most of the time, we concentrate on actively preventing harm. However, in the event that an issue arises, we have policies set by the previous MoSHE (the present MoE), and HEIs are subject to disciplinary action. Additionally, this university has created a set of disciplinary guidelines. [...] We will use this paper to take remedial action. We also have a discipline committee, and according to the rules and regulations, this body will take remedial action when disciplinary issues arise. This committee will make important choices like terminating people and refusing to provide them documents after graduation. Additionally, students have the option of appealing to the university president.

(Interviewee, #3, June 2023)

Likewise, interviewee # 11 replied that:

We have policy. And, in the discipline case too, we have incorporated since Ethiopia has signed on international convention. So, we have country level declared proclamation in connected with gender and disability diversity issue. In the university level, we have articles related to gender in the senate legislation.

(Interviewee, #11, May 2023)

This finding reflects a proactive approach by Ethiopian public HEIs in creating a safe and inclusive environment that prioritizes the well-being and rights of individuals of diverse gender identities. However, it is significant for Ethiopian public HEIs to ensure that these disciplinary processes are widely communicated, easily accessible, and effectively implemented. Regular training and awareness programs can also contribute to fostering a campus culture that actively discourages and addresses discrimination, promoting a more equitable and respectful environment for all members of the HEIs' community.

However, when it comes to the specific policy environment in Ethiopian public HEIs, both MoE (2004) and Semela (2006, b) report the opposite. It seems that in these HEIs, students are not only affected by the actions of significant others but also by the institutional environment itself, which fails to implement the policies outlined by the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2004). Currently, HEIs lack effective, standardized, and specific policies that protect the rights of genders and can be rigorously enforced against those who violate them (Semela, 2006, b).

Policy Practice 4: Effective GDM Policy Communication

The respondents strongly agreed that gender diversity-related policies, regulations, and guidelines are not successfully communicated to both gender students at their institution, as evidenced by the average response and standard deviation for GDM related policy practice item 4 in Table 12 ($M = 2.51$, $SD = .935$). The analysis suggests that gender diversity-related policies, regulations, and guidelines are not successfully communicated to both gender students at their HEIs'. This indicates there are shortcomings in effectively disseminating information about gender diversity-related policies and guidelines sentences reflecting efforts to promote structural diversity of DLE model. Effective communication of gender diversity-related policy is crucial for ensuring awareness, understanding, and compliance among all members of the institution. When policies are not successfully communicated, it can result in confusion, lack of clarity, and potential gaps in

implementing and upholding these policies. The following respondent's responses during the qualitative phase were inconsistent with the quantitative and qualitative results:

Yes, we duplicate the disciplinary rule and offer it to each student when they enroll at our university. You could find this disciplinary measure if you search each dorm. The student is ultimately in charge of maintaining order and discipline. So, we anticipate that they will read it. [...] We won't waste our time by outlining the disciplinary policy, as we presume, they are aware of it. But we also offer orientation in addition to these disciplinary guidelines. Specific genders won't be covered by these guidelines because they are universal. For your knowledge, I have never witnessed or experienced gender-based harassment since I first walked into this workplace. I had absolutely no report.

(Interviewee, #3, June 2023)

Along similar lines, interviewee number 11 presented his view like this:

As a leader, we say we have communicated these policies, legislations, guidelines and the like. because I remember when the policy was finalized, stakeholders' validation was occurred. Even email was circulated to comment on these legal documents before validation. [...] Then it was validated by making workshop. After validation, publicly in the form of circulation, it was communicated. So, making full implementing these legal documents will be the task of an office director. The communication will be as good as the capability of the director. In our part, we have done what is expected.

(Interviewee, #11, May 2023)

This finding is in consistent with, UNESCO's (1998) World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century declaration document stated that among the priority actions that each country should take at the national level is establishing the legislative framework and communicating well for the reform and further development of HEIs that HEIs shall be accessible to all (UNESCO, 1998 Article 1.a), defining, communicating and implementing policies to eliminate all gender stereotyping in HEIs, and consolidating women's participation at all levels and in all disciplines (UNESCO 1998 Article 1.i).

This finding emphasizes the importance of improving communication strategies and mechanisms within Ethiopian public HEIs to bridge the gap between policy development and effective dissemination, despite qualitative respondents acknowledging that the policy is communicated. To address this issue, HEIs should consider implementing various strategies. Like regular communication campaigns can be conducted to ensure consistent and widespread dissemination of gender diversity-related policies. Additionally, clear and accessible

documentation should be provided to students, making it easier for them to understand their rights and responsibilities.

Policy Practice 5: Gender Diversity Management Policy Implementation

The majority of respondents indicated that their university's implementation of policies, rules, and regulations protecting gender diversity is inadequate, as evidenced by their mean and standard deviation scores for GDM related policy practice item 5 in Table 12 ($M= 4.16$, $SD=0.969$). This finding indicated that the majority of respondents indicated that their university's implementation of policies, rules, and regulations protecting gender diversity is perceived as inadequate reflecting much more engagement needed from the behavioral components of DLE model. This also suggests that there are gaps or shortcomings in effectively translating policies into action and ensuring the protection of gender diversity within the Ethiopian public HEIs. The inadequate implementation of policies and regulations can result in a lack of proper support, resources, and enforcement mechanisms for gender diversity-related issues. It may lead to instances of discrimination, exclusion, or unequal treatment of individuals based on their gender identity or expression. During the qualitative phase, the following respondent replies mis-matched the quantitative result as follows:

We take following the policies and procedures extremely seriously. I'm not sure what knowledge you have of this university because there are no persistent disciplinary issues here. It's not for want of trying, but rather because we were able to avoid many disciplinary actions on our campus because to our preventative and remedial procedures. [...] In other words, what is mentioned on the paper is being implemented correctly. Therefore, our disciplinary guidelines go beyond what is written on a piece of paper.

(Interviewee, #3, June 2023)

This investigation aligns with the findings of a related paper which highlighted the importance of formulating and implementing enabling policies to address female educational challenges. Many countries have rapidly prioritized women's educational experiences through education policy and planning (Naeem, & Dahar, 2016). Overall, the finding suggests that while qualitative respondents expressed as there is implementation of policies, rules, and regulations protecting gender diversity, a considerable number of quantitative respondents perceived it as inadequate.

Policy Practice 6: Fair Gender Diversity Affirmative Action

Affirmative action policy is being used by their HEIs' to equitably manage gender diversity, according to the majority of respondents, according to the mean and standard deviation scores for GDM related policy practice item 6 in Table 12 ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.996$). This demonstrates that the majority of respondents indicated that their HEIs are utilizing affirmative action policy to equitably manage gender diversity by promoting proactive engagement and behavior from DLE model. This also suggests a practice that the HEIs are actively taking steps to promote gender diversity and ensure fair representation and opportunities for individuals of diverse gender identities. By implementing affirmative action policies, the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs demonstrates a commitment to creating a more inclusive and diverse environment, where individuals of all genders have equal access to education, and other opportunities. The replies of the following respondent during the qualitative phase matched the quantitative outcome as follows:

The affirmative action is provided despite the accessibility issue. For example, we created a library that is too close to the female dorms for the purpose of protecting women from harassment in the evening. Anytime they read, it benefits them. Due to the fact that even nature is hostile against men, we are working to give affirmative action for females. Furthermore, women do have a lot of dragging things. I'd say we're developed but not quite there if we added more items for women. It could not even be fulfilled by our future children's. [...] Females may not study for three to four days at least because of their monthly administration. Nature prefers men. Not only in this country, even all over the world, what is being done for females as compared to the burden what they have, not sufficient. I have two females and one male child and the amount of burden what we load in our females' children is heavier than our male one.

(Interviewee, #3, June 2023)

Respondent number 11 has also claimed that:

What is kept by ministry of education for gender and disability diversity, we are implementing. [...] We cannot deviate from that in admission, in requirements or in other things. Even when there is a position, the affirmative action package will be used.

(Interviewee, #11, May 2023)

This is consistent with the results of ESDP III, which stated that one of the purposes of the education sector was to take affirmative action to achieve parity of female participation in all education and training programs. Female students were supposed to be assigned based on their preferences, while those who were married and have families were supposed to be enrolled in HEIs

closer to their home (FDRE, 2005). As stated by Wondimu, (2004), affirmative action, quotas, preferential treatment, reserving positions, admission of top percent, compensatory procedures, separate institutions, and preparatory (compensatory) programs have all been used by countries such as the United States, Canada, South Africa, Tanzania, India, Malaysia, and others to reduce and possibly eliminate educational disadvantage, particularly in HEIs.

Similarly, researchers argue that if affirmative action for females in HEIs is to be effective, it must begin with confronting old stereotypes and obstacles on university campuses. Male students, who constitute the "majority" in universities, should be part of the affirmative action solution as well as part of the issue (Semella, 2006 a).

Policy Practice 7: Gender Diversity Support Initiatives

The respondents overwhelmingly agreed that their institution had specific policies, programs, or activities to support gender diversity, as shown by the average response and standard deviation for GDM related policy practice question 7 in Table 12 (M= 3.85, SD= 0.913). This data implies that having specific policies, programs, or activities to support gender diversity signifies that the HEIs are actively working towards creating an inclusive and equitable HEIs reflecting efforts to promote structural diversity of DLE model. These initiatives can include, but are not limited to, gender-inclusive restrooms, gender identity and expression training, support groups, mentorship programs, and educational campaigns. By implementing such initiatives, HEIs acknowledges and addresses the unique challenges and needs of individuals with diverse gender identities. It sends a message that Ethiopian public HEIs values diversity and is willing to providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of the community. On the important of having policies, the interview number 3 stated that:

Since diversity entails inclusivity, we must establish a policy that reflects that stance. The institution should assert that diversity is the wellspring of prosperity and growth. Then, [...] the practical aspects will start moving toward implementation in practice. Policy should thus emphasize it. When we observe numerous forms of diversity in a certain organization, we won't be afraid then.

(Interviewee, #3, June 2023)

Generally, it can be said that both the grand mean value of $M = 3.87$ and the qualitative finding suggests that Ethiopian public HEIs have policies in place to manage gender diversity. However, the implementation and effectiveness of these policies, as well as the communication of

these policies ($M = 2.51$), appear to be limited. Consistent with this finding, past critical studies on diversity management have emphasized that specific policies ought to be essential elements of diversity management (Noon, 2007; Wrench, 2005).

4.6.1 Relationships Between Policy Practices for GDM and the Commitment of Top Management

Sub Research Question 2.1: *Do policy practices for managing gender and disability diversity relate to the commitment of senior leaders?*

As previously stated, one of the present study's sub fundamental research objectives was to examine whether policy practices for managing gender and disability diversity are related to senior leaders' commitment. The following findings attempted to provide answers to such queries by specifically focusing on GDM.

<i>The relationship between policy practices and the commitment of senior leaders</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Pearson Correlations</i>	<i>Sig.(2-tailed)</i>
	395	.613	.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 13: The relationship between policy practices and the commitment of senior leaders at the Selected Five Ethiopian Public HEIs

The correlation coefficient is a number between -1 and 1. A perfect positive linear connection is represented by a value of 1, which means that as one variable rises, the other variable rises in a steady and proportionate way as well. A value of -1, on the other hand, denotes a perfect negative linear connection, in which the decline of one variable is proportionate to the growth of the other. If there is no linear relationship between the variables, the correlation coefficient is 0.

A correlation value of 0.613 in this instance indicates a substantial positive association between top management commitment and policy practices. This indicates that the senior leaders at Ethiopia's public HEIs tends to be more committed when policy practices advance or become more successful. Because of the correlation coefficients near proximity to 1, the strength of the link is deemed strong. The fact that the association is positive suggests that both variables have a propensity to move in the same direction. For instance, there's a greater chance that top

management commitment will rise if the policy practices score rises. It's crucial to remember that a connection does not suggest a cause. Although the correlation coefficient points to a link between the variables, it cannot establish a cause-and-effect relationship.

Overall, a correlation value of 0.613 shows that there is a significant positive association between senior leaders' commitment and policy practices at the chosen Ethiopian public HEIs. This suggests the two factors are closely linked in the context being studied. This suggests that better policy practices may be linked to higher levels of senior leaders' commitment. Similarly, as shown in the preceding table, the significant value between policy practices and the commitment of top management at the selected Five Ethiopian Public HEIs is likewise perfectly significant, with a p value of 0.000.

4.6.2 Relationships Between Perceptions and Practices of GDM

Sub Research Question 2.2: *What are the relationships between perceptions and policy practices of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs?*

As previously stated, one of the current study's sub-basic research questions was to investigate the links between views and practices of GDM & DDM in Ethiopian public HEIs. The following results sought to answer such questions from the GDM point of view.

Variables	1	2	3	4
Overall Perceptions for GDM	1.00			
Curricular Perceptions for GDM	.090	1.00		
Extra-Curricular Perceptions for GDM	.018	.150**	1.00	
Policy Practice for GDM	.046	.192**	.074	1.00

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 14: *The relationship between perceptions and policy practices of GDM at the Selected Five Ethiopian Public HEIs*

Drawing from the results presented in Table 14 above, it can be said that three variables—policy practice for GDM, curricular perceptions for GDM, and overall perceptions for GDM—showed strong connections with experience of practicing GDM. About extracurricular impressions of GDM, however, no meaningful association was discovered. Cohen's widely-used correlation coefficient interpretation guidelines were applied in the interpretation. As per the

recommendations provided by Cohen, a correlation value of $r = 0.1$ is classified as minor, $r = 0.3$ as moderate, and $r = 0.5$ as large. In this instance, the following correlation coefficients exist between the characteristics given and the experience gained from practicing GDM:

- GDM policy practice: $r = 0.852$ ($p < 0.01$), suggesting a stronger and somewhat favorable link. A substantial positive association between experience experienced for GDM and policy practice for GDM is shown by the correlation value of 0.852.

- Perceptions of the GDM curriculum: $r = 0.219$ ($p < 0.01$), suggesting a somewhat favorable association. With a correlation value of 0.219, it appears that there is a moderately favorable association between GDM experience and perceptions of the curriculum.

- Overall Perceptions for GDM: $r = 0.126$ ($p < 0.01$), suggesting a somewhat favorable association. A little positive association between experience practicing GDM and general impressions about GDM is shown by the correlation value of 0.126.

- Extra-curricular perceptions for GDM: $r = 0.089$ ($p < 0.01$), suggesting no meaningful association. With a correlation value of 0.089, it appears that extracurricular impressions of GDM and experience practiced for GDM are unrelated. Every association listed is statistically significant, meaning that the observed relationships are unlikely to have happened by accident, based on the p-values given (all less than 0.01).

The following correlation coefficients have been found between GDM policy practice and the aforementioned criteria:

- The perception of GDM in extracurricular activities shows a little positive association of $r = 0.074$ ($p < 0.01$). GDM policy practice and extracurricular views of GDM appear to have a little positive association, as indicated by the correlation coefficient of 0.074.

- Curricular perceptions of GDM: moderately favorable association, $r = 0.192$ ($p < 0.01$). Curriculum views of GDM and GDM policy practice appear to be somewhat positively correlated, as indicated by the correlation value of 0.192.

- There is a little positive connection ($r = 0.046$; $p < 0.01$) between overall perceptions of GDM. The correlation value of 0.046 indicates a weakly positive association between general views of GDM and GDM policy practice. All of the correlation coefficients are statistically

significant, according to the supplied p-values, suggesting that the observed connections are unlikely to have happened by accident. To summarize, the results indicate that there are little relationships between GDM policy practice and the other categories, which include extracurricular, curricular, and overall perceptions of GDM. Based on the given p-values, the correlations suggested are statistically significant.

The following are the correlation coefficients between extracurricular perceptions of GDM and the specified attributes:

- GDM's curricular perception show a weakly positive connection ($r = 0.150$, $p < 0.01$). Between extracurricular and curricular viewpoints on GDM, there appears to be a slight positive association (correlation coefficient = 0.150).

- Overall perceptions show a weakly positive connection, with $r = 0.018$ ($p < 0.01$). Extracurricular impressions of GDM and general perceptions appear to have a weakly positive association, according to the correlation value of 0.018. It is highly improbable that the observed connections happened by accident, as shown by the supplied p-values, which show that every correlation coefficient is statistically significant. In conclusion, the results imply that extracurricular perceptions of GDM only imply weak relationships with the other characteristics. The p-values supplied indicate that the correlations described are statistically significant. Still, the correlations are low since they are below Cohen's criteria's threshold of 0.3, which is commonly regarded as a moderate correlation.

4.7 Senior Leaders' Commitment for Gender Diversity Management

Research Question 3: *How is the commitment of senior leaders to managing gender and disability diversity?*

The study group's response to the issue on senior leaders' commitment for GDM was evaluated in terms of mean and standard deviation values using data from the quantitative survey responses. The information that is relevant to the study's subjects is listed in Table 13.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	The senior leaders of this campus are committed to create a campus environment that welcomes gender diversity.	395	2.86	1.281

2	Senior leaders of this campus are committed to handle gender diversity matters satisfactorily.	395	2.56	1.225
3	Senior leaders shows that gender diversity is important through its actions.	395	3.17	1.080
4	Senior leaders on this university responds to instances of gender-based harassment or discrimination with the necessary action.	395	4.05	1.166
5	In this campus, senior leaders establish the campus vision for gender diversity.	395	3.86	1.075
6	In this campus, senior leaders treat students of various gender with equal respect.	395	4.09	1.080
Overall Average		395	3.43	

Table 15: *Senior leaders' Commitment for GDM*

Commitment for Fostering Inclusive Educational Environment

The majority of respondents disagreed, as shown by the mean and standard deviation scores to senior leaders' commitment for GDM item 1: "*the senior leaders of this campus is committed to create a campus environment that welcomes gender diversity*" in Table 15 was ($M= 2.86$, $SD= 1.281$), The finding indicates that the senior leaders who are in charge of running the selected five HEIs are not committed to creating a welcoming environment that values gender diversity addressing the unwanted psychological climate dimension of DLE model by not acknowledging the importance of creating a positive and accepting atmosphere. It suggests that there is an issue with the leadership's lack of dedication to fostering a gender diverse HEI's community. One respondent submitted the following responses, which matched to the numerical value:

If I say I am committed, the methodology will suffer from self-rating bias. But, by my very nature, I am pro diversity. The manifestation of the commitment is properly assigning budget and purchase them properly. for instance, in one time, by initiating, we have bought laundry machines by 6 million Ethiopian birr for washing clothes. When students prepare event, [...] I cancel my other programs and sit with them. Decision, presence and action are the manifestations of commitments. Any ways, we have good orientation and, fortunately, the two top management members are doing in diversity area.

(Interviewee, #11, May 2023)

However, it appears that the contrary is true. This was confirmed by respondent number 3. Here is the quote:

You must be committed to being inclusive, right? In our campus situation, I might not be sure to respond to this question. I see commitment on certain subjects, and I

see them while not being committed on other issues. As you can see, dedication will go as far as overthrowing the existing structure. Are we prepared for it, too? I'm not certain. But the management is highly receptive if you provide them with a concept that they should support. [...] I find it challenging to assert firmly that senior management is dedicated. It will be hard to commit if there are justifications, thus we must do it unconditionally.

(Interviewee, #3, June 2023)

This lack of dedication might show itself in a number of ways, such not putting inclusive policies into place, not addressing incidents of bias or discrimination, or not actively supporting programs that want to increase gender diversity. The results also suggest that those respondents may not find a friendly or inclusive atmosphere on HEIs. A lack of knowledge or comprehension of the advantages that diversity offers to an educational institution may also be shown if the senior leaders are not dedicated to promoting gender diversity. The leadership may be losing out on the benefits of having a varied HEIs' community if they do not prioritize gender diversity. This result contradicts with previous study recommendations (e.g., Maki, 2023), which suggested that committedly top management of HEIs should accordingly prepare students for diverse education by creating supportive learning settings and opportunities.

Commitment for Ensuring Gender Diversity

In table 15 to senior leaders' commitment for GDM item 2, respondents were asked if senior leaders of their university are committed to handle gender diversity matters satisfactorily. The mean and standard deviation of the data is ($M= 2.56$, $SD= 1.225$). According to the findings, the respondents believe that their institution's senior leaders are not committed enough to properly handle issues related to gender diversity falling under the behavioral components from DLE dimension as it highlights the less commitment of the leadership to take appropriate actions in response to gender diversity issues. It also indicates that the respondents don't think that the top leadership is committed to solving gender diversity issues in a satisfactory way. This impression may result from a number of things, including a deficiency of overt acts, inefficient regulations, or insufficient funding for gender diversity programs on HEIs. In the qualitative component, to the opposite of the stated quantitative result, two interviewee participants (Interviewee, #25, and Interviewee, #4,) stated that:

As you know we need to have some core things which requires our knowledge time

and focus, as to me those in the system are expected to be highly focused but in top leadership members, I do not take as they are committed enough up to the expected standard. Leaders are expecting these activities to be performed by the assigned structure only which is not totally good. [...] We, leaders should be committed enough rather than expecting only from those assigned experts.

(Interviewee, #25, May 2023)

You see, if you ask them, they may replay you as if they were carrying out the GDM issues satisfactorily, but you as a researcher did well to ask us, and I can confidently tell you that, rather than doing so in an ordinary case, they cannot be considered as carrying out the GDM case as such satisfactorily. And, if you ask me to put it in a percentile form, I can give them a percentile of 70% nothing more! When the remaining 30% fulfilled well, I can say that they are performing satisfactorily.

(Interviewee, #4, April 2023)

It shows that the respondents think those in positions of power and influence inside the institution have a duty to promote gender diversity. Senior leaders' behaviors and attitudes have a big influence on the culture and laws around gender diversity in general. It also draws attention to the particular issue of gender diversity. The respondents' dissatisfaction implies that they see a disconnect between their ideal standard of inclusion or advancement and the gender diversity that exists at their campus now. This finding aligns with the recommendation put forth by King et al. (2010), emphasizing the need for strong support from top management and the implementation of measures to effectively address gender diversity matters in university settings.

Commitment on Actions for Gender Diversity

The vast majority of survey participants firmly agreed that senior leaders demonstrate the value of gender diversity through its actions moderately. The respondents' responses to leadership demonstrates the value of gender diversity through its actions for GDM item 3 in Table 15 had a mean and standard deviation of ($M= 3.17$, $SD= 1.080$). It indicates that while the five Ethiopian public HEIs' leaderships recognize the value of gender diversity, their performance does not completely demonstrate a strong commitment to advancing it aligning with the behavioral components DLE model's dimension as it highlights the leadership's behavior and actions in relation to gender diversity. Now let's dissect and talk more about this finding. The moderated action (3.17) makes the suggestion that although the leadership values gender diversity, they are not taking especially strong or thorough steps to encourage it. The implication is that they might

promote gender diversity in little ways but stop short of enacting larger programs or regulations. Here again, contrary to the quantitative result, three interviewee (Interviewee, #16, Interviewee, #5) respondents gave their perspective with regard to this issue:

I do not think. we are just having them to solve problems no by considering the diversity as an important part. We think that the diversity is a problem and we have to be the part of the solution. [...] It is not something what we do as a happy activity. We think they [both genders and SWDs] are having a problem, we are facing it here too so we have to help them is the mentality in this university.

(Interviewee, #16, April 2023)

“Since gender equality is a pressing issue that requires actual action, whether in psychological or social assistance, I have yet to see any special action taken by any university’s top leadership member. Everything is normal.”

(Interviewee, #5, May 2023)

It suggests that while the leadership acknowledges the need of gender diversity, their actions do not quite match that recognition. This can point to a lack of dedication or insufficient work to foster HEIs that is more diverse and inclusive. It might be worthwhile to have a conversation about whether the leadership has taken actual steps to advance gender diversity or if their initiatives are purely symbolic.

Commitment on Resolving Gender-Based Incidents

The senior leaders on the chosen five HEIs reacts to cases of gender-based harassment or discrimination with the required action, as seen by the average response and standard deviation to senior leaders’ commitment for GDM item 4 in Table 15 ($M= 4.05$, $SD= 1.166$). It falls under the behavioral components DLE model as it highlights the leadership's actions and behaviors in addressing such issues. The findings present a promising picture in which Ethiopian public HEIs' senior leadership is proactively dedicated to tackling harassment and discrimination against gender. It implies that they are taking proactive steps to address and prevent these problems in addition to being aware of them. The leadership's dedication is essential to creating a secure and welcoming place and advancing gender parity in the HEIs. In this case, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against female (UN, 1979) is exemplified. This treaty's Article 10 said the following:

(c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programs and the adaptation of teaching methods.

Confirming this, interviewee #25 stated:

In this university, on correcting harassment and discrimination, we are so good. Now I can say that harassment is getting lower and we went to the extent of firing instructors. Three teachers who were involved on harassment act were penalized in salary deduction. We have a separate strong committee who investigate such act having both genders as a member. [...] This committee will investigate any reported case fairly and the final finding will be reported to the president of the university. Finally, the president will decide on the corrective measures. We do not tolerate harassment and discrimination act.

(Interviewee, #25, May 2023)

Interviewee number 11 pointed out that:

The bad news is that (on harassment). The university is like a jungle. We have 10 colleges and 2 technology institutes. Operationally closely we do not know events of harassment. We just here reports. I accept incidents may occur and when they are exposed, we are not tolerant to take actions. [...] On harassment, we have zero tolerance policy. So, since there are rules, we will take corrective measures. There are incidents on which corrective measures were taken. But are they good enough? I do not think. Will they hide report or inform us on time? I doubt. Since we are part of the society, I cannot say confidently this university is holy.

(Interviewee, #11, May 2023)

Given that GDM is the process of developing and sustaining a more favorable learning environment (see the working definition), by having top leadership that responds to instances of gender-based harassment or discrimination with the necessary action this implies that fortunately, the senior leaders of the five Ethiopian public HEIs responds to instances of gender-based harassment or discrimination with the necessary action, indicating that GDM is taking action against gender-based harassment or discrimination.

Commitment on Setting Gender Diversity Vision

The majority of respondents agreed, for “*the senior leaders on their campus creates the campus vision for gender diversity*” as evidenced by the mean and standard deviation scores to senior leaders’ commitment for GDM question 5 in Table 15 (M= 3.86, SD= 1.075). The finding

indicates that senior leader's commitment can have a favorable effect on promoting gender diversity in an academic setting aligning with the DLE model's historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion dimension as it pertains to the leadership's role in shaping the campus's vision and historical trajectory regarding gender diversity. The finding also suggests that leaders who really embrace gender diversity set a powerful example and have an impact on the institution's overall vision and direction. Senior leaders that are in line with these principles may foster an environment that is welcoming and inclusive, promoting gender diversity, representation, and equitable opportunity for all students. However, contrary to the quantitative result, participant number 7 described the too less commitment of the top management in the following ways:

They are not committed. Because, since I have worked in Jimma & Aksum university before, the leaders there were participating us for vision plan. And we were evaluating and discussing the vision implementation strongly. In this university, I have worked for two years and [...] I never seen such commitment. Simply I can say that there is a commitment problem here.

(Interviewee, #7, April 2023)

This indicates that GDM in educational institutions involves creating and maintaining a positive and diverse learning environment (Hurtado et al., 2012) through the establishment of a campus vision for gender diversity. Despite the disagreement among qualitative respondents, it is evidenced that the senior leaders of the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs has established a campus vision for gender diversity, suggesting that GDM is effectively addressing this aspect.

Commitment to Provide Equal Respect for All

Whether the highest levels of HEIs' leadership treat students of diverse genders with the same respect or not, the majority of respondents' mean and standard deviation scores to senior leaders' commitment for GDM item 6 in Table 15 was ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 1.080$). The study's findings point to a promising situation in which the top leadership of the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs are actively showing respect for students of all gender backgrounds falling under the psychological climate dimension of DLE model as it highlights the leadership's role in fostering an environment of equal respect for all genders. The interview quote by #3 exemplifies that:

We appear to be who we lead in the office, correct? I can guarantee that we won't be questioned on giving everyone equal respect. Everyone is receiving the same treatment. However, do not bring up an equity problem. A difficult topic is equity. We treat everyone fairly.

(Interviewee No. 3, June 2023)

However, contrary to the above finding, the following quotes illustrate the commitment problem reported by participants #1:

No, commitment is our problem and I cannot say our top management members are committed enough on this regard. They will answer you, “we have no budget”. If you ask me to mark their commitment out of hundred, I will give them 70% only.

(Interviewee No. 1, April 2023)

By treating every student with respect and equality, it demonstrates a dedication to inclusion and fosters an atmosphere in which both genders may flourish. In line with this finding, researchers also noted that treating students of different genders with the same respect at the top of the organizational hierarchy is crucial for enhancing the outcomes of diversity management programs as well as for establishing and preserving positive environments for diversity (Bendick et al., 2001).

To sum up, the study's both qualitative and quantitative findings suggest that while the commitment of senior leaders at Ethiopian public HEIs towards GDM for students is generally positive ($M=3.43$), their actual efforts in creating a campus environment that genuinely welcomes and embraces gender diversity were more limited ($M=2.86$ for GDM). Additionally, the institutions did not appear to adequately handle matters related to gender diversity in an appropriate manner ($M=2.56$ for GDM). This indicates a disconnect between the senior leadership's expressed commitment to GDM and the actual implementation and effectiveness of their diversity-related efforts on the ground. The findings point to a need for these public HEIs to strengthen their institutional frameworks and practices in order to foster a more welcoming, responsive and inclusive campus environment for students of all genders. There is a gap that needs to be addressed between the stated commitment to gender diversity and the concrete steps taken to translate that commitment into a truly inclusive reality on their campuses.

4.7.1 The Correlation Between Commitment for GDM and Students' Satisfaction

Sub Research Question 3.1: Does HEIs leadership commitment for GDM & DDM have significant positive correlation or regression to students' satisfaction?

As previously stated, one of the current study's sub-basic research questions was to determine whether or not HEI leadership commitment for GDM & DDM has a substantial positive

correlation or regression to student satisfaction. The following findings attempted to provide answers to such queries from the GDM point of view.

<i>Correlation between HEIs leadership commitment for GDM to students' satisfaction</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Pearson Correlations</i>	<i>Sig.(2-tailed)</i>
	395	.227	.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 16: Correlation Between Commitment for GDM & Satisfaction

A correlation coefficient between two variables between 0.25 and 0.5 is deemed "weak" as a rule of thumb. As a result, Pearson Correlation Coefficient = 0.227, demonstrating a fairly weak relationship between leadership commitment for GDM and student satisfaction at the five Ethiopian public HEIs. Similarly, as seen in the preceding table, if the p-value is more than (>0.05), we may conclude that there is a significant difference. As a consequence, the significant value between leadership commitment for GDM and students' satisfaction at the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen is less than 0.05, (0.00), indicating that the relationship is significant. Therefore, based on the provided information on table 16, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between leadership commitment for GDM and student satisfaction at the five Ethiopian public HEIs. The correlation coefficient may be considered weak, but the statistical analysis suggests that the relationship is significant. The findings indicate that, in the context of the Ethiopian public HEIs studied, the relationship between leadership commitment and student satisfaction is much weaker for GDM initiatives compared to other factors examined.

4.8 Challenges of Gender Diversity

Research Question 4: *What challenges do respondents' face in relation to gender & disability diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs?*

By analyzing the mean and standard deviation values of the quantitative survey responses, the research group's approach to the challenges of managing gender diversity was assessed. Table 17 contains the pertinent data for the study's participants.

No.	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	At this university, physical and attitudinal barriers have strong negative impact on gender diversity management.	395	3.95	1.122
2	Not putting too much emphasis for gender diversity management is one of the challenges.	395	4.21	.946
3	At this campus, the process to file a female's complaint was not secure.	395	4.26	1.022
4	Purposely omitting or excluding a reported harmful practice against female in this campus is a challenge.	395	2.52	1.17
5	No sufficient provision of access to counseling for female students who have experienced harassment was a challenge at this campus.	395	2.42	1.13
6	The climate of the campus favors males' than females.	395	4.20	.996
7	Instructors in this campus do little or no modifications to accommodate students with gender diversity in their instructional activities.	395	3.85	.913
8	I am planning leaving this university because I felt isolated or unwelcomed due to my gender.	395	2.70	1.195
Overall Average		395	3.51	

Table 17: *Challenges of Gender Diversity*

Physical and Attitudinal Challenges

The majority of respondents agreed with the finding that at their institution, physical and attitudinal barriers have a considerable negative influence on GDM, according to the mean and standard deviation scores for challenges of gender diversity item 1 in Table 17 (M= 3.95, SD= 1.122). Based on the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, the results indicate that establishing gender diversity presents major hurdles. Physical obstacles as well as attitudinal ones are the cause of these problems suggesting that there is a historical legacy of exclusion and discrimination from the DLE model, which impacts the management of gender diversity in the HEIs. For instance, interviewee #22 confirmed this by saying:

Resource is big challenge followed by lack of satisfaction. Actually no one is I think satisfied. Are you satisfied in life? Therefore, now we have no perception challenge rather budget, which is related to resources. [...] As I said it, the students are demanding which cannot be fulfilled to their all needs. Professionals who can lead our centers is also a challenge.

(Interviewee No. 22, May 2023)

A more or less similar view is held by respondent number 5 as follows:

Yes, I have seen such attitudinal barriers in this university. For instance, although the good number of females in this campus do not want to join to mechanical engineering due to an attitude of the department for male. If you see the number of females in this department, they are not even 10 % of the whole department students.

(Interviewee No.5, May 2023)

The physical obstacles that exist are a sign that resources and infrastructure need to be improved in order to guarantee that both genders can access and be included equally. Similar to this, overcoming attitude barriers necessitates encouraging equality of opportunity, dispelling prejudices, and cultivating an inclusive culture.

This finding is supported by several studies that highlight the presence of attitudinal and physical barriers, including infrastructure inequalities, hindering the mainstreaming of gender in East African countries. These barriers encompass challenges such as the lack of gender-disaggregated statistics, limited effectiveness of sensitization programs, and difficulties in implementing affirmative action initiatives (Kwesiga & Ssendiwala, 2006; Lihamba et al., 2006).

Gender Diversity Neglected: Emphasis Challenge

In Table 17 challenges of gender diversity question 2, respondents were asked if one of the problems is not placing too much focus on GDM. The data's mean and standard deviation ($M=4.21$, $SD=0.946$). The results imply that the insufficient focus of GDM in Ethiopian public HEIs is a significant problem. The result suggests that GDM is not given enough weight or focus in Ethiopian public HEIs implying that the university may lack a diverse structural composition from DLE model's point of view. This shows that these institutions might not provide gender diversity-related concerns, such promoting equal opportunities, fostering an inclusive atmosphere, and resolving prejudices and discrimination based on gender, enough priority or funding.

Inadequate attention to GDM may have a big impact on attaining gender parity in higher education. GDM entails putting strategies and policies into practice to guarantee inclusion and equitable chances for people of all genders. Institutions that do not prioritize this component sufficiently risk creating hurdles to success and access for specific genders, as well as restricted representation and uneven treatment. Supporting the quantitative data, two interviewees (#4, #5) indicated that by saying:

“As I have noticed, one of the issues on our university is putting too less attention on GDM. The reason why I say this is that the institution is carrying out its duties as normal, not merely by emphasizing the gender problem”.

(Interviewee No. 4, April 2023)

Respondent number 5 has the following, more or less comparable opinion:

Yes, I think not given emphasis as such. For instance, it would be good if understanding the GDM issue was not found as such. Since engineering is totally natural science part, most teachers left the gender diversity and equality issue to the social science field. [...] I do not think even as it was getting enough emphasis in social science fields too.

(Interviewee No.5, May 2023)

The results further emphasize how critical it is to acknowledge GDM as a serious issue and take appropriate action. It is essential for HEIs to promote GDM in order to create an inclusive and equitable learning environment. This may be achieved by putting comprehensive policies into place, supporting programs for diversity and inclusion, and addressing any prejudices or discriminatory practices that may already be in place.

Insecure Complaint Filing Process

The vast majority of survey participants were unwavering in their conviction that the procedure for submitting a female complainant's complaint was not secure on their campus. Responses from respondents to challenges of gender diversity item 3 in Table 17 were ($M= 4.02$, $SD= 1.022$) in terms of mean and standard deviation. The finding suggests that the process for filing a complaint regarding females' issues was not secure at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model. The result also shows that the procedure for registering complaints about problems encountered by females at the chosen Ethiopian public HEIs was fraught with security risks or weaknesses.

This suggests that the processes set up to deal with and handle complaints were insufficiently strong or dependable to guarantee the security and privacy of those who voiced their concerns. For female students at these HEIs, the absence of a safe channel for complaints may have serious consequences. They could be deterred from coming forward with reports of harassment, discrimination, or other gender-related problems because they are afraid of facing consequences, don't trust the system, or are worried about their own safety. This has the potential

to maintain a culture of silence and impede attempts to find practical solutions for gender-related issues. The results also emphasize how the complaint procedure at the chosen public HEIs in Ethiopia needs to be improved. It emphasizes how crucial it is to set up safe systems, such as transparent reporting guidelines, qualified staff, methods to prevent retribution, and confidentiality agreements, so that women feel supported and safe in making complaints. However, contrary to the quantitative result, one participant (#25) described the good complaint handling system by stating as follows:

You see, at each college we do have gender coordinators who are responsible to the college deans and to the gender office as well. Their main work is discussing each department's gender case. [...] After discussing with their department dean, the worst case will come to the Academic Commission (AC) meeting. We have both the know-how and reporting system. When they first joined to the university, sufficient orientation will be given them. [...] The problem is I think the confidence of the students on reporting the happening case on time. Mostly they failed to report.

(Interviewee No.25, May 2023)

The findings suggest that GDM in HEIs aims to establish and uphold a positive and diverse learning environment (Berhe, 2023; Hurtado et al., 2012), including ensuring a secure process for filing complaints by female students. Despite few qualitative respondents expressing positive views on this aspect, the process of filing a female's complaint was found to be insecure at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, indicating a challenge in GDM regarding the security of this process.

Challenging Exclusionary Practices: Reporting

The respondents strongly agreed that intentionally deleting or removing a documented harmful behavior against gender at this campus is not a challenge, as evidenced by the average response and standard deviation for challenges of gender diversity item 4 in Table 17 ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 1.17$). The result implies that the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen for study do not face any difficulties in willfully ignoring or omitting a documented detrimental practice against female referring to the psychological climate dimension of the DLE model by highlighting the challenge of deliberately omitting or excluding reported harmful practices against females. This suggests that the institutions respond appropriately to reports of these kinds of behaviors and do not deliberately choose to overlook or avoid them. The fact that this difficulty isn't present

indicates that the HEIs put more of an emphasis on dealing with bad behavior and creating a secure atmosphere for female students. It is possible that they have established procedures to look into reported occurrences, discipline offenders, assist victims, and try to stop such acts from happening again. According to the findings, the chosen HEIs take the initiative to address harmful activities that are reported. This can help foster an environment of accountability by giving people the confidence to report occurrences because they know that their concerns will be considered carefully and dealt with appropriately. Effectively addressing harmful practices against gender is crucial for educational institutions.

Insufficient Counseling Access

The majority of respondents stated that there was no barrier on this campus in providing access to counselling for female students who had experienced harassment, as evidenced by the mean and standard deviation scores for challenges of gender diversity question 5 in Table 17 (M= 2.42, SD=1.13). The findings suggest that female students who have encountered harassment at the designated educational institutions encounter no barriers when attempting to obtain counseling services relating to the behavioral component of the DLE model. In order to address the psychological and emotional effects of harassment occurrences, it appears that the institutions have created a welcoming climate in which female students may readily seek help and support. HEIs must make counseling services available to students who are harassed. Counseling may assist survivors in managing the psychological fallout, offer direction in navigating the reporting and resolution procedures, and support the impacted people's general wellbeing and recuperation.

It is imperative for HEIs to consistently assess and enhance their counseling services, even in cases where the results show no obstacles to counseling access. The efficacy of counseling programs must be evaluated, any gaps must be filled, and counseling resources must be sufficiently stocked and made available to satisfy the requirements of every student. This finding is not consistent with Semella, (2006) finding which states that “*absence of guidance and counseling service in the university*” existed.

.... female students have frustration and helplessness regarding the inability of HEIs to provide them with sufficient protection for their safety and security. Several incidents of physical and sexual harassments take place in classes, libraries, cafeterias, around their dormitories, and in study spaces (MoE, 2004, p.14).

Gender Bias in Campus Climate

The majority of respondents' mean and standard deviation scores ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.996$) for challenges of gender diversity item 6 in Table 17 on “*the climate of the campus favors males’ than females*”. The results suggest that there is a pervasive bias that favors men over female in the HEIs’ environment pertaining to the psychological climate dimension of DLE model by indicating a biased climate that favors males over females. This also implies that female students may encounter additional challenges or disadvantages, whereas male students may experience a climate that is more accepting, encouraging, or beneficial for them at the Ethiopian public HEIs. Achieving gender diversity in in Ethiopian public HEIs may be hampered by the unbalanced favorability towards men in the campus culture. The goal of gender diversity is to provide an accepting atmosphere where both genders are supported, represented, and given equal opportunity. When the environment is biased in favor of men, it puts obstacles in the way of female students and diminishes their participation, representation, and overall experience in Ethiopian public HEIs.

The data also demonstrates how the prejudiced environment in Ethiopian public HEIs can have a detrimental effect on the experiences and results of female students. Poorer self-esteem, restricted access to resources, unfair treatment, and trouble obtaining leadership roles or educational chances are possible outcomes. Gender diversity and inclusiveness efforts may be hampered by this, as well as gender discrimination and prejudices. Empirical data comes from interviewee number 23 is exemplary. Here is the quote:

For females, the campus environment is not friendly. If you ask me why, we do have still a mentality of undermining females and we think they are here [at HEIs] only because of the affirmative action. But honestly there are a number of outstanding females. The physical environment of the campus is not peaceful for females. [...] The males seem dominant. And somethings what we see is not good. During the night time, for instance in this campus, light will off usually. In the evening, how can females pass through darkness? Let alone females, even we instructors will be challenged. The evening is dark which is problematic.

(Interviewee No.23, June 2023)

Participant number 9 reported his observation on challenges in the following way:

Perception, I think is a challenge. We forget males and when we think of genders, we are not even thinking males. When we see results, in our university, females perform high and males are showing lower academic performance. I really worried not to deviate from the core of gender aim. The leadership system should be

exemplary for both genders. [...] But the problem what I see is, when there is a leadership change, they will not continue what was started by the previous one. Rather the new one will start from another scratch which is actually undesirable. If we had a strong system, what is started will go on. As a fashion, one leader may highly focus on gender diversity issue then when he left the position, the next person may forget gender and bring another agenda.

(Interviewee No.9, June 2023)

The results indicate that the objective of GDM in Ethiopian public HEIs is to establish an inclusive and supportive learning environment for students of all genders. However, there is still a significant gender bias favoring males over females within the HEIs culture of the selected HEIs. This finding aligns with previous studies (Eshetu, 2015) that highlight the persistent issue of gender bias in education, particularly in prestigious HEIs. Semella (2006) further adds that traditional gender norms, which reinforce male dominance, act as a deterrent for female students considering enrollment in Ethiopian HEIs. Educators at these establishments have a tendency to give preference to male students, making them the center of attention and control during class discussions by customizing lesson plans around their hobbies. The research also demonstrates that classroom vocabulary, analogies, illustrations, and instructional materials do not adequately take gender diversity into account (Simon & Terhile, 2014).

Limited Gender-Inclusive Instruction

The respondents overwhelmingly agreed that instructors at their campus make little or no adjustments to accommodate students with gender diversity in their instructional activities, as shown by the average response and standard deviation for challenges of gender diversity question 7 in Table 17: (M= 3.85, SD=.913). The results indicate that instructors at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs may not be doing enough to modify their lessons so that students of both genders may participate addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model. This implies that the particular requirements and experiences of students of both genders may not be taken into account by these educators. Establishing an inclusive climate in the classroom that values and celebrates students of both gender is crucial. The results also suggest that these HEIs' instructors might not be cognizant of or sympathetic to the demands of their gender-diverse pupils. To make sure that every student feels included and respected, they might not modify their teaching strategies, resources, or classroom procedures.

In order to provide instructors a framework to operate within and to specifically address gender diversity, efforts should also be taken to create regulations and standards. These policies can set standards for inclusive teaching methods and provide direction on how to best assist students from both genders. This also implies that teaching diversity issues in HEIs is important for practitioners, according to Cunningham and Wechsler (2002), but they pointed out that professors only teach in their own academic preparation. This is despite the fact that pedagogical techniques to integrate issues of gender diversity into existing courses have also received considerable attention in the literature.

Gendered Exclusion: Seeking Departure

For challenges of gender diversity question 8 in Table 17, the mean and standard deviation score ($M= 2.70$, $SD= 1.195$) suggests that the respondent had not considered quitting their university because they felt excluded or undesired owing to their gender. The results imply that, in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, students did not consider quitting because they felt excluded or unwelcome because of their gender relating to the negative psychological climate dimension of the DLE model by expressing feelings of isolation and unwelcomeness due to gender. This suggests that the students did not consider their gender to be a major challenge to their scholastic experience or feeling of acceptance at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs.

It's crucial to understand that the lack of students contemplating leaving because they felt excluded or undesirable does not imply that there aren't any gender-related problems or obstacles remaining in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. If they do not get to the stage where they are thinking about leaving the university, some students could nevertheless experience subtle kinds of bias, discrimination, or other challenges because of their gender. Institutions must continuously evaluate and respond to the needs and worries of all students, especially those pertaining to gender diversity, in order to guarantee a truly inclusive atmosphere. However, in other nations, students tend to be more likely to: terminate their studies and report the lowest levels of student satisfaction (HEFCE, 2015). If HEIs does not work well on GDM, and it might lead to emotions of isolation and isolation, frustration, disengagement and finally quitting their study (Thomas & May, 2010).

Generally, based on the combined qualitative and quantitative data, with a quantitative grand mean of 3.51, the findings suggest that students of all genders at Ethiopian public HEIs often face substantial challenges in navigating their educational environments. Some of the key

challenges identified include: physical and attitudinal barriers, lack of emphasis on GDM, insecure or inadequate complaint filing processes, favoritism towards male students over female students, and limited modifications or accommodations made by instructors to address the diverse needs of students with varying gender identities in their teaching activities. The overall picture indicates that the educational environments at these public HEIs do not adequately address the diverse needs of students across the gender spectrum. This points to the need for these institutions to take more comprehensive and effective steps to create truly inclusive campus settings that support and empower all students, regardless of their gender.

4.9 Satisfaction on Gender Diversity Management

Research Question 5: *To what extent are students satisfied with the gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian Public HEIs?*

Using information from the quantitative survey responses, the study group's reaction to the question of how satisfied they were with the management of gender diversity was assessed in terms of mean and standard deviation values. Table 18 provides a list of the data that is pertinent to the study's participants.

No.	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	At this university, I am overall satisfied with my interactions with other students and faculty.	395	2.61	.972
2	I am satisfied with the fair and equitable treatment given for both gender in classrooms and classroom settings (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.).	395	2.70	1.093
3	I am satisfied with overall the campus experience/environment regarding gender diversity, equity, and inclusion.	395	4.08	1.026
4	I am satisfied with the regulations and laws that protect gender diversity in this university.	395	2.60	1.084
5	I am satisfied with this university's sufficient programs and resources to foster the success of a gender diversity management.	395	3.77	1.066
6	I feel satisfied with the recognition given to gender diversity in this university.	395	2.64	1.165
7	This university's process for investigating acts of gender discrimination or harassment is satisfactory.	395	2.46	1.133
8	At this campus, I am very satisfied with top leadership response for incidents of gender discrimination or harassment.	395	2.53	1.199
9	I am satisfied with commitment of this campus's top leadership to gender diversity and equity.	395	2.38	1.089

Overall Average	395	2.86
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Table 18: *Satisfaction on Gender Diversity Management*

Satisfaction in Interactions

According to the mean and standard deviation scores for GDM satisfaction item 1 in Table 18 (M= 2.61, SD= .972), the majority of respondents indicated that their HEI's interactions with other students and teachers generally were not satisfied their needs. It is implied by the finding that, generally speaking, students at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen are dissatisfied with how they interact with instructors and other students indicating a negative psychological climate from DLE model in terms of gender diversity and inclusion. This also suggests that the quality of interpersonal connections among academics may be significantly hampered or problematic. A lack of interactive and helpful social atmosphere may be the cause of students' dissatisfaction with their interactions with other students. Peer relationships are essential to academic achievement, personal growth, and general well-being. It can be detrimental to students' educational experiences for them to feel alone, alienated, or unable to build strong relationships with their peers. Similarly, it also indicates a lack of effective communication, support, or involvement between students and their instructors if students report dissatisfaction with their contacts with faculty members. This may impair students' impressions of the kind of education they are receiving, as well as the learning process and student involvement. Similarly, respondent number 3 stated identical response with the qualitative one as follows:

Because there are different ways to gauge satisfaction, we were unable to quickly satisfy them. The student's satisfaction was far lower than anticipated for a variety of reasons. There is more work to be done in order to provide good results because this university is too old. Our universities pale in comparison to others that have just launched. [...] But we have some solid starting work. How can we say we have done a satisfying job when the kids themselves will tell you they are not satisfied?

(Interviewee No.3, June 2023)

This overall dissatisfaction can be attributed to various factors. One possible cause is a mismatch between students' expectations and the teaching strategies employed by faculty members. Insufficient communication channels, limited opportunities for discussion and collaboration, and a lack of mentorship or supervision may also contribute to this issue. To address this problem, it is crucial for institutions to prioritize the establishment of an interactive and inclusive learning environment. These findings align with the results of Abbasi et al. (2011), who

found that a majority of students, regardless of gender, enrolled in Pakistani universities expressed dissatisfaction with their interactions with faculty members.

Satisfaction on Equitable Treatment

Respondents were asked in Table 18 GDM satisfaction item 2 if they were satisfied with the fair and equitable treatment provided for both genders in campus and classroom settings (e.g., labs, libraries, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.). The data's mean and standard deviation was ($M= 2.70$, $SD= 1.093$). The results indicate that the fair and equitable treatment of both genders in different classroom settings, such as labs, recitation sessions, and clinical situations, appears to have left students at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs unsatisfied addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model by expressing dissatisfaction. All students, regardless of gender, should have equal access to educational opportunities and resources in an inclusive learning environment, which can only be achieved via treating everyone fairly. Feelings of exclusion, inequity, or lack of support can arise in students when they perceive disparities in the treatment of various genders. A more or less similar view with the quantitative data is held by respondent number 11 as follows:

Look, this country is a developing country. In poor country how can we satisfy the need of human being? Our institution is service giver, so before providing satisfactory service, basic needs have to be fulfilled ahead of time. Quality dorm, quality food better pocket money, best laboratory and the facilities cannot be fulfilled easily. This is Ethiopia and for war resource was shifted. We are serving with what we have and we are trying our best. Government allotted 22 (twenty - two) birr but we are paying 105 (one hundred five) Ethiopian Birr (in AAU case) which means 83 (eighty-three birr) the university is financing. So, [...] if this satisfies them ok. But if they ask the ideal level of expectation, they may not be satisfied because the country is in budget constrained. I will give it 75% for satisfaction level of our university.

(Interviewee No.11, May 2023)

Students' complaints of dissatisfaction might have a number of causes. For instance, there can be situations in which people of a certain gender are given preference when it comes to resources, opportunities, or involvement. Unconscious prejudices, gender stereotypes, or a lack of knowledge about the significance of gender equality might all be to blame for this. Prioritizing and actively promoting gender equity in all facets of the educational process is crucial for HEIs' wishing to solve this problem. This illustrates gender equality in education, which calls for equal access to and participation in education for both men and women as well as equal opportunity for

high-quality, equitable learning experiences and results (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2018). This contradicts the conclusions of Kurtz-Costes et al. (2006), who stated that students experienced various academic, financial, and personal problems, but selected few were satisfied with the training their HEIs as they were getting and dedicated to finishing their studies.

Satisfaction on Inclusive Campus Experience

In terms of gender diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus, the overwhelming majority of poll respondents firmly agreed that they were satisfied with the entire experience. The mean and standard deviation of the respondents' responses to GDM satisfaction item 3 in Table 18 were 4.08 and 1.026, respectively. The results indicate that the general selected five Ethiopian public HEIs' experience and atmosphere in terms of gender diversity, equity, and inclusion is satisfactory to students pertaining to the psychological climate of the DLE model. This also suggests that these educational institutions have worked to foster a friendly and inclusive environment for students of both genders. This might entail conducting routine reviews and assessments of procedures and regulations, giving students a voice and encouraging their participation, and giving all members of the HEIs' community access to continuing instruction and training. This is consistent with the findings of Jones & Suh (2000), which concluded that equity, and inclusion on campus influences overall satisfaction. However, one participant described her dissatisfaction in connection with equity with the following:

No, I do not say I got satisfactory service from this university. There are some dissatisfying things in this campus. For instance, we females will not go freely to library or other places due to harassment trials. Some males do have a mentality of as they can whet ever like on females, which is a wrong mentality. While we were fresh, it was not toxic but now it is challenging. And, females do have a problem of not reporting to the concerned person when they got harassed. Females are hidden to tell their harm occurrences. Gender equality mentality is still not existed on this university. Females even are not bold enough to tell their violence by having fear of the consequence.

(Interviewee No.24, April 2023)

The finding from interviewee number 24 is consistent with prior research (e.g., Molla, & Cuthbert, 2014), which found that female students face harassment and bullying from their male peers in lecture halls and libraries.

Satisfaction with Gender Diversity Regulations

The average response and standard deviation for GDM satisfaction item 4 “*satisfied with the regulations and laws that protect gender diversity in this university*” in Table 18 was (M= 2.60, SD= 1.084). The results imply that students at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen are dissatisfied with the rules and legislation that are in place to preserve gender diversity relating to the historical legacy of exclusion dimension of DLE model by expressing dissatisfaction. This also suggests that students believe there are restrictions, flaws, or insufficiencies in the current frameworks and laws pertaining to gender diversity. It also implies that students who voice dissatisfaction with rules and regulations are implying that they think these measures fall short of meeting the interests and concerns of some students with varied gender. Their perception can be that the university's safeguards and assistance are insufficient to provide a fair and welcoming atmosphere for every student. Students' complaints of dissatisfaction might have a number of causes. They could notice, for instance, that there are regulations that are not fully addressing issues like access to gender-neutral facilities, stopping harassment or discrimination based on gender, or include a variety of gender viewpoints in the curriculum. Confirming the stated finding, the two interview participants (Interviewee No.14 & 2) stated that: “*Most of the policies are not practicable. Although they are there. If they are not practiced, they will not be useful at all*”. (Interviewee No.14, May 2023)

On some part I am satisfied. And on other parts, I am not satisfied. For instance, learning with an equal environment without discrimination is satisfactory. But as compared to other local universities, I am not satisfied. There are local universities working well currently.

(Interviewee No.2, May 2023)

This finding also indicates that in order to tackle this matter, it is imperative that establishments undertake a thorough examination and modification of their policies and legal structures concerning gender diversity. Engaging in consultations with key stakeholders such as academics, staff, and students may help collect input and pinpoint areas that want improvement.

Satisfactory Gender Diversity Programs

According to their mean and standard deviation scores for GDM satisfaction item 5 in Table 18 (M= 3.77, SD= 1.066), the majority of respondents said that they are satisfied with the HEIs’ sufficient programs and resources to support the achievement of a GDM addressing the structural diversity dimension of the DLE model. The results also imply that the activities and

resources the selected five HEIs provides to encourage and support GDM are well-received by students. This also suggests that these establishments have put policies and procedures in place to support the inclusion of both genders. Student satisfaction suggests that the HEIs' are doing a good job of fostering an atmosphere that values and encourages gender diversity. The offered tools and programs probably cater to the special requirements and difficulties that both gender identities encounter, and they also enhance their general success and well-being in the academic community. Individual experiences might differ, though, and some students could still have difficulties or think that the offered tools and programs could use some improvement. Thus, in order to guarantee the continuous efficacy and responsiveness of these efforts, continuous evaluation and feedback systems are crucial.

Satisfaction with Gender Diversity Recognition

The mean and standard deviation scores for GDM satisfaction item 6 in Table 18 ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 1.165$) indicate that the majority of respondents are not satisfied with the recognition given to gender diversity in their HEIs pertaining to the psychological climate of the DLE model by indicating dissatisfaction. According to the findings, gender diversity among the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen is not acknowledged to the satisfaction of the students. This suggests that students believe the institution undervalues or fails to recognize the significance of gender diversity. Students who voice dissatisfied with the institution's acknowledgement of gender diversity are expressing their belief that the university does not sufficiently recognize the distinct experiences, viewpoints, and difficulties encountered by both gender identities. The following quotes from respondent number 25 illustrate the lower satisfaction level on GDM: *"Since we do have a number of limitations, I cannot say that our students are satisfied. Having all these gaps, I do not want to say boldly they are satisfied and if you ask me the percent may be 65 % work is good"* (Interviewee No.25, May 2023).

There might be a number of reasons for the dissatisfaction that students are expressing. For example, they can feel that there aren't enough opportunities for or representations of both genders on HEIs in terms of leadership roles, programs, policy, and curricula. Additionally, they could believe that HEIs are not giving enough attention to or prioritizing their needs and concerns regarding gender diversity. Consistent with this finding, in principle in the policy document of ESDP IV, HEIs were anticipated to have enhanced access and recognition to higher education of traditionally disadvantaged groups such as females as one of the planned program goals of ESDP

IV (FDRE 2010). This is an additional clarification to the Constitution. Increasing the proportion of female overall enrollment was one of the primary outcomes aims of ESDP IV.

Satisfaction with Harassment Investigation Process

The average response and standard deviation for GDM satisfaction question 7 on “*process for investigating acts of gender discrimination or harassment*” in Table 18 was (M= 2.46, SD= 1.133). The results indicate that the inquiry procedure used by five public HEIs in Ethiopia to look into cases of harassment or discrimination against female is not considered adequate addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model by expressing dissatisfaction with the HEI's process for investigating acts of gender discrimination or harassment. This also suggests that the current protocols and practices used by these HEIs to deal with such problems are insufficient or ineffectual. When it comes to gender discrimination and harassment, the absence of a good investigative procedure might have serious repercussions. Victims may be discouraged from coming forward with instances, which would support a culture of silence and enable discriminatory practices to continue. It can also damage the HEIs’ reputation for being a committed institution that combats harassment and discrimination based on gender among staff, instructors, and students.

It also implies that to guarantee a secure and welcoming learning environment in Ethiopian public HEIs, these issues must be resolved. Clear rules and regulations must be established, investigators must have thorough training, sufficient funding must be allotted, and openness must be encouraged at all stages of the inquiry. Involving stakeholders, such as staff, instructors, and students, may also aid in identifying systemic problems and creating workable solutions. This finding is consistent with prior research (e.g., Krumrei et al., 2013), which found that student satisfaction with their HEIs’ experience in investigating acts of gender discrimination or harassment is recognized as crucial to persistence. Furthermore, another current finding by Fleming et al., (2017) is also consistent that understanding the influences of gender discrimination or harassment may offer additional malleable variables for future to improve satisfaction.

Satisfaction with the Leadership Response

The average and standard deviation scores for GDM satisfaction item 8 on “*satisfied with top leadership response for incidents of gender discrimination or harassment*” in Table 18 (M= 2.53, SD= 1.199). The outcome suggests that these institutions' investigative processes and techniques for cases of harassment or discrimination against female are deemed insufficient or

unsatisfactory relating to the behavioral component of the DLE model by expressing dissatisfaction. The results of this study also point to fundamental shortcomings in the way these HEIs manage these kinds of situations, which might have detrimental effects on both the victims and the reputation of the HEIs as a whole. A clear and efficient procedure must be followed when looking into allegations of harassment or discrimination against gender. An effective investigative procedure ought to give precedence to the rights and welfare of the parties concerned, provide an impartial and equitable methodology, and enable suitable measures to be taken against the offenders. The results, however, imply that these are areas in which the chosen Ethiopian HEIs are deficient. There may be a number of explanations for the inquiry process's perceived unsatisfactory.

Improving the investigative procedures for harassment and discrimination based on gender is a top priority for the HEIs in order to solve these deficiencies. In addition to allocating adequate resources and fostering accountability and openness throughout the process, they should set clear norms and procedures and educate investigators thoroughly. In order to stop such instances and provide a secure and encouraging atmosphere for all members of the university community, it is also essential to promote a culture of respect, inclusion, and zero tolerance for gender-based harassment and discrimination. Findings from this survey were in line with other research (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Strayhorn, 2019), which found that underrepresented gender, disability, and ethnicity groups were less satisfied with their university's diversity management.

Satisfaction with Leadership's Gender Diversity Commitment

According to Table 18, GDM satisfaction item 9, the respondents were questioned about their satisfaction on their HEIs' regarding whether or not the top leadership of their HEIs' are committed to gender diversity and equity with the mean and standard deviation values of ($M=2.38$, $SD=1.089$). The results show that the top management of these HEIs are thought to be ineffective or unmotivated when it comes to advancing gender equity and diversity inside their own institution addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model by expressing dissatisfaction. The results of this study also imply that there are issues with the leadership's objectives, policies, and activities concerning gender equality and inclusion. Managing gender diversity and promoting fairness are essential elements in creating a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere in HEIs. To bring about significant change and provide chances for people of all

genders to prosper, top management must demonstrate a sufficient level of dedication. Two interviewers (#23, and #14) backed up this claim by saying:

Generally, if we say, about 70 % of the students are dissatisfied. Because of the methodology, instructors' character & the like. I think the students are dissatisfied. The instructor's quality as compared to the previous, the current instructors are not committed. And, since students evaluate, the caliber of instructors they may not be satisfied. [...] Years back, this university had highly committed instructors. Some instructors, let alone teaching, he/she may have a difficulty of expressing himself/herself. How can students be satisfied? When students know that person is incompetent, he/she may insult or punish them in the form of mark deduction, which is big crime.

(Interviewee No.23, June 2023)

"[...] On some things I have satisfied and on some other issues I am dissatisfied. So, I really do not have a full satisfaction in this campus, I do have a number of questions to be fulfilled. "

(Interviewee No.14, May 2023)

A number of consequences may result from dissatisfaction with the senior leadership's dedication to GDM and fairness. Underrepresented genders may face obstacles to promotion, gender-based imbalances may persist, and decision-making processes may lack diversity and representation. Furthermore, it might foster an atmosphere in which prejudice, inequality, and gender discrimination continue. Initiatives promoting gender diversity and equity should be provided with sufficient funding. Support services, training initiatives, and studies addressing gender-related concerns can all be funded in this way. This consistent with the findings of Tomlinson et al., (2018), who state that university's top leadership around the world are under increasing pressure to improve the quality - and equity - of gender diversity in their educational provision in order to increase student satisfaction scores and secure their reputation in the competitive global HEIs.

The central finding of the research, based on the quantitative grand mean of 2.86 and the qualitative data, is that students of both genders at Ethiopian public HEIs express significant dissatisfaction with the institutions' GDM efforts. This points to substantial room for improvement in order to achieve greater satisfaction, equity and inclusivity for both gender identities within these educational environments. The study has identified several critical areas that the HEIs need to prioritize in order to address this student dissatisfaction: Ensuring fair and equitable treatment of students of all genders within classroom settings and activities. Establishing robust regulations,

policies and laws that comprehensively protect and support gender diversity on campus. Improving the processes for investigating and addressing any incidents of gender-based discrimination, harassment or other forms of bias. Strengthening institutional responsiveness and accountability when dealing with gender diversity-related issues raised by students. In essence, the research indicates a need for these public HEIs to undertake concerted, systemic efforts to create a truly inclusive campus climate that is welcoming and supportive of students across the gender spectrum. Bridging the gap between stated commitments and actual, impactful implementation is crucial.

4.9.1 The Correlation Between Curricular and Co-curricular Activities and GDM satisfaction

Sub Research Question 5.1: *Is there a significant positive correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities and GDM & DDM satisfaction at Ethiopian public HEIs?*

As stated above, one of the current study's sub-basic research questions was to establish whether or not there was a substantial positive link between curricular and co-curricular activities and GDM & DDM satisfaction at public Ethiopian HEIs. The following results sought to offer solutions to such questions from the GDM point of view.

Variables	1	2	3
Curricular Perceptions for GDM	1.00		
Extra-Curricular Perceptions for GDM	.150**	1.00	
Satisfaction on GDM	.151**	-.065**	1.00

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 19: Correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities & GDM satisfaction

As shown in Table 19, Satisfaction on GDM was correlated with low values with the two variables, The widely-used rules specified by Cohen regard a correlation of $r=.1$ as small, $r=.3$ as moderate, and $r=.5$ as large. Here, then, we see a low negative correlation ranging from ($r = -.065$, $p < .01$) for extra-curricular perceptions for GDM to ($r = .151$ $p < .01$) for curricular perceptions. Thus, there are statistically low and moderate relationships between satisfaction, curricular and extracurricular, for GDM because all of the two tailed p value was less than .01, Satisfaction on GDM was significant with the variables mentioned. This result was consistent with

research done in (2011) by Kayastha on Thailand HEIs, which showed that there is a modest correlation between general impressions and student satisfaction.

The extra-curricular perceptions for GDM were also slowly correlated with the curricular perceptions for GDM. Cohen's frequently used guidelines classify a correlation of $r=.1$ as minor, $r=.3$ as moderate, and $r=.5$ as strong. We detect a moderate association here, ranging from ($r=.1.50$, $p<.01$) for curricular views of GDM. Because all of the two tailed p value was less than .01, Extra-Curricular Perceptions for GDM was significant with the variables mentioned.

The findings indicate that in the context of the Ethiopian public HEIs studied, student satisfaction with GDM initiatives had low to moderately negative correlations with the integration of gender diversity content into the academic curriculum and extracurricular activities, despite these relationships being statistically significant. This suggests that increased student satisfaction with GDM efforts at these institutions does not necessarily correspond with or drive stronger incorporation of gender diversity topics across the educational and campus life domains. Kara, & DeShields, (2004) has provided evidence for this claim by utilizing both empirical data and a conceptual model to demonstrate the positive correlation between students' activities and their satisfaction and intention to continue their education.

4.9.2 T -Statistics for Male and Female Respondents on Satisfaction for GDM

Sub Research Question 5.2: *Is there statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on satisfaction for GDM & DDM?*

As stated above, one of the current study's sub-basic research questions was to establish whether or not there was statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on satisfaction for GDM & DDM at public Ethiopian HEIs. The following results sought to offer solutions to such questions from the GDM point of view.

Group Statistics					Independent Sample T-test			
Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Satisfaction								

for GDM	Male	216	25.7315	3.65260	.24853	-.265	393	.791
	Female	179	25.8324	3.90546	.29191			

Table 20: *Independent Sample T-Test of Respondents Satisfaction for GDM Based on Sex*

As shown in Table 20, there was no significant mean difference between the sample population ($p=0.791$). This means that, because $p > 0.05$, there was no statistically significant difference in satisfaction on GDM between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen. The finding that there was no statistically significant difference in student satisfaction with GDM between male and female respondents suggests that gender is not a significant factor influencing this aspect of the student experience at the Ethiopian public HEIs studied. This implies a level of equity in the GDM practices and support provided to students at these institutions, regardless of their gender identity. The results do not align with earlier research by Daniel et al. (2017), which indicated a noteworthy difference in students' satisfaction levels between genders.

4.10 Overall Perceptions for Disability Diversity Management

Research Question 1: *What are the respondents' overall perception regarding GDM & DDM at Ethiopian public HEIs?*

Using information from a quantitative survey, the study team evaluated how respondents overall perceive about DDM. To examine the replies, statistical metrics such as the mean and standard deviation were used. An overview of the pertinent data of the research subjects is given in Table 21. The goal of the study team's calculation of the mean, or average value of the data, was to get understanding of the replies' central tendency.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	There is respect and support for students with disability.	247	2.67	1.105
2	Non disabled students value making friends with students with disability.	247	4.21	.942
3	I feel uncomfortable around members of the campus whose disability is different from mine.	247	4.28	1.019
4	This campus is fully accessible for students with disabilities.	247	2.41	.966

5	Disability diversity equality means that disabled and non-disabled enjoy the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities.	247	4.18	.952
6	Protecting and assisting students with disability diversity is the only responsibility of officially assigned offices in the university and specialized organizations that work outside the university.	247	2.69	1.184
Overall Average		247	3.4	

Table 21: Overall Perceptions for Disability Diversity Management

Perceptions on Respect and Support

Based on the mean and standard deviation scores presented in Table 21, it can be inferred that the majority of respondents exhibited a low perception ($M=2.67$, $SD=1.105$) regarding the level of respect and support for SWDs and their diversity. This finding suggests a potential deficiency in assistance and consideration provided to SWDs within the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, indicating an unfavorable psychological environment as proposed by the DLE model. The significance of this finding lies in its ability to highlight a potential barrier to inclusive education and the equitable enrollment of SWDs in HEIs. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of considering the challenges faced by SWDs in the classroom when examining this issue. In order to ensure equal access to education for all students, specific impairments may require additional support and adjustments.

If Ethiopian public HEIs truly fail to value or support SWDs, there could be several negative consequences. Firstly, it may foster a hostile and prejudiced environment for SWDs, resulting in low self-esteem, feelings of marginalization, and decreased motivation among affected students. Moreover, without appropriate support, SWDs may struggle to fully concentrate on their academic pursuits, potentially leading to detrimental effects on their grades. To address this issue, it is crucial for Ethiopian public HEIs to prioritize the inclusion and support of SWDs. This can be achieved through various measures. Firstly, educational institutions should establish clear rules and regulations that promote inclusivity and provide assistance for SWDs. Furthermore, it is essential to effectively communicate these rules to teachers, staff, and students, enhancing awareness and fostering an inclusive culture. By taking these steps, Ethiopian public HEIs can work towards creating an environment that values and supports SWDs, ultimately overcoming the challenges posed by the lack of inclusion and assistance.

To substantiate this claim, it is worth noting that the Federal Ministry of Education of Ethiopia (MoE, 2004) has stated that students with special education needs are not adequately accommodated in HEIs' programs, leading to a significant portion of SWDs being unable to pursue further education due to a lack of support. Additionally, Peters (2007) has made a similar claim, highlighting the absence of efforts in developing nations to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities in education. This lack of progress in providing the necessary support for students with disabilities has been consistently observed. However, the constitution of Ethiopia under article 41 states that: *"The Government shall, according to its economic capacity, do it's best to rehabilitate and support persons with physical and mental disabilities, the elderly and children without parents or foster parents"*. The inclusion of the issue of disability diversity in the country's constitution is a big step forward, and it may have an impact on future action. Here are some examples, as described by interviewees:

Considering the number of SWDs diversity we have, works are positive. But little complain is move on from our SWDs. We cannot say we are fully respect givers. At instructors and department head levels, those with negative attitude may affect SWDs diversity and when these happened this university's disability center will inter in it and solve the problem. Mostly, things go smoothly but sometimes barriers occurred and complains comes.

(Interviewee No.12, June 2023)

The above quote from interviewee no 12 typifies answers demonstrating that although not as practical as discussed, the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs want to do the right thing and make their teaching and learning procedures as accessible, inclusive, and effective for all students as possible. The quotes from the interview # 12 below illustrated how support for SWDs diversity was viewed:

SWDs have support and to what extent they are satisfied? We do not know. But coming from finance regulation, the university by adding from its internal income, it gives financial support. For instance, finance ministry has said per month, 200(Two Hundred) Ethiopian birr pocket money for SWDs diversity to be paid but this university by adding additional 300 (Three Hundred) Ethiopian Birr, 500 (Five Hundred) Ethiopian Birr per month will be paid for each SWD diversity. Once in a year, one Hundred Ethiopian Birr will be given for each SWDs diversity for clothing purpose. Learning aids (like, slates, tiles brail papers etc.) to SWDs diversity are too much expensive but these will be given to SWDs diversity in this university for free. When various NGOs give us wheelchair, it will be given to these SWDs diversity immediately. They will also get photo copy service freely. Plus, they will get admin expert support to utilize the computer and internet well.

Therefore, in this university, we can confidently say that there is financial, administrative and learning support to SWDs diversity.

(Interviewee No.12, June 2023)

The responses from respondent #12 above do not show a lack of willingness on the part of either institution or individual, but if appropriate financial resources were available, more than providing a washing machine could be provided. Here again, contrary to the above both quantitative& qualitative result, one interviewee (Interviewee, #10) respondent gave her perspective with regard to this issue:

The problem in this university in general and in my department in particular is, there is no the needed materials for SWDs diversity. For instance, in other departments, there are materials for blind students but in my department, I am not getting. I am fully dependent on other students support for reading. If students are not recording for us, there is no any other means of getting the lesson. Mostly, we SWDs diversity are taking exam by only hearing and remembering what the instructor already said.

(Interviewee No.10, April 2023)

The data found from Interviewee, #10 above makes a convincing case for a rethinking of getting the needed materials for SWDs diversity at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs and how to best support students with disabilities. The finding from respondent 10 is consistent with findings from other situations in which most institutions throughout the world were essentially inaccessible to SWDs diversity (Campbell, et al., 2003). Similar to the other context finding mentioned above, Arefaine (2008) evidenced in his study that, while much has changed in recent years in the field of disability diversity in HEIs, the status of SWDs diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs looks to remain poor.

This illustrates that one of the criteria for a suitable environment for SWDs is the availability of respect and support for SWDs. However, the majority of participants perceived as there is lack of respect and support for SWDs in the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen, showing that DDM still has a long way to go in terms of respect and support for SWDs.

Perceptions on Valuing friendship at HEIs

As shown in Table 21, overall perceptions item 2, the respondents were questioned about whether they perceived those non-disabled students valued making friends with SWDs diversity

or not. The results show that the majority of them perceived those non-disabled students valued making friends with SWDs diversity highly, with a mean and standard deviation of ($M= 4.21$, $SD= 0.942$). The findings imply that students without disabilities prioritize establishing friends with SWDs at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs indicating the healthy behavioral dimensions of the DLE model on needing friendship. This result draws attention to the benefits of social integration and inclusion in these educational settings. Examining this outcome calls attention to the importance of friendships and social contacts for students' general well-being and educational experience. Friendships can offer companionship, support, and chances for personal development. Having supportive social networks can be especially helpful for SWDs in fostering a sense of inclusion and belonging. Here is a qualitative comment from one respondent that corresponded to the numeric value:

It may be observed from two angles. One for receiving what I can't get alone, I might prefer to be among non-SWDs diversity. Non-disabled students are uneasy about walking with us because if they see any scratches on the road against us, they will shrink. To avoid upsetting others, I prefer to be among like SWDs diversity.

(Interviewee No.6, June 2023)

The concerns shown above by interviewee No.6 are entirely valid. However, since what students without disabilities showing somehow natural feeling, it is hard not to make have such psychological feeling while they are trying to help SWDs in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. The respondent number 18 expressed the following ideas: *“Most of the students in this university like to be friend with their high school students. Not based on disabilities”*. (Interviewee No.18, June 2023).

Based on the findings, it can be inferred that the majority of participants in the study perceived a high level of importance placed on these friendships at the selected Ethiopian public HEIs, indicating that the inclusive environment promoted by the GDM model is effective in this aspect. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Alqurain and Gut (2012), who emphasized that the inclusion of SWDs provides them with opportunities to develop their social skills through partnerships with their non-disabled peers.

Perceptions on un/comfortability

The mean and standard deviation scores of the respondents for overall perceptions item 3 in Table 21 were ($M= 4.28$, $SD= 1.019$), indicating that the majority of respondents strongly

perceived that they felt uncomfortable around campus members who had a different disability diversity than they did. This finding indicates that there may be a problem preventing inclusion on campuses contributing to a negative psychological climate of DLE model. It also implies that building relationships and a sense of belonging in the community may be difficult for SWDs. It's critical to spread knowledge about disability diversity, foster empathy, and create a more inclusive atmosphere. Ethiopian public HEIs may establish a supportive environment where people feel valued and included regardless of their disability by promoting awareness and acceptance. One of the interviewees (#6) corroborated this as follows:

“As to me, since I do have good self-confidence, I like to be with both SWDs diversity and students without any type of disability diversity. Generally, I do not feel discomforted”.

(Interviewee No.6, June 2023)

These are a few more or less comparable opinions provided by respondent number 18:

“I value being friends with others. And, I can interact with all with no difference”.

(Interviewee No.18, June 2023)

The essential lesson gained from the above interviewee No.6 comment is that, while all students should ideally feel comfortable living and socializing on campus while completing coursework, extracurricular activities on campus. For interactions with the broader campus community, the self-image identified on the SWDs is most important. From the sample of respondents quantitative and interviewed data, it is clear to suggest that while DDM in Ethiopian public HEIs is the process of creating and maintaining a more positive diversified learning environment (McKay & Avery; 2015; Nishii, 2013; Hurtado et al., 2012) the majority of participants perceived that they feel uncomfortable around members of the campus whose disability is different than them indicating that DDM still has a long way to go towards improving such uncomfortable climate for SWDs.

Perceptions on HEIs' Accessibility for SWDs

The responders' average score and standard deviation for overall perceptions item 4: *“This campus is fully accessible for students with disabilities”* in Table 21, was (M= 2.41, SD= 0.966), This finding falls under the category of DLE model's structural diversity as it addresses the physical accessibility of the HEIs for SWDs. The results show that there is a lack of complete

accessibility for SWDs at the five Ethiopian public HEIs under investigation. This implies a major obstacle to maintaining inclusion and equitable opportunity in the system of HEIs'. Through limiting their capacity to fully participate in educational activities and access resources, inaccessibility can create hurdles that impede the academic progress and engagement of SWDs.

It also implies that in order to advance inclusion and uphold the rights of SWDs, this problem must be addressed. Making physical infrastructure accessible, supplying assistive devices, educating employees on disability inclusion, and putting inclusive policies and procedures into place are just a few of the extensive efforts needed. It also indicates that Ethiopian public HEIs can better support the personal development of SWDs by providing an accessible environment that allows them to fully engage in both social and academic life. Additionally, by fostering diversity, fostering empathy, and improving the educational experience for all students, inclusive education improves the whole institution. In order to provide equitable opportunities and remove obstacles for SWDs in Ethiopian public HEIs, legislators, administrators, and stakeholders must act decisively. Interview # 8 below indicated, in support with the quantitative finding:

It cannot be generally accessible for all types of SWDs diversity. For instance, for my case, since I have moving disability, the compound is under maintenance which is challenging not to move freely. Similarly, for blind students, and for those SWDs diversity using wheel chair, the road condition and the toilet style is challenging. So generally, the campus environment for the SWDs diversity is not conducive as such. I believe it will be improved soon.

(Interviewee No.8, May 2023)

The statement provided by interviewee No.8 emphasizes the significance of accessibility, along with the essential infrastructure, in shaping the learning outcomes of SWDs in HEIs. This aligns with the findings of Tirussew (2006), who acknowledged the challenges and potential of accessibility in Ethiopia, indicating that it is an evolving concept rather than an established reality. Similarly, Kassie (2013) noted that accessibility in HEIs is still in its early stages of development. Muzemil (2018), in his local study finding also noted that the overall physical environment of the campus was inaccessible for the needs of PWDs." In addition to examining the perceptions of participants, the survey also focused on identifying the most prevalent physical barriers faced by SWDs on HEIs. These barriers encompassed inaccessible classrooms, libraries, bookshops, auditoriums, dining halls, dormitories, circulation spaces, corridors, and restrooms. The findings of the doctoral dissertation complement and expand upon existing research conducted by Braun &

Naami (2019), Muzemil (2018), Sprong et al. (2013), and Tsagris & Muirhead (2012). These previous studies have highlighted the detrimental impact of inaccessible university buildings on the mobility and overall well-being of SWDs.

Perceptions on Disability Diversity Equality

According to Table 21, overall perceptions item 5, the respondents' mean and standard deviation score was (M= 4.18, SD= 0.952), indicating that respondents strongly perceived that disability diversity equality meant that SWDs diversity and non-disabled students have the same rights, obligations, and opportunities. This finding falls under the category of DLE model's Behavioral elements as it discusses the behavior and actions required to achieve disability diversity equality. The results of this finding show that participants from the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs had favorable opinions on the rights, obligations, and opportunities that are equal SWDs and those without them. This raises the possibility of a positive change in views toward equality and diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs. It is a sign of acknowledging the potential and intrinsic worth of SWDs to view disabled and non-disabled students as having equal rights and opportunities. Similarly, interview # 8, #10 responded as follows:

“Yes, on same right, there is a gender office in this university and through this office SWDs diversity are getting good things like getting first chance when there is any support including getting money”.

(Interviewee No.8, May 2023)

“I am seeing equally; no extra effort is expected from me as SWD diversity to be performed. And I don't make isolated myself”.

(Interviewee No.10, April 2023)

The aforementioned comment from respondent number 10 offered nuanced evidence by demonstrating how assistance from concerned individuals at HEIs may increase SWDs learning by empowering them to contribute and enhancing their feeling of self-efficacy. It represents a readiness to advance inclusion and equitable treatment as well as a rejection of discriminatory actions. It also implies that it's crucial to keep in mind, though, that perceptions do not necessarily match the realities that SWDs face on the ground. The degree to which respondents' good perceptions are translated into specific actions and policies that advance accessibility, support services, and inclusive practices at Ethiopian public HEIs must be evaluated, even when the respondents may have positive perceptions.

Perceptions on the Responsibilities of Offices and Specialized Organizations

The majority of respondents had a high perception that protecting and assisting SWDs is not the only responsibility of officially assigned offices in the university and specialized organizations that work outside the university, according to the mean and standard deviation scores for overall perceptions item 6 in Table 21 ($M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.184$). It is generally perceived that the need to safeguard and support SWDs goes beyond the formally designated offices inside the HEIs, according to respondents from five public HEIs in Ethiopia. This finding is also falls under the category of DLE model's Behavioral elements as it addresses certain behavioral actions and support structures that are needed to fulfill responsibilities by various offices and specialized organizations. The key interview informants reflected their views as officially assigned offices in the university only will not be the sole responsible as follows:

This is clear. For instance, one NGO officer will not come in daily bases to help SWDs diversity. So, community's continual support is quite important. As to the blind students, I do not think we are highly dependent. Once we know the road well, we can accustom it. Of course, on some exceptional cases, organizations may be highly needed for extra support.

(Interviewee No.10, April 2023)

This finding also shows that the burden also extends to specialized groups outside of the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. Stated differently, the respondents perceived that other groups should be involved in addition to HEIs' administrations when it comes to aiding SWDs. This point of view emphasizes the understanding of the necessity of a cooperative strategy to meet the requirements of SWDs in HEIs.

Similar to this result, UNESCO'S the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) emphasized that achieving the aim of successful education of SWDs diversity is not only the responsibility of Ministries of Education and educational institutions. It necessitates the cooperation of families, the mobilization of community and volunteer groups, and the backing of the general public.

In contrast to the above findings, Tefera et al., (2015) said that the topic of SWDs diversity education is more of an NGO participation, with minimal community support. According to their findings, NGOs play a vital role in service provision, both in terms of technical assistance and service delivery. They are also involved in the coordination of services for SWDs diversity.

Overall, respondents at Ethiopian public HEIs expressed a generally positive perception towards the institutions' DDM efforts. The quantitative findings showed a grand mean score of 3.4 for DDM, indicating a relatively favorable view among participants. The qualitative data further revealed that respondents perceived the HEIs as making efforts to accommodate and include SWDs. However, they felt there were limitations in ensuring comprehensive respect, support and accessibility for this student population (mean = 2.67 for support for students with disabilities). The study suggests that these public HEIs should work to strengthen their institutional frameworks and practices around DDM in order to make their campuses fully accessible and inclusive for students with diverse abilities. While the general perceptions were positive, the findings point to the need for continued improvement and enhancement of the HEIs' disability diversity management approaches.

4.11 Curricular Perceptions for Disability Diversity Management

Sub Research Question 1.1: How do respondents perceive the use of curricular activities in relation to GDM & DDM?

Based on the information acquired from the replies to the quantitative survey, the study group's reaction to curricular perceptions for DDM was assessed in terms of mean and standard deviation value. Table 22 provides a summary of the information that is pertinent to the research subjects.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	Most part of the course materials include a variety of students with disability interests.	247	2.68	1.024
2	There is a positive campus climate in which students with disability are comfortable on asking and answering diversified questions.	247	4.06	.937
3	Students with disability receive adequate diversity training to engage with non-disabled students.	247	2.39	1.106
4	The university library has a wide variety of reading materials on disability diversity issues.	247	2.35	1.112
5	In classes, the same amount of attention will be paid to all students regardless of their disability.	247	2.68	1.148
6	In class, instructors make students aware of the harm of stereotyping other students on the basis of their disability.	247	2.40	.973
7	In class, instructors encourage students with disability to participate in discussions and ask questions.	247	2.25	.902

8	Students get more personal attention from instructors who are similar to them in disability.	247	3.94	1.103
Overall Average		247	2.84	

Table 22: *Curricular Perceptions for Disability Diversity Management*

Perception on Inclusive HEIs' Curriculum

Based on the mean and standard deviation scores presented in Table 22 for curricular perceptions item 1 (M=2.68, SD=1.024), it is evident that the majority of respondents held a low perception regarding the curricular aspects of their HEIs. Specifically, they perceived that the course materials offered at these institutions lacked sufficient diversity to cater to the interests and preferences of SWDs. This finding suggests a lack of inclusion and inadequate consideration for the unique needs and preferences of SWDs in the content of these courses. It indicates that the course materials in these HEIs may not be adequately designed to incorporate the interests of SWDs, reflecting limited efforts to achieve the desired structural diversity outlined in the DLE model. The participants' perception indicates that there is a lack of representation and thoughtfulness towards the specific challenges and preferences faced by SWDs in the course materials. This perception highlights the importance of incorporating multiple perspectives and addressing the requirements of SWDs when developing course materials. It suggests that greater emphasis should be placed on creating inclusive and accessible educational content that reflects the diverse needs and interests of SWDs. HEIs are expected to create an inclusive and dynamic learning environment that addresses the needs of all students, regardless of disability. This highlights the pressing requirement for the development of engaging, flexible, learner-centered, and individualized educational curricula to improve the education of SWDs (Tirussew, 2023). This underscores the importance of collaboration between the administration and other key stakeholders in accessing curricula at HEIs (Phasha & Mosia, 2017). It emphasizes that the creation of accessible curricula for SWDs in HEIs necessitates a collective effort to ensure that students' interests are recognized and that avenues for achievement are established. During the qualitative phase, two respondents offered the following comments, which were consistent with the quantitative finding:

There is no intentionally discouraging act on SWDs diversity in the teaching-learning process and in the curricula as well. Because HEIs have higher academic standards, such obvious discouraging behaviors are rarely found. And, especially, for SWDs diversity, special treatment will not be noticed in the class as regular

students, things are anticipated to go. For example, when I was a first-year student, there was a physical fitness course, and I declared that I am SWD diversity. However, I received no one-of-a-kind assistance other than the conversion of my practical project to a written exam. In the event of attendance, I was supposed to be on the sports field just to observe them. If I fail to attend the game, I may receive a zero mark for attendance, which may have an impact on my Grade Point Average (GPA).

(Interviewee No.8, May 2023)

The quotes below from the interview number 4 and number 13 illustrated how the course materials failed to contain a range of SWDs diversity interests and conditions:

Well, by emphasizing the students' interest and condition, the course materials are not developed. I don't think it appeals to SWDs diversity in particular. For example, SWDs assigned to the geography department are unable to make calculations, read maps, perform cartography, and practically do Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and statistical work. Just they are assigned. So, I can say that the curriculum not prepared to their standard and due to this I do not think the course materials is well organized by considering the situations of SWDs diversity.

(Interviewee No.4, April 2023)

“No, I do not think it attract their interest. Because in general the course was prepared by focusing the students without disability”.

(Interviewee No.13, April 2023)

According to the aforementioned quote from respondent number 4, students are more likely to feel welcome on HEIs when faculty demonstrate inclusive teaching practices and include disability in the curriculum; however, more research on these topics is required; otherwise, the interest of SWDs will not be cached. The finding from interview # 13 is also contrary to the notion that *“although the curriculum may be dictated by the school system, teachers teach it. Where the curriculum falls short in addressing the needs of all students, teachers must provide a bridge . . .”* (Richards et al., 2007, p. 68). Similarly, consistent with the above finding, a 2011 UN assessment found that there was a failure to serve unique educational interests of excluded populations, including SWDs diversity. Similarly, UNESCO's the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) calls on states to tailor curricula to the interests of SWDs diversity rather than vice versa. As a result, educational institutions should provide SWDs diversity with curricular options. Concerning the course materials cover a wide spectrum of SWDs diversity interests, similar to this researches' finding, UNESCO (2007) also mentions the

following notable accomplishments for SWDs: The new continuous curricular framework development takes learners' diversity into account. Textbooks are transcribed in braille to ensure that blind students have equal access to education. Sign language is used as a medium of instruction to guarantee that deaf students have access to learning.

Perception on Inclusive Classroom Dialogue

The respondents were asked about their perceptions on whether or not there is a welcoming campus environment where SWDs diversity feel comfortable posing a variety of inquiries and receiving thoughtful responses, as shown in Table 22, for curricular perception item 2. The results, with a mean and standard deviation of ($M= 4.06$, $SD=.937$). It shows as there is an inclusive learning environment promoted by creating HEIs' culture where SWDs feel comfortable asking and answering a range of questions which is the presence of supportive psychological & Behavioral climate from DLE model's perspective. This also implies that these academic institutions have established an all-encompassing educational setting that stimulates the active involvement and interaction (Behavioral component of DLE model) of SWDs. Regardless of their limitations, the respondents perceived that there is a friendly environment that supports students' self-expression.

This relatively conducive learning environment shows a dedication to advancing equitable opportunities and guaranteeing that every student, including those with disabilities, has a voice in the classroom. A setting like this fosters a feeling of inclusion and belonging in addition to assisting SWDs in their academic development. This is in line with what Salmi & Bassett (2014) say about access being denied when there isn't a welcoming HEI's environment for SWDs to thrive in the programs they've selected. However, contrary to the quantitative finding, interviewee number 13 gave his perspective with regard to this issue:

I do not think there is a freedom. Most of the time, students are complaining particularly SWDs. The SWDs were being rejected when they ask department choice. And, yes gradually accepting the students request were coming. But at first there was no. And I can say that there was no enough freedom.

(Interviewee No.13, April 2023)

This implies that a key requirement for creating a favorable environment for DDM is to establish a healthy HEI's climate where SWDs feel at ease to ask diverse questions and receive

comprehensive answers. While one participant expressed reservations about the quantitative results, the majority of participants observed a welcoming HEI's atmosphere at the five selected Ethiopian public HEIs. This environment fosters confidence among SWDs from different backgrounds to openly share a range of issues and receive pertinent and helpful responses. These findings suggest that DDM is effectively functioning in promoting an inclusive and supportive environment in this regard.

Perception of the Preparedness for Diversity Training

The majority of respondents firmly agreed that SWDs diversity failed to receive appropriate diversity training to interact with non-disabled students, according to the mean and standard deviation scores for the respondents for curricular perception item 3 in Table 22: (M= 2.39, SD= 1.106). This suggests that SWDs are not adequately prepared or supported to navigate social situations and build inclusive connections in the context of HEIs representing a behavioral component from DLE model's focused on not promoting inclusivity and effective interactions. The responders are inflexible that tackling this problem is essential to encouraging inclusion, empathy, and understanding among all students. Ethiopian public HEIs may create a respectful and cooperative atmosphere by giving SWDs the skills and information they need to interact with their peers who are not impaired through proper diversity training. Additionally, by increasing awareness among students who are not impaired, such training may foster an environment of acceptance and support. This finding is consistent with previous research (Wilson et al., 2000) that reported administrators and staff members feeling inadequately supported in terms of training, particularly regarding the university's ability to provide the necessary resources, information, and training for effective interactions with SWDs. By the same token interviewee number 13 added this:

“Now, to be honest, I did not see such training. Only one time, I have seen a kind of training concerning on how to handle the remedial students. Rather on DDM issue, there was no training or conference”.

(Interviewee No.13, April 2023)

The empirical material from the interviewee number 23 is more revealing:

There is no as such a training on it. Just only a personal initiation is found here. As an administrative task, there is no even trial on the training issue. If we give them small support, SWDs can perform well.

(Interviewee No.23, June 2023)

Furthermore, this suggests that HEIs need to create a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment for all students by addressing this deficiency in training. The findings of this study align with previous research conducted in various countries, indicating that providing training at the HEIs level is crucial. This is because institutional actions have a significant impact on how staff, faculty, and students perceive and embrace the concept of disability diversity (Harbour & Greenberg, 2017). Similarly, Malle et al. (2015) discovered that there was a lack of clear correlation between the policies addressing SWD diversity and training requirements and their actual implementation in practice.

Perception on Disability-Inclusive Library Materials

According to the respondents' average score and standard deviation for curricular perception question 4 in Table 22, which were ($M = 2.35$, $SD = 1.112$), their university library failed to provide a large selection of reading materials on disability diversity concerns. This implies that there aren't many resources available in libraries that especially cater to the interests and requirements of SWDs reflecting a too less commitment to addressing the extension of DLE model's historical exclusion by not promoting inclusivity on library materials. The participants strongly concur that this is a deficiency, given that an extensive library of reading materials is essential for fostering inclusion, awareness, and understanding. HEIs' libraries may help SWDs improve academically and personally by offering a wider range of reading materials on disability diversity issues. They can also inform other students about the value of inclusive practices. One interviewee participant (Interviewee, #10) voiced the identical of the reported quantitative result:

In the library, the materials are for SWDs diversity learning in the law department. For other departments, there is no. And, as I stayed here for four solid years, I never seen posters, fliers etc. in the library for DDM.

(Interviewee No.10, April 2023)

The empirical material from the interview number 18 is more revealing: *"There are no such reading materials in this university's library."* (Interviewee No.18, June 2023)

During the researcher's observation in the library and in the disability center, consistent with the interview and survey data result, SWDs are not getting sufficient reading materials as such. The aforementioned input underscores the necessity for libraries to place a high priority on the procurement and accessibility of materials that address the varied requirements and preferences

of every student, including those with disabilities.

Perception on Equitable Care for All

In table 22, the mean and standard deviation scores of the respondents were ($M= 2.68$, $SD= 1.148$) for curricular perception item 5: *“in classes, the same amount of attention will be paid to all students regardless of their disability”*. This shows that there may be a perception of unequal treatment between SWDs and their counterparts without impairments. The respondents wholeheartedly concur that there is unequal treatment, which suggests that efforts to create an inclusive learning environment ought to be strengthened indicating too less efforts to promote structural diversity of DLE model. This finding emphasizes how critical it is to solve this problem and make sure that every student in the classroom, regardless of disability, receives equal attention and assistance. Ethiopian public HEIs may aim to create an atmosphere that recognizes and supports the learning needs of all students, encouraging inclusion and equitable opportunity for academic achievement, by acknowledging and resolving this difference. Reflecting a similar view, interviewee No. 4; and number 13 said respectively:

Me, I try to give the same amount of attention. But there are factors forcing me to ignore SWDs diversity. For instance, if I have a partially hearing student, and if I have a student who can see but not hearing, I cannot provide same amount of attention without having translator. In this campus there are only one or two translators, you can guess for how many departments they will be assigned. The other one, the translators may not know our technical language. I have a suspect on the translation quality. So, it will be false if we say we are treating them equally although there is kindness of human nature, the infrastructure will not allow us.

(April 2023; Interviewee No. 4)

“I really do not hear as such exaggerated complain on not getting same amount of attention. to be honest.”

(April 2023; Interviewee No. 13)

The above interview and survey data result implies that although DDM in HEIs is the process of building and sustaining a more favorable diversified learning environment by providing the same amount of attention to all students regardless of their disability, it is quite likely that respondents firmly perceived that in Ethiopian public HEIs regardless of their disability diversity, were not receiving the same amount of attention in class, indicating that on DDM, there is still a long way to go towards providing the same amount of attention to all students regardless of their

disability.

Perception on Challenging Stereotypes About Disability

According to the mean and standard deviation scores for curricular perception item 6 in Table 22 ($M = 2.40$, $SD = .973$), the majority of respondents strongly agreed that instructors failed to educate students about the dangers of stigmatizing other students because of their disability's diversity contributing too less to a positive psychological climate from DLE's model. This suggests that students are not aware of or comprehend the detrimental effects of stigmatization. The responses are adamant that educators have a duty to address this matter and advance an environment of respect and acceptance. HEIs unintentionally support prejudiced attitudes and actions toward SWDs by neglecting to teach students about the risks of stigmatization. In the qualitative area, one participant provided the following response, which is equal to the numerical value:

No, they do not. Me, still I never heard them while doing so. Let alone telling to students on the issue of stereotyping, I remember my health and physical education instructor said as "...since you are a student, you have to do the activity by any means as a regular student!" You see, the instructor was not thinking for SWDs diversity.

(April 2023; Interviewee No. 10)

In the qualitative component, one interviewee participant (Interviewee, #6) expressed a bit unique idea:

I do not think that this university students need such information from their instructors. As to me, the university community's maturity level is higher and they will consider SWDs diversity as we can do all by ourselves. [. . .] I think this university/s community has an exaggerated perception on SWDs diversity ie. As we do not need any scaffolding. Instructors in this university, I do not hear them while addressing the danger of stereotyping. I remember, in anthropology class, they just told us and passed it on related to the topic of marginalized society.

(June 2023; Interviewee No. 6)

More illuminating empirical data comes from interview number 18:

"Still now, what I have seen was the instructors focus on the course content or the subject matter only. I never seen them while reflecting on DDM".

(June 2023; Interviewee No. 18)

These finding highlights how important it is for instructors to actively involve themselves in teaching students about the value of accepting diversity, cultivating empathy, and dispelling preconceptions. By doing this, educational institutions may help foster a more welcoming and encouraging learning atmosphere where all students, with or without disabilities, are valued for their individual experiences and skills.

Perception on Promoting Disability -Inclusive Participation

As shown in Table 22, curricular perception item 7, the respondents were questioned about their perceptions of whether or not their instructors encouraged SWDs diversity to participate in class discussions and ask questions with a mean and standard deviation of ($M= 2.25$, $SD= .902$) in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. This implies that there aren't enough inclusive teaching strategies that support SWDs' equal participation and opportunity fostering non- inclusive and less supportive psychological climate from DLE 's model's point of view. It also shows that the respondents are adamant that educators have a responsibility to help foster an inclusive learning environment in which all students, regardless of their disability, feel free to participate and express themselves. Instructors run the risk of inadvertently excluding SWDs from important learning opportunities and impeding their academic progress if they do not aggressively encourage their involvement. Two respondents made the following remarks during the qualitative phase, which were not as such congruent with the quantitative result:

To some extent, yes. That is, despite the fact that it is different from our high school experience, here, one chapter may be completed in one session, which is challenging for SWDs diversity. Personal assistance was thus necessary to fully grasp it.

Interviewee No. 6 (June 2023)

The above finding emphasizes how crucial it is to create a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere where all students—disabled or not—are encouraged to voice their opinions, pose questions, and actively engage in class discussions. The selected five Ethiopian public HEIs may make learning more inclusive and rewarding for all students by doing this.

Perception on Disability-Aligned Instructors' Support

According to the mean and standard deviation scores of ($M= 3.94$, $SD= 1.103$) for curricular perception item 8 in Table 22, the majority of respondents strongly agreed that students

receive more individualized attention from instructors who share their disability diversity. This implies that SWDs similar to those of their instructors are seen to get preferential attention and care indicating a need for further attention to achieve structural diversity of DLE model. The respondents firmly feel that students who do not have the same diversity of disabilities may not have the same learning chances or experiences due to this attention gap. This finding emphasizes that instructors should provide every student the same amount of attention and assistance, regardless of whether or not they have a disability. By tackling this problem, HEIs can guarantee an equitable and inclusive classroom where all students have access to the tools and guidance, they need to be successful in their studies.

Regardless of the diversity of their disabilities, fostering equal attention for all students leads to a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for everyone. This is consistent with prior research that SWDs may particularly benefit from having members of their faculty who are disable in or expert disability studies or who can mentor them and help them learn about disabilities beyond their personal experiences (Damiani & Harbour, 2016; Evans et al., 2017; Stentiford, & Koutsouris, 2021). More illuminating but different empirical data comes from interview number 18: *“I am thinking as being seen equally. Because, my disability is not as such complicated”*. Interviewee No. 18 (June, 2023). This finding highlights that instructors who possess a similar disability diversity as their students tend to provide greater individualized attention to them. It also underscores the global challenge that arises from the lack of inclusive pedagogy, where SWDs receive more personalized attention from instructors who share their disability diversity.

Overall, the respondents' perceptions of the use of curricular activities in relation to DDM were low, with a mean score of 2.8. This suggests that respondents believe the current curriculum in Ethiopian public HEIs lacks content and approaches that adequately address issues of disability diversity. The low mean score indicates that respondents do not feel the curriculum effectively incorporates activities and materials that cater to the needs and experiences of students with disabilities. This points to a need to revise the curriculum to incorporate more inclusive and diversity-focused content and pedagogy when it comes to addressing disability-related topics and considerations.

4.12 Extra-curricular Perceptions for Disability Diversity Management

Sub Research Question 1.2: *What do respondents perceive about the use of*

extracurricular activities aimed at promoting gender and disability diversity?

Based on the information acquired from the replies to the quantitative survey, the study group's perceptions to extracurricular perceptions for DDM was assessed in terms of mean and standard deviation value. Table 23 provides a summary of the information that is pertinent to the study's participants.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	Life skills training with topics related to disability diversity is offered on this campus.	247	3.91	.996
2	Invited speakers from several disability organizations delivered talks on disability diversity awareness on this campus.	247	2.83	1.395
3	There are associations and clubs that appeal to disability issues.	247	3.94	1.099
4	Disability-related festivals and festivities are organized by the campus's disability club.	247	2.41	.786
5	This university's extra-curricular uses leaflets, posters, university radio programs, etc for disseminating perceptions about disability diversity.	247	2.97	1.226
Overall Average		247	3.21	

Table 23: *Extra-curricular Perceptions for Disability Diversity Management*

Perception on Disability-Inclusive Life Skills Training

The majority of respondents strongly perceived that life skills training with issues linked to disability diversity is given on their campus, as evidenced by the mean and standard deviation scores for extracurricular perceptions item 1 in Table 23 (M= 3.91, SD= 0.996). This suggests that these educational institutions acknowledge the need of equipping SWDs with the essential capacities to manage many facets of life, while simultaneously attending to disability-related issues fighting the historical legacy of exclusion from the DLE model's point of view. Furthermore, it demonstrates the importance of offering life skills training in this context to promote inclusion, foster empathy, and empower SWDs to take charge of their lives. By providing this type of instruction, Ethiopian public HEIs can equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to overcome challenges, advocate for themselves, and actively participate in society. This finding also underscores the commitment to providing comprehensive support and development for SWDs, recognizing their unique needs and experiences. The provision of life skills training related to disability diversity reflects a proactive approach aimed at enhancing the overall well-being and academic success of SWDs. This reflects that as Wilson-Strydom (2011) points out, SWDs' talents

are boosted when they have greater educational options in the form of various trainings. This study's findings are consistent with previous research conducted in comparable settings, where Passman (2012) found that informal training regarding disabilities prompted higher-level community college administrators to make better attempts to serve the needs of SWDs. Yet, given there is limited research on this subject, caution must be taken when evaluating attitudes and understanding regarding disabilities. It was also noted that training should not be implemented randomly (Lombardi & Lalor, 2017). In training, for instance, simulations are frequently used, although they typically fail to impart positive views regarding impairment (Burgstahler & Doe, 2004). However, one participant gave the following opposite response in the qualitative section:

Training, specifically to GDM & DDM was not given. But since there is Higher Diploma Program (HDP) for instructors in this university, training will be given. The training is mandatory and credit will be given for those instructors who took that training. [. . .] So, this university is encouraging us to be trained. However, I have never seen special training for GDM or DDM.

(Interviewee No. 4; April 2023)

This finding thus confirms the results of related studies conducted in other settings, which showed that faculty and staff members' attitudes toward SWDs, inclusive pedagogy, and disability diversity awareness can be greatly influenced by training, education, and professional development programs (Hong, 2015; Vogel et al., 2008).

Perception on Diverse Disability Awareness Speeches

If the respondents perceived that invited speakers from various disability diversity supporting organization gave speeches on disability diversity awareness on their campus, the question was posed to them in Table 23 extracurricular perceptions item 2. Considering the data's mean and standard deviation ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.395$), the majority of them said there wasn't. This implies that there may not be as much of an effort as might be made to invite outside speakers who can offer insightful commentary and increase awareness of disability diversity which shows to the extension of historical legacy of exclusion of DLE model. The responders are adamant that having these discussions would help to advance inclusion, understanding, and a more accepting atmosphere for SWDs. This finding emphasizes how important it is for HEIs and to become involved with disability organizations and invite experts and firsthand accounts from these groups to speak at their campuses. By doing this, these organizations may raise awareness of disabilities

and provide forums for discussion and education on the diversity of disabilities. By putting such efforts into practice, universities may foster a more inclusive environment that recognizes and respects the various needs and viewpoints of its SWDs. This is a reflection of a lack of collaboration with community members, local educational institutions, partners, and other pertinent governmental and non-governmental players (Tirussew, 2023). In the qualitative component, similar to the stated quantitative result, one interviewee participants (Interviewee, #10,) stated that:

“Let alone to getting various speeches from gusts, I never heard even whether there are clubs or not in this university. No one has noted me and invited us to clubs”.

(Interviewee No. 10; April 2023)

In this respect, UNESCO's Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) emphasized that various community partners, including organizations of PWDs diversity and other non-governmental organizations, should be empowered to take responsibility for the program, which is not similar to this finding. Government entities at both the national and local levels should give financial and other assistance as needed.

Perceptions On Associations and Clubs That Appeal to Disability Issues

According to the mean and standard deviation results for the respondents for extracurricular perceptions item 3 in Table 23, the majority of respondents firmly thought that there are groups and clubs that cater to DDM issues:(M= 3.94, SD= 1.099). This suggests that an emphasis on inclusion and the advancement of equitable opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities, is suggested by the existence of these clubs. It is essential to acknowledge disability concerns in order to provide a platform for the active involvement and engagement of SWDs in the higher education community, as well as to promote awareness, understanding, and support for them. It emphasizes how critical it is to provide a welcoming atmosphere that celebrates diversity and works to offer all students, regardless of ability level, the tools and assistance they need to successfully participate in class. This reflects the arrangement of co-curricular and extracurricular activities for students is crucial in enhancing the educational experience of SWDs (Tirussew, 2023). Here is an example from the interview who had similar concern, claiming that:

There is a Disability Care Club for both SWDs & non-SWDs diversity to assist SWDs diversity. Voluntary exam readers and tutorial volunteers who have obtained approval from the student center dean and the disability support head will assist

SWDs in reading examinations through this club. SWDs diversity will use such clubs to seek for their rights and to file complaints. [. . .] as a result, we will allow students to join these clubs as soon as they enroll at the institution. And numerous queries will be submitted to the various deans of the institution by these clubs under the student union.

(Interviewee No. 12; June 2023)

Another interviewee confirmed this by saying:

[. . .] right after my arrival at this university, I have heard as there are clubs for SWDs diversity, but I am not Shure whether blind students are participating or not. Actually, I can tell you that blind students are not engaged on this clubs.

(Interviewee No. 10; April 2023)

All in all, the above interview and survey data result implies that since DDM in HEIs is the process of building and sustaining a more favorable diversified learning environment where there are associations and clubs that appeal to disability diversity issues, it is quite likely that respondents highly perceived in Ethiopian public HEIs, there are associations and clubs that appeal to disability diversity issues, indicating that on DDM implementations associations and clubs are applicable.

Perception on Disability-Inclusive Festivals

Table 23 presents data on extracurricular perceptions, specifically item 4. The average response and standard deviation for this item were recorded as ($M=2.41$, $SD=0.786$). These statistics provide insights into disability-related festivals and festivities organized by the campus's disability diversity club. The average response of 2.41 suggests that, on average, respondents perceive a relatively low level of organization or involvement by the disability diversity club in arranging disability-related festivals and festivities. This indicates that the club's role in promoting such events may be limited or ineffective. Overall, based on the average response and standard deviation, it can be concluded that disability-related festivals and festivities are not well organized by the campus's disability diversity club, as indicated by the low average and limited variability in responses.

Additionally, this indicates that there is a need to integrate more information about disability diversity awareness into extracurricular activities, programs, handbooks, and new student orientations. By doing so, there is a higher likelihood that SWDs will recognize, accept, and embrace their peers with impairments. Moreover, the campus's disability diversity club can

play a role in organizing disability-related festivals and festivities, as suggested by DelRey (2014) and Hart et al. (2010). These events can serve as platforms to promote understanding and appreciation of disability diversity among first-year students. Including a statement about SWDs diversity's festivals and festivities can further emphasize the importance of inclusivity (Aquino, 2016).

Perception on Disability Diversity Awareness Campaigns

The respondents strongly agreed that their university's extra-curricular uses leaflets, posters, university radio programs, etc. for disseminating perceptions about disability diversity, as shown by their mean and standard deviation scores for extracurricular perceptions item 5 in Table 23 ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.226$). This result suggests that there may not be enough support or knowledge in these institutions to encourage disability inclusion. This aligns with the unwanted behavioral component of the DLE model, by not encouraging engagement and promoting understanding of disability diversity. It also emphasizes the necessity of using different strategies to help staff and students become more cognizant of and accepting of disability diversity. Using internet platforms, holding seminars, bringing in special guests, or collaborating with groups that serve SWDs are a few ways to promote important dialogues and instruction. Furthermore, this implies that these institutions have the potential to play a significant role in building a more equitable society for individuals with disabilities through the promotion of an inclusive environment. They can accomplish this by employing diverse advertising tools and embracing alternative techniques to enhance awareness about disability issues. This investigation is consistent with similar studies conducted in various countries, underscoring the significance of comprehensive and well-advertised co-curricular programming that actively involves stakeholders. By implementing such initiatives, educational institutions can foster partnerships and cultivate a culture of inclusion and belonging (Robinson et al., 2023). Interviewee # 8 corroborated this as follows: *"No, I did not see such fliers, posters and the like towards DDM". (Interviewee No. 8; May 2023).*

In this respect, UNESCO's Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) emphasized that mass media can play a powerful role in promoting positive perception toward SWDs diversity integration, overcoming prejudice and misinformation, and instilling greater optimism and imagination about SWDs' diversity capabilities. The media can also influence perception regarding hiring SWDs diversity. This means that although the media

should be utilized to enlighten the public about innovative methods in education, notably in the provision of special needs education in educational institutions, through popularizing examples of excellent practice and successful experiences, in the Ethiopian public HEIs case it is not as such fruitfully done.

Overall, the study found that respondents generally held somewhat positive perceptions (with a grand mean of 3.21) towards the use of extracurricular activities for promoting disability diversity at Ethiopian public HEIs. However, the data also revealed some areas for improvement. Respondents noted that disability-related festivals and festivities organized by campus disability clubs were relatively limited (M=2.41). Additionally, invited talks from disability organizations aimed at raising awareness about disability diversity were also described as fairly limited (M=2.83). While the HEIs had made efforts to include SWDs in extracurricular programming, the survey results suggest there is still room for enhancing the frequency and visibility of disability-focused events and initiatives on these HEIs.

4.12.1 Relationships Between DDM Related Coursework and Perceptions of Extracurricular Activities

Sub Research Question 1.3: *To what extent do respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM related coursework relate to their perceptions of extracurricular activities?*

As stated above, one of the current study's sub-basic research questions was to test whether or not respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM-related coursework relate to their perceptions of extracurricular activities at public Ethiopian HEIs. The following results sought to offer solutions to such questions from the DDM point of view.

The relationship between perceptions DDM related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities	<i>N</i>	<i>Pearson Correlations</i>	<i>Sig.(2-tailed)</i>
	247	.388	.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 24: *The Correlations Between perceptions DDM related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities at The Selected Five Ethiopian Public HEIs*

As shown in Table 24 above, since values between 0 and 0.3 (0 and -0.3) indicate a weak positive (negative) linear relationship through a shaky linear rule, there is a weak and positive relationship ($p=0.388$) between perceptions of DDM related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs.

Similarly, as shown in the preceding table, the significant value between perceptions of DDM-related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities at the selected five Ethiopian Public HEIs is likewise highly significant, with a p value of 0.000. The statistical significance of the relationships examined indicates that students perceive the curricular and extracurricular components of the DDM program at the HEIs as interconnected, even though the strength of the association between these elements is relatively modest.

4.12.2 T -Statistics for Male and Female Respondents on Overall Perception for DDM

Sub Research Question 1.4: *Is there statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on overall perception for GDM & DDM?*

As stated above, one of the current study's sub basic research questions was to determine whether or not there is statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on overall perception for GDM & DDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. The following results sought to answer such questions from the DDM point of view.

Group Statistics					Independent Sample T-test			
	Sex	N	Mean	Std.	Std. Error	t	df	Sig.
T-test for				Deviation	Mean			(2-tailed)
DDM								
Overall	Male	165	20.7818	3.41280	.26569	2.308	245	.022
Perception	Female	82	19.7317	3.27372	.36152			

Table 25: *Independent Sample T-Test of Respondents Perception for DDM Based on Sex*

Table 25 shows that there was a significant mean difference between the sample population ($p=0.022$). This shows that there was a significant difference in perceptions of disability diversity

management between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen, because p was less than 0.05. Consistent with this finding, studies reveal that different genders have different perceptions on how students feel about diversity concerns on HEIs. (Mayhew et al, 2005; Hurtado et al., 2002; Whitt et al, 2001).

4.13 Disability Diversity Management Related Policy Practice

Research Question 2: *How are policies for GDM & DDM practiced at Ethiopian public HEIs?*

The research group's answer to diversity related policy practice for DDM was evaluated in terms of mean and standard deviation values using data from the quantitative survey responses. The information that is relevant to the research subjects is listed in Table 26.

N	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	This campus's mission statement specifically refers to the value of having disability diversity.	247	3.96	1.120
2	By the campus's legislation, related policies and internal code of conduct, it is clearly written that discrimination against disability is not allowed.	247	4.21	.942
3	This university has clear disciplinary procedures for anyone to report prejudice or discriminatory experiences on disability issues.	247	2.26	.896
4	In this university, diversity related policies, legislations and guidelines are effectively communicated to students with disability diversity.	247	2.44	.872
5	This university has specific policies, programs or initiatives that contribute to managing disability diversity.	247	4.18	.952
6	The implementation of policies, rules and regulations that protect disability diversity is weak in this university.	247	4.20	.979
7	This campus is using an affirmative action policy to fairly manage disability diversity.	247	2.60	.949
Overall Average		247	3.4	

Table 26: *Disability Diversity Management Related Policy Practice*

Policy Practice 1: Inclusive Disability Diversity Mission

According to the mean and standard deviation scores for DDM related policy practice item 1 in Table 26 ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.120$), the majority of respondents agreed that their campus's mission statement particularly mentions the benefit of having disability diversity. The results demonstrate that including disability diversity into the mission statements of five public HEIs in Ethiopia is a

step in the right direction toward creating a welcoming and fair learning environment highlighting the historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion of DLE model by indicating that the HEI's mission statement. These HEIs also understand the significance of empowering and accommodating SWDs by formally recognizing the value of disability diversity. Equality of opportunity for all students, irrespective of their physical or cognitive ability, is the goal of these Ethiopian public HEIs, which embrace diversity. Additionally, it implies that the academic community should value the distinct viewpoints and contributions that SWDs may make. This was emphatically supported by one of the interviewees in the field, as follows:

As a university, it is included in the mission statement by having budget. [. . .] as well, clearly, the legislation has articles which supports inclusion. on top of it the finance rule by providing special attention to SWDs diversity, it budgeted to them. So, we can say that his campus's mission statement specifically refers to the value of having disability diversity.

(Interviewee No. 12; June 2023)

This finding is consistent with prior research (e.g., Milem et al. 2005; Rankin & Reason 2008), which found that policy shows how seriously HEIs takes disability diversity. This is evident in university programs, policies, and services (Rankin and Reason 2008), all of which need to be connected to the institutional mission (Clayton-Pedersen et al. 2007). Institutional policies and procedures can be evaluated for disability equality and diversity, and they have the power to produce more fair conditions and results for a diverse student body.

In line with the results of Tefera et al., (2015), the Ethiopian government has demonstrated commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and "education for all" (EFA) goals as outlined in the legislative and policy framework. It has also stated its intention in the five-year growth and transformation plan (GTP) to use inclusive education as a key to sustaining economic development, developed a strategy for SWDs diversity, incorporated it into ongoing sector development programs (ESDP III and IV), and extended it to regional and local action plans to minimize budget barriers in strategy implementation.

Policy Practice 2: Disability Discrimination Protection Policy

Respondents were asked in Table 26 item 2 to indicate whether or not it is explicitly stated in the HEI's legislative, associated regulations, and internal code of conduct that discrimination against SWDs diversity is not permitted. According to the data's mean and standard deviation (M=

4.21, SD= 0.942), the majority of them believed this. The results indicate that the legislative framework, associated policies, and internal codes of conduct of five public HEIs in Ethiopia have explicitly prohibited discrimination against SWDs reflecting efforts to promote structural diversity of DLE model. This is a praiseworthy attempt to promote inclusion and equality. The finding also shows that these HEIs are demonstrating their opposition to unjust treatment and their dedication to fostering an atmosphere that upholds the rights and dignity of every person by making it abundantly evident that discrimination on the basis of disability is not permitted. Interviewee #12 confirmed this:

As I said before, this university's legislation explicitly states that there would be no tolerance for SWDs diversity discrimination, which is evidence of institutional acknowledgment for it. Furthermore, in this campus atmosphere, any form of discrimination against PWDs diversity is strictly prohibited, and such behavior will not be tolerated.

(Interviewee No. 12; June 2023)

However, the opposite appears to prevail. Interviewee #10 corroborated this as follows:

Not sufficient. I can say that there is marginalization. For instance, in class room teaching, thanks to instructors, there is no marginalization but, in the leadership, while they provide learning materials, some SWDs diversity from some department including ours will be marginalized by not getting the needed resources equally. This is pure marginalization. SWDs diversity attended in this university before us had exam readers employed by the university but in our time, we are not getting such learning support which I consider it as marginalization. [. . .] the leaders said there is no clear policy and stooped it what was existed before. If they count as their student, they would bring the needed learning materials. Is Gonder or Haromaya university is unique on bringing the needed learning materials for SWDs diversity? I heard as these universities were giving such learning materials for SWDs diversity but here there is no.

(Interviewee No. 10; April 2023)

Overall, the finding suggests that while there may be some disagreement among qualitative respondents, it is highly likely that discrimination against disability diversity is not permitted based on the presence of such provisions in the campus legislation, related policies, and internal code of conduct. This suggests that the implementation of DDM through these measures has been successful in addressing the issue of discrimination against SWDs in Ethiopian public HEIs.

Policy Practice 3: Disability Discrimination Reporting Procedures

The mean and standard deviation of the respondents' responses to DDM-related policy practice item 3: “*this university has clear disciplinary procedures for anyone to report prejudice or discriminatory experiences on disability issues*”, in Table 26 are ($M= 2.26$, $SD= .896$). This finding suggests that the effectiveness of the five Ethiopian public HEIs' commitment to inclusion may be called into question due to the absence of explicit disciplinary processes for reporting bias or discriminatory experiences pertaining to disability problems fostering a negative psychological climate of DLE model where SWDs will not feel safe and supported. Even if it is positive to have laws and behavior guidelines that forbid discrimination, SWD's capacity to seek justice and find a solution is compromised when there are no established procedures for reporting and handling such instances. When policies and processes are unclear, SWDs who encounter bias or discrimination can be reluctant to report it for fear of being punished or that nothing would be done. The institutions' capacity to address systemic problems and foster a secure and welcoming learning environment may be hampered by this, which may also perpetuate a culture of silence.

It also implies that to ensure confidentiality, impartiality, and swift investigations of incidences of prejudice, these institutions must establish strong and easily available methods for reporting such incidents. Furthermore, in order to hold offenders responsible and offer suitable compensation to impacted parties, they had to set up disciplinary procedures and accountability frameworks. The rights and welfare of all members of the community, including SWDs, may be upheld by these institutions by filling in these gaps and putting in place efficient reporting and disciplinary procedures.

This finding is supported by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006), which states that discrimination against disabled students includes any distinction, exclusion, or restriction that prevents them from realizing their right to participate fully in society, including HEIs, for reasons related to their disability diversity. This includes failing to provide a ‘reasonable accommodation’ to students' specific needs, such as communication help, putting them at a significant disadvantage in comparison to other students (Articles 2 and 24).

The finding suggests that, although DDM in HEIs is the process of creating and sustaining a more diverse learning environment by having a clear disciplinary procedures for anyone to report prejudice or discriminatory experiences on disability issues, it is quite unlikely that although various international and national policy documents recommend to have a specific disciplinary

procedure for anyone to report bias or experiences with discrimination on the basis of disability diversity, the good number of Ethiopian public HEIs failed to have it.

Policy Practice 4: Effective DDM Policy Communication

The average response and standard deviation for DDM related policy practice item 4: *“In this university, diversity related policies, legislations and guidelines are effectively communicated to students with disability diversity”*, in Table 26 was (M= 2.44, SD=0.872). This finding indicates that the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs had a low degree of inclusivity and equitable access to information, which is concerning given the ineffective communication of diversity-related policies, laws, and guidelines to SWDs reflecting efforts to promote structural diversity of DLE model by communicating policies, legislations, guidelines, and programs that focus on disability diversity is weaker. To guarantee that SWDs are aware of their rights, the institutional structure in place to meet their requirements, and the support services that are available to them, it is imperative that communication be clear and accessible. These students' capacity to participate completely in their education may be hampered by a lack of information and awareness of the options that are available to them in the event of ineffective communication.

These institutions may improve accessibility, empower SWDs, and create a diverse, inclusive learning environment by taking proactive measures to close this communication gap. This is in concert with findings written in the ten years, (2020-2030) strategic planning document of AAU's, saying: *“Not fully communicating the vision, missions and strategic plans and inability to create common and shared vision and values among the University community”* (AAU, 2020, p.18). However, as opposed to the finding, only one participant, described the issue of diversity related policies, legislations and guidelines communication by stating:

We have taken careful consideration of the needs of SWDs and have incorporated them effectively into our plans. Additionally, the directives and guidelines issued by the MoE are aligned with our institutional plan. Furthermore, we ensure effective communication of these vital documents through various channels, including tea and coffee ceremonies, organized by the assigned structures.

(Interviewee No. 25; May 2023)

This indicates that while DDM in HEIs aims to establish and maintain a diverse learning environment by effectively communicating diversity-related policies, legislations, and guidelines to SWDs diversity, there is a notable gap in effectively communicating these policies to SWDs.

This suggests that there is still significant progress needed in the implementation of DDM to ensure proper communication of diversity-related policies and guidelines. Further efforts are required to bridge this gap and improve the communication of diversity-related policies to effectively support SWDs.

Policy Practice 5: Disability Diversity Support Initiatives

As illustrated by their mean and standard deviation scores for DDM related policy practice item 5 in Table 26 ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.952$), the majority of respondents said that their university has specific policies, programs, or initiatives that contribute to managing disability diversity. This finding suggests that the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs have made a commendable effort to support SWDs and promote inclusivity by having particular policies, programs, or initiatives that help DDM reflecting efforts to promote structural diversity of DLE model. These regulations may include a variety of topics, such as inclusive teaching methods, assistive technology, reasonable accommodations, accessible infrastructure, and specialized support services. Programs may concentrate on fostering a feeling of community among SWDs, mentorship, disability advocacy, and awareness-raising. These initiatives have the potential to lower stigma, dismantle obstacles, and advance an inclusive HEIs' society. To evaluate the success and responsiveness of these programs and pinpoint areas for development, it is important to regularly solicit input from SWDs. The existence of certain policies, programs, or initiatives is, all things considered, a positive start toward DDM; but, in order to guarantee that these measures actually improve the lives of SWDs, ongoing dedication and improvement are essential. This finding is also consistent with a recent study, which concluded that while participation is not merely about numerical representation, now is the time to develop a similar global policy and research momentum for DDM (Albert et al, 2005).

Policy Practice 6: DDM Policy Implementation

The mean and standard deviation scores for DDM related policy practice item 6: “*The implementation of policies, rules and regulations that protect disability diversity is weak in this university*”, in Table 26 was ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.979$). The finding shows that there are substantial obstacles in ensuring equal opportunities and inclusivity for SWDs, as the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs have inadequate policies practices for protecting disability diversity reflecting much more engagement needed from the behavioral components of DLE model. Even when legislations,

rules, and regulations are in place, their implementation is compromised by a lack of consistent application. This might be caused by a number of things, including a lack of funding, staff members who are not properly trained, and a lack of awareness or dedication to disability inclusion throughout the institution. Inadequate implementation of these standards may lead to inadequate support services for SWDs, a dearth of appropriate accommodations, and restricted access to facilities and resources. Their academic progress may be hampered, their educational experience may be badly impacted, and obstacles to their full participation may be maintained. However, the following quote from respondent # 25 highlights the medium experience of document implementation at HEIs. Here is the quote:

Yes, whatever you plan will not be practical if you do not have good implementation strategy. Here, although it is not practical up to our expectations due to various reasons, too the good percent, we are implementing these rules and regulations. By the way, since President Sahalewok Zewde too has a project initiative here, our practicality is vital. But I do think that we are implementing it to 100%. As you know full implementations require many things like huge amount of money, commitment and the like.

(Interviewee No. 25; May 2023)

The finding implies that a thorough and methodical strategy is required to solve this problem and guarantee the successful implementation of disability protection measures. In order to do this, it is necessary to set aside sufficient funds, give staff members continual training and assistance, create explicit accountability procedures, and actively involve SWDs in decision-making. To identify areas for improvement and address any weaknesses, it is crucial for HEIs to conduct regular assessments and evaluations of their implementation efforts. This finding emphasizes the importance of having inclusive policies that are effectively implemented for DDM. By establishing implementable policies from the outset, HEIs can save time and reduce the need for frequent revisions in the future on the issue of disability (Bunbury, 2020).

Policy Practice 7: Fair Disability Diversity Affirmative Action

The average response and standard deviation for DDM-related policy practice question 7 in Table 26 (M= 2.60, SD= .949) indicate that the majority of respondents believed that their HEI is not fairly managing disability diversity by enacting an affirmative action policy indicating no proactive engagement and behavior from DLE model to support disability diversity. This result suggests that in order to properly manage disability diversity, the selected five Ethiopian public

HEIs are not making the most of their affirmative action policies. Policies pertaining to affirmative action aim to rectify past injustices and advance equitable chances for marginalized populations, such as those with disabilities. But the lack of complete implementation of these principles by the institutions raises the possibility that a chance to actively encourage inclusion and offer essential assistance to SWDs was lost. In support of this, the MoE (2004) in its ESDP II document, noted that activities are not enabled for SWDs diversity; as a result of a lack of assistance, the majority of SWDs diversity are denied the chance to continue their studies. As a result, their engagement in employment and society is severely constrained. However, the following two interviewee respondents agreed that there is an affirmative action practically in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs opposite to the quantitative result:

Despite of the accessibility problem, we will give the affirmative action. For instance, in dormitory allocation, we fever SWDs to get the better rooms. And for wheel chair using SWDs, by preparing ramp, we assign them in the ground. Similarly, for blind students, by their choice, we give priority. In the cafeteria there is a special place for SWDs and they will get first serve. No non SWD will take their regular places in the cafeteria.

(June 2023; Interviewee No. 3)

For example, contradicting the aforementioned concerns, one of the interviewees (Interviewee No. 12) claimed:

As a center, if we are not helping them fairly, it is better to close it. The ultimate purpose is to give them justice and equitable service. We really need to be model and protect them not to be violated by others. We never compromise by the fair treatment. However, complain with the fair treatment will come? Yes, some out of controlled in relation to grade or unnecessary cheating case may occur. Or some SWDs diversity may be questioned how they got exaggerated exam result etc. When this reported, as a right, we fight for SWDs diversity. As the same time, we will teach them to know their responsibilities as well. A SWD diversity does not mean he has no duty at all. No! [. . .] we tell them to discharge their duties and respect the rule of the university and not to be violated their rights as well.

(June 2023; Interviewee No. 12)

A similar scenario can be evidenced in certain South African HEIs, where an affirmative action policy gap exists. While there are affirmative action policies in place, they are not fully implemented and fail to adequately address the well-being of SWDs for whom they are intended (Ndlovu & Woldegiorgis, 2023).

The findings of the current PhD study validate this finding. Despite qualitative respondents in Ethiopian public HEIs indicating some implementation of the affirmative action aspect, it is evident that SWDs, who are the intended beneficiaries of these institutional policies, are not reaping the practical benefits of the existing affirmative action policy.

Overall, the grand mean value of $M = 3.4$ and the qualitative findings suggest that Ethiopian public HEIs have policies in place to manage disability diversity. However, these HEIs have limited clear disciplinary procedures for reporting prejudice or discriminatory experiences related to disability issues ($M = 2.26$). Additionally, diversity-related policies, legislations, and guidelines are not effectively communicated to SWDs diversity ($M = 2.44$), and the use of affirmative action policies to fairly manage disability diversity was also limited ($M = 2.60$).

4.14.1 Relationships Between Policy Practices for DDM and the Commitment of Senior Leaders

Sub Research Question 2.1: *Do policy practices for managing gender and disability diversity relate to the commitment of senior leaders?*

As it is written above, one of the present study's sub fundamental research questions was to determine how policy practices for managing gender and disability diversity relate to the commitment of senior leaders in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. It was attempted to answer such queries in the results shown below.

The relationship between policy practices and the commitment of senior leaders	<i>N</i>	<i>Pearson Correlations</i>	<i>Sig.(2-tailed)</i>
	247	.698	.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 27: *The relationship between policy practices and the commitment of senior leaders at the Selected Five Ethiopian Public HEIs*

As indicated in Table 27 above, Pearson Correlation Coefficient = 0.698, indicating a somewhat good association between policy practices and senior leaders' commitment at the five Ethiopian public HEIs. As demonstrated in the previous table, the significant value between policy practices and senior leaders' commitment at the selected Five Ethiopian Public HEIs is also completely significant, with a p value of 0.000. The data shows a strong, statistically significant

positive relationship between the policy practices implemented at these HEIs and the level of commitment demonstrated by their top management for DDM. This suggests the two factors are closely linked in the context being studied.

4.14.2 Relationships Between Perceptions and Policy Practices of DDM

Sub Research Question 2.2: *What are the relationships between perceptions and policy practices of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs?*

As stated above, one of the current study's sub-basic research questions was to establish the relationships between perceptions and policy practices of diversity management for GDM & DDM at public Ethiopian HEIs. The following results sought to offer solutions to such questions from the DDM point of view.

Variables	1	2	3	4
Overall Perceptions for DDM	1.00			
Curricular Perceptions for DDM	.427**	1.00		
Extra-Curricular Perceptions for DDM	.465**	.388**	1.00	
Policy Practice for DDM	.754**	.491**	.514**	1.00

****.** *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 28: *The relationship between perceptions and policy practices at the Selected Five Ethiopian Public HEIs*

As shown in Table 28, experience practiced for DDM was significantly correlated with all four variables, The widely-used rules specified by Cohen regard a correlation of $r=.1$ as small, $r=.3$ as moderate, and $r=.5$ as large. Here, then, we see a larger and moderate positive correlation ranging from ($r=.490$, $p<.01$) for overall perceptions to ($r=.385$, $p<.01$) for curricular perceptions to ($r=.416$, $p<.01$) for extra-curricular perceptions and with policy practiced for DDM ($r=.563$, $p<.01$). Thus, there are statistically moderate and larger relationships between perceptions, curricular extracurricular, and policy practice and experience practiced for DDM because all of the correlation results are greater than .3 and the two tailed p value was less than .01, experience practiced for DDM was significantly correlated with the variables mentioned.

The DDM policy was highly associated with the remaining factors. Cohen's frequently used guidelines classify a correlation of $r=.1$ as minor, $r=.3$ as moderate, and $r=.5$ as strong. We detect a stronger and somewhat favorable association here, ranging from ($r=.514$, $p<.01$) for extra-

curricular views of DDM to ($r = .491$, $p < .01$) for curricular perceptions to ($r = .754$, $p < .01$) for overall perceptions of DDM. Because all of the correlation results were greater than .3 and the two tailed p value was less than .01, policy practiced for DDM was significantly correlated with the variables mentioned.

As shown in table 28, extracurricular perceptions of DDM were strongly related to the remaining characteristics. Cohen's commonly used criteria describe $r = .1$ as small, $r = .3$ as moderate, and $r = .5$ as high. We find a stronger and more favorable relationship here, ranging from ($r = .388$, $p < .01$) for curricular views of DDM to ($r = .465$, $p < .01$) for overall impressions. Extracurricular perceptions for DDM were substantially connected with the factors listed since all of the correlation findings were larger than .3 and the two tailed p value was less than .01.

The findings overall suggest that in the context of Ethiopian public HEIs, there are statistically significant and moderately strong to strong relationships between different factors related to DDM. The data indicates that positive student perceptions of disability diversity, the integration of disability diversity content into the curriculum and extracurricular programs, and well-designed institutional policies and practices around DDM are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing elements that enable the successful implementation and advancement of disability diversity initiatives in this higher education setting.

4.14 Senior Leaders Commitment for Disability Diversity Management

Research Question 3: *How is the commitment of senior leaders to managing gender and disability diversity?*

Based on the data acquired from the quantitative survey responses, the study group's reaction to senior leaders' commitment for DDM was assessed in terms of mean and standard deviation value. Table 29 provides a summary of the information that the study's participants should be aware of.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	The senior leaders are committed to creating a campus environment that welcomes disability diversity.	247	2.67	1.098
2	The senior leaders are committed to handling disability diversity matters satisfactorily.	247	2.65	1.220

3	Senior leaders shows that disability diversity is important through its actions.	247	3.04	1.263
4	Senior leaders respond to instances of disability-based harassment or discrimination with the necessary action.	247	4.28	1.019
5	Senior leaders are accountable and responsible for a healthy campus climate.	247	4.04	.953
6	The senior leaders establish the campus vision for disability diversity.	247	4.18	.952
7	The senior leaders treat disabled students with equal respect.	247	4.20	.979
Overall Average		247	3.58	

Table 29: *Senior leaders' Commitment for Disability Diversity Management*

Commitment for Having Environment that Welcomes Disability Diversity

The majority of respondents agreed, as shown by the mean and standard deviation scores to senior leaders' commitment for DDM item 1 in Table 29 ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.098$), that the senior leaders was not committed to creating a campus environment that welcomes disability diversity. The results show that the senior leaders of the chosen public HEIs in Ethiopia are limited in their efforts to promote inclusion and value the uniqueness of SWDs addressing the unwanted psychological climate dimension of DLE model by not acknowledging the importance of creating a positive and accepting atmosphere. Their choices and behaviors show that they don't think it's important enough to create an atmosphere that supports and accommodates SWDs. It also implies that for academics, staff, and SWDs, this lack of dedication impedes possibilities and sustains marginalization. This data reinforces the findings of previous research conducted in similar contexts, indicating that SWDs in HEIs often perceive their campuses as lacking a commitment to fostering an inclusive environment that embraces disability diversity. This perception can have adverse effects on their learning, engagement, and retention of information (Harbour & Greenberg, 2017). This was half-heartedly supported by one of the interviewees in the field, as follows:

They are committed on answering when we ask only. But they are not thinking ahead of time for regarding SWDs diversity. I think they are busy on non-disabled students issue only. For instance, when they maintain café, the road distorted and no alternative means were thought and done for SWDs diversity. [. . .] In planning stage, I do not think they consider us. Therefore, from this perspective, the commitment is lesser.

(Interviewee No. 8; May 2023)

This suggests that, although DDM is the process of creating and maintaining a more positive learning environment by being the senior leaders of the campus committed to creating an

environment that welcomes disability diversity, unfortunately senior leaders of the HEI's was not as such committed to creating a campus environment that welcomes disability diversity, indicating that DDM needs much more improvement in this regard. This finding is also consistent with prior research (e.g., Wilson, et al., 2000, pp. 44), which found that "*students overwhelmingly felt that there was little or no university commitment to them*" (pp.44).

Commitment for Ensuring Disability Diversity

In Table 29 to senior leaders' commitment for DDM item 2, respondents were asked if the senior leaders are committed to handling disability diversity matters satisfactorily. The mean and standard deviation of the data (M= 2.65, SD= 1.220). The results show that the senior leaders of the chosen public HEIs in Ethiopia has not demonstrated a strong commitment to successfully resolving issues about disability diversity falling under the behavioral components from DLE dimension as it highlights the less commitment of the leadership to take appropriate actions in response to disability diversity issues. This demonstrates that their methods and actions have not been sufficient in addressing the concerns and encouraging the inclusion of SWDs. Because of this lack of dedication, disability-related issues are not being handled satisfactorily at these institutions. The finding also implies that the leadership must be aware of how critical it is to prioritize disability diversity and move proactively to enhance their strategy. These HEIs can guarantee that SWDs get the assistance, modifications, and chances they need to succeed in their academic endeavors by creating an atmosphere that is really inclusive. The empirical information from interview number 4 is the same as the quantitative information:

[. . .] If you do not consider it as a blame, I do not believe they are committed. This university is uncommitted, beginning with infrastructure and continuing with brainstorming training. Rather, they solely incorporate SWDs diversity from different departments. There was no dedicated deep thinking. [. . .] For example, today, one SWD diversity had his skull injured and plastered. When I asked, he was lying over the large hole. So, are the people doing their jobs dedicated enough? I don't perceive a singular commitment on their part [on leaders]. Accepting SWDs diversity and having translators[two] is at least 50% up to 60%, but not more than that.

(Interviewee #4; April 2023)

The above both quantitative and qualitative data implies that, given that DDM is the process of creating and maintaining a more positive learning environment by being senior leaders

of the HEIs committed to handling disability diversity matters satisfactorily, unfortunately the senior leaders of selected five Ethiopian public HEIs are not as such committed to handling disability diversity matters satisfactorily, indicating that on DDM there is still a long way to go towards achieving disability diversity matters satisfactorily.

Commitment on Actions for Disability Diversity

The majority of survey participants held a moderate belief that senior leaders demonstrate a moderate level of importance towards disability diversity through their actions. The respondents' responses to the item assessing senior leaders' commitment for DDM in Table 29 had a mean and standard deviation of ($M= 3.04$, $SD= 1.263$). These results indicate that the senior leaders at the selected Ethiopian public HEIs acknowledges the value of disability diversity to a modest extent, aligning with the behavioral components of the DLE model. However, their attempts to fully address the needs of SWDs are not entirely comprehensive (as indicated by not high mean score of 3.04) or consistently carried out, even though they may have taken certain steps in that direction. For instance, empirical data comes from interviewee number 23 by saying “not committed” is more telling. Here is the quote:

The senior leader's commitment on this regard, is too much low. And for instance, I am providing common course and I do have a number of deaf students taking that course. These deaf students do not have translators. At day one, I observed these deaf students and asked the office to assign translators for them but still they are not getting. How can these students understand me? since there are both born deaf and acquired deaf, those acquired deaf may try to understand me by following my lip movement. But the born deaf students will not have any chance to understand. These deaf students asked me as they are not understanding my lesson. When I ask why no translators, I heard that the university will not pay the salary for translators per month. Rather translators were getting their salary per semester. Now the SWDs are on air without any support. I am really sorry. Why they did not improve the salary for translators and pay that on every month. The system is wrong system. No commitment. The burden is on instructors and what can I do?

(Interviewee #23; June 2023)

It appears from the leadership's actions that they are only partially committed to diversity, which might lead to less opportunities and assistance for instructors, staff, and SWDs. It also implies that these institutions must step up their efforts to create inclusive policies, provide the required modifications, and promote an inclusive culture that goes beyond simple acknowledgment if they are to genuinely value disability diversity.

Committed on Resolving Disability-Based Incidents

The senior leaders on the chosen five HEIs reacts to cases of senior leaders responds to instances of disability-based harassment or discrimination with the necessary action, as seen by the average response and standard deviation to senior leaders' commitment for DDM item 4 in Table 29 ($M= 4.28$, $SD= 1.019$). The results show that the senior leaders of the chosen Ethiopian public HEIs takes a respectable approach to dealing with harassment and discrimination against SWDs. It falls under the behavioral components DLE model as it highlights the leadership's actions and behaviors in addressing such issues. They probably may use a proactive approach and take the required steps to deal with these problems in a timely and efficient manner. This also demonstrates that they foster an atmosphere that supports the safety and wellbeing of SWDs by swiftly resolving such situations. This prompt action shows a dedication to creating a welcoming and courteous HEI' s environment. To provide a truly inclusive academic place for everybody, it is crucial that the leadership also prioritize preventative measures and continual education. This will help to develop a culture that discourages harassment and discrimination.

Commitment for Having a Healthy University Climate

The majority of respondents agreed, as evidenced by the mean and standard deviation scores to senior leaders' commitment for DDM question 5 in Table 29 ($M= 4.04$, $SD= 0.953$), that the senior leaders are accountable and responsible for a healthy HEIs climate. According to the behavioral components DLE model, which highlights the leadership's actions and behaviors in addressing such issues, the results demonstrate a strong sense of accountability and duty among the senior leaders at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs for maintaining a positive HEI's atmosphere. They may actively emphasize the welfare and well-being of teachers, staff, and students. They make sure that the HEI's community is secure, supported, and respected by taking on their responsibilities. This finding also indicates that these leaders take proactive steps to solve problems or difficulties that may occur because they recognize how important it is to create an environment that is favorable for learning and development. All members of the university community will benefit from their dedication to accountability, which leads by example and fosters a pleasant university environment.

Commitment on Setting Disability Diversity Vision

The majority of respondents' mean and standard deviation scores to senior leaders' commitment for DDM item 6: *"The senior leaders establish the campus vision for disability diversity"*, in Table 29 was ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.952$). The findings demonstrate how important it is for the senior leaders of the selected public HEIs in Ethiopia to develop the universities' vision for disability diversity. In terms of the leadership's role in forming the campus's vision and historical trajectory regarding disability diversity, they set the standards and guidelines for creating a warm and inclusive environment for SWDs that are in line with the historical legacy of inclusion/exclusion dimension of the DLE model. As a result of their leadership, they have the chance to encourage and mold the HEIs' community to appreciate and welcome the variety of SWDs. The finding also implies that it's crucial to evaluate whether their goal is actually well-thought-out and executed, though. To be successful, their vision must be translated into concrete policies, procedures, and tools that encourage equitable opportunities, support, and access for teachers, staff, and SWDs.

Commitment to Provide Equal Respect for SWDs

The respondents were asked about whether the senior leaders treat SWDs diversity with equal respect or not, as indicated in Table 29, item 7 was mean and standard deviation value of ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.979$). The results show that the senior leaders of the chosen Ethiopian public HEIs have a commitment to providing SWDs with the same respect as their peers falling under the psychological climate dimension of DLE model as it highlights the leadership's role in fostering an environment of equal respect for SWDs. They place a priority on establishing a welcoming, discrimination-free atmosphere where SWDs are respected members of the community. By their deeds, they advocate for resources, support services, and equitable opportunities for SWDs. It implies that this cultivates a feeling of inclusion and guarantees that SWDs get equitable and dignified treatment. To address any possible gaps or issues that can prevent the full fulfillment of equal respect for SWDs, it is crucial to continuously assess and enhance these efforts. However, a comment from an interviewee number 25 is different from both the quantitative responses among providers:

"Even the SWDs learning in our university in one meeting told us as we are not committed enough to the extent of their expectations. They have complained on us. So, I will not say the top leadership is committed up to the expected standard".

(Interviewee #25; May 2023)

From the interview data, it becomes evident that the SWDs at these HEIs expressed their dissatisfaction regarding the perceived lack of commitment from the senior leaders. During the meeting, the SWDs conveyed their expectations, emphasizing that they felt the commitment they anticipated was not being met. The SWDs' complaints shed light on their concerns and indicate a perception that the top leadership's level of dedication falls short of what is expected. The comments made by the SWDs raise questions about the extent to which the senior leaders prioritize and address the needs of SWDs. These concerns may have implications for the overall inclusivity and support provided to the SWDs within the university community.

Overall, it can be said that, the commitment of senior leaders at Ethiopian public HEIs to students' DDM is generally positive, with an average score of 3.58. However, their efforts to create a campus environment that genuinely welcomes and embraces disability diversity were more limited, scoring an average of 2.67 for DDM. Additionally, the institutions did not adequately address matters related to disability diversity, scoring an average of 2.65 for DDM. The findings suggest that while the senior leadership at Ethiopian public HEIs expresses a generally positive commitment to DDM among students, they have fallen short in actually creating an inclusive campus environment and in properly addressing diversity-related issues. This disconnect between the stated commitment and the actual implementation points to a need for the institutions to strengthen their efforts to foster a more welcoming and responsive approach to disability diversity on their HEIs.

4.14.1 The Correlation Between Commitment for DDM and Students' Satisfaction

Sub Research Question 3.1: *Does HEIs leadership commitment for GDM & DDM have significant positive correlation or regression to students' satisfaction?*

As stated above, one of the current study's sub basic research questions was to test to what degree does HEIs leadership commitment for GDM & DDM have a substantial positive correlation or regression to students' satisfaction. The results provided below try to answer such questions from the DDM point of view.

Correlation between HEIs leadership commitment for DDM to students' satisfaction	N	Pearson Correlations	Sig.(2-tailed)
	247	.475**	.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 30: *Correlation Between Commitment for DDM & Satisfaction*

For this type of data, on table 30, we normally consider correlations above 0.4 to be rather strong; correlations between 0.2 and 0.4 are regarded moderate; and correlations below 0.2 are considered weak. As a result, as it is kept on the table 30 above, Pearson Correlation Coefficient = 0.475, indicating a moderately high association between DDM leadership commitment and student happiness at Ethiopia's five public HEIs. Similarly, as seen in the prior table, if the p-value is less than (0.05), we may conclude that there is a statistically significant difference. As a result, the significant value between leadership commitment for DDM and student satisfaction at the five Ethiopian public HEIs considered is less than 0.05, (0.00), showing a substantial association.

The finding that leadership commitment has a strong and statistically significant relationship with student satisfaction for DDM in the Ethiopian public HEIs context implies the following: Strong leadership commitment and support from top management is a crucial factor in driving student satisfaction and buy-in for DDM programs and efforts at these institutions. When institutional leadership demonstrates a high level of commitment to disability diversity, it translates into positive perceptions and satisfaction among students regarding the institution's DDM initiatives. This relationship between leadership commitment and student satisfaction is an important one for effectively implementing and sustaining DDM practices in the Ethiopian public higher education setting. In other words, the data suggests that leadership support and prioritization of disability diversity is a key driver of student engagement and positive outcomes when it comes to DDM initiatives at these universities.

4.15 Challenges of Disability Diversity Management

Research Question 4: *What challenges do respondents' face in relation to gender & disability diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs?*

The research group's response to the challenges of disability diversity was evaluated in terms of mean and standard deviation values based on information obtained from quantitative survey answers. The details that research participants need to be aware of are summarized in Table 31.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	Physical and attitudinal barriers have a strong negative impact on disability diversity management.	247	4.28	1.019
2	Not putting too much emphasis on disability diversity management is one of the challenges.	247	4.21	.942
3	There is a shortage of disability diversity management related research.	247	3.96	1.12
4	The process to file students with disabilities complaints was not secure.	247	4.04	.953
5	There is a practice of deliberately ignoring or excluding disabled harmful practices reported by students with disabilities.	247	4.18	.952
6	There is no sufficient provision of access to counseling for students with disabilities who have experienced harassment.	247	4.20	.979
7	In many ways, the campus environment favors non-disabled students over students with disabilities.	247	3.86	.900
8	Instructors do little or no modifications to accommodate students with disability diversity in their instructional activities.	247	4.03	.917
9	I am planning leaving this university because I felt isolated or unwelcomed due to my disability.	247	4.02	1.139
Overall Average		247	4.08	

Table 31: *Challenges of Disability Diversity Management*

Physical and Attitudinal Challenges

According to the mean and standard deviation scores for challenges of disability diversity item 1 in Table 31 (M= 4.28, SD= 1.019), the majority of respondents agreed with the statement that at their institution, physical and attitudinal barriers have a significant negative influence on disability diversity management. According to the findings, there are substantial challenges to successful DDM in the chosen Ethiopian public HEIs, both structural and attitude-based suggesting that there is a historical legacy of exclusion and discrimination from the DLE model, which impacts the management of disability diversity in the HEIs. The involvement and inclusion of SWDs are hampered by the existence of physical disabilities, such as inadequate infrastructure or a dearth of assistive technologies. The difficulties experienced by SWDs are further

compounded by attitudes that create obstacles, such as bias, prejudices, and discriminatory attitudes. Identical to the quantitative result, one interviewee (Interviewee, #10) respondents gave her perspective with regard to this issue as follows:

Yes, the physical environment of this university is not conducive for SWDs. For instance, the damage line is not conducive for blind students. Now and then, the road is not as such smooth and there are holes on the road. The building steps are totally not fit for wheel chairs and crunch users. I think SWDs diversity were not in the planning while the building was being built.

(Interviewee No. 10; April 2023)

The finding also implies that these challenges foster a climate of exclusion that restricts possibilities and hinders the complete inclusion of SWDs into the academic community. Promoting a truly inclusive and equitable higher education environment that values the variety of SWDs requires addressing and eliminating these challenges.

This is consistent with the findings of a fresh home-grown study by Kabtyimer (2020), who identified poor ramp design and the absence of ramps in some buildings, an inaccessible pathway to different offices/classes, and a lack of attention in physical accommodation of students with visual impairment as factors influencing SWDs' diversity full participation. Ethiopian higher education proclamation, No.1152/2019, article 41.3 declared that building designs, campus physical landscapes, computers, and other infrastructures of institutions should take SWDs' diversity interests into account. This finding is also supported by previous studies by Morley, & Croft, (2011) that the built environment of HEIs primarily created for non-disabled persons.

The researcher observed during his observation session at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs that the support system for SWDs varies greatly across institutions: it primarily consists of directing students to e-learning, counseling, and teacher instructions; providing alternative ways of taking exams; using a computer to verify knowledge; and providing access to student-mentors. However, with the exception of one university, the level of assistance was insufficient.

Disability Diversity Neglected: Emphasis Challenge

According to Table 31, respondents were asked if one of the challenges they faced was not

giving enough emphasis to managing disability diversity. The average response and standard deviation were ($M= 4.21$, $SD= 0.942$). The findings highlight a significant issue regarding the lack of attention given to DDM at the selected five public HEIs in Ethiopia. This suggests that the HEIs may have a limited structural composition that aligns with the DLE model's perspective on diversity. It implies that disability inclusion might not be prioritized as a key component of their broader diversity and inclusion initiatives. Insufficient funding, lack of resources, and inadequate accommodations for SWDs may be the consequences of this lack of focus. Additionally, there may be a lack of knowledge regarding the specific challenges faced by faculty, staff, and SWDs. To effectively address this issue, it is crucial for the HEIs to recognize the value of disability diversity and allocate sufficient funds and time to ensure equitable opportunities and support for every member of the university community. One interviewee (Interviewee, #10) responder provided her viewpoint on this topic as follows:

Enough attention and priority were not given at all. With out making us their priority, just for formality and to say we are teaching SWDs diversity, they accept us. It is inclusion without facilitation. If they cannot able to manage with the needed educational resources, it would be much better to transfer us to other universities.

(Interviewee No. 10; April 2023)

The above analysis suggests that one of the challenges in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs was: “*not paying enough attention to managing disability diversity*”, which was supposed to be created and maintained well as part of the DDM process. This finding is consistent with other research (Bunbury, 2018), which found that SWDs still encounter obstacles to fair educational opportunities because their impairment is not given adequate consideration.

DDM Related Research Challenge

There is a shortage of DDM related research on their campus. Responses from respondents to challenges of disability diversity item 3 in Table 31 were ($M= 3.96$, $SD= 1.12$) in terms of mean and standard deviation. Based on the DLE model, the results indicate that one major challenge for the selected Ethiopian public HEIs is the dearth of research on DDM, which suggests that the HEIs may not have a diverse behavioral composition. An understanding of the most effective strategies and approaches for promoting disability inclusion in academic settings is limited by the dearth of

research. These HEIs could find it difficult to create evidence-based policies and procedures that cater to the unique needs and experiences of teachers, staff, and SWDs in the absence of a substantial research. In order to educate their decision-making processes, implement comprehensive programs, and foster an inclusive atmosphere that promotes the success and well-being of SWDs, it is imperative that institutions prioritize and invest in research on DDM.

Insecure Complaint Filing Process

The respondents strongly agreed that the process to file SWDs diversity complaints was not secure, as evidenced by the average response and standard deviation for challenges of disability diversity item 4 in Table 31 ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 0.953$). The finding suggests that the complaints procedure for SWDs at the chosen public HEIs in Ethiopia is considered not secure. Addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model by highlighting an issue with the process of filing complaints. This raises questions regarding the efficacy of resolving SWDs' issues and the privacy protection of those students. SWDs may be discouraged from coming forward and reporting problems if they feel that there is a lack of security in the complaint procedure or that their privacy may be compromised. The HEIs' capacity to properly address and resolve issues linked to disabilities is hampered as a result. Establishing a safe and private complaint procedure that enables SWDs to air their concerns and guarantees that their requirements are met in a timely and suitable manner must be given top priority by these HEIs.

Challenging Exclusionary Practices: Reporting

The mean and standard deviation scores for question 5, regarding the challenges of disability diversity in Table 31, reveal that a majority of respondents believed that there is a practice of intentionally ignoring or excluding reported harmful practices against SWDs ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.952$). These results indicate a concerning pattern of deliberately dismissing or omitting detrimental activities reported by SWDs at the selected Ethiopian public HEIs. This aligns with the historical legacy of exclusion dimension of the DLE model, which emphasizes the challenge of purposefully excluding or omitting reported harmful practices against SWDs. Such behavior is highly problematic as it perpetuates a culture of exclusion and discrimination, disregarding the safety and well-being of SWDs. By discounting or overlooking identified detrimental activities, the HEIs fail to address systemic concerns and create an environment that supports learning and growth for all students. It is crucial for educational institutions to take allegations of harmful

practices seriously, conduct thorough investigations, and implement necessary safeguards to prevent future harm and ensure fair treatment of SWDs. This finding is consistent with previous research (Lovett, 2021), which highlights the challenges faced by SWDs when their complaints and challenges are ignored in HEIs.

Insufficient Counseling Access

The majority of respondents' mean and standard deviation scores ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.979$) for challenges of disability diversity item 6 in Table 31 show that there is no sufficient provision of access to counseling for SWDs diversity who have experienced harassment. The results show that there is insufficient access to counseling for SWDs who have been harassed at the chosen public HEIs in Ethiopia relating to the behavioral component of the DLE model by pointing out the lack of sufficient access to counseling for SWDs who have experienced harassment. SWDs already confront difficult circumstances, and this lack of assistance makes them even more marginalized in the academic world. In order to give victims of harassment resources, direction, and emotional support, counseling services are crucial. The HEIs jeopardize the mental health and general wellbeing of impaired children by not offering enough of these services, which makes it more difficult for them to succeed both personally and intellectually. In order to ensure that SWDs receive the tools needed to address the impacts of harassment and discrimination, it is imperative that educational institutions emphasize counseling services that are customized to meet their specific requirements. Likewise, similar to this finding, in the United Nations Disability and the Millennium Development Goal (2011) document, it has been shown that the major problem for SWDs diversity is not necessarily their unique disability, but rather their lack of equal access to different rehabilitative services such as counseling, health care, education, job, or social and legal support systems (United Nations, 2011).

Disability Bias in HEIs' Climate

The respondents overwhelmingly agreed that in many ways, the HEI's environment favors non-disabled students over SWDs diversity, as shown by the average response and standard deviation for challenges of disability diversity question 7 in Table 31: ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.900$). The results show that there is a prejudice toward non-disabled students on the campuses of the chosen Ethiopian public HEIs, which unfairly disadvantages SWDs pertaining to the psychological climate dimension of DLE model by indicating a biased climate that students without disabilities.

This partiality takes many forms, including a deficiency of inclusive policies, accommodations, and accessible measures. These elements support the barriers that prevent SWDs from participating fully in society and from succeeding academically, therefore sustaining inequality in the educational environment. Ensuring equitable chances for all students, implementing extensive accessibility measures, and prioritizing disability inclusion are imperative for the HEIs to tackle this pressing issue. The institutions may promote a truly inclusive HEIs' community that caters to the varied interests and experiences of every student by addressing these discrepancies.

The research conducted by Tirussew et al. (2013) supports the current finding and identifies several challenges experienced by SWDs in HEIs. These challenges include inaccessible buildings and classrooms, the absence of elevators, and parking modes that do not cater to the needs of disabled individuals which are favorable for non-disabled ones. This aligns with findings from other studies, such as the work of Kane (2009), who also highlighted the difficulties faced by SWDs in HEIs. These challenges encompass accessing buildings, toilets, bookshops, campus shops, dining halls, dormitories, and courses. These findings collectively demonstrate an HEI's environment that tends to favor non-disabled students over SWDs creating a disparity in accessibility and inclusivity. More illuminating empirical data comes from interviewee number 23:

For SWDs, since this building was built in the 70's, they are not totally friendly. There is no lift. Even when they arrange classes, they are not considering SWDs. I do not think there is willingness to assign SWDs in better class rooms. It is the coordinators and assistant deans' work. SWDs are in problems. The roads inside too are getting damaged which is challenging for SWDs. The university community, since they do have moral values, they usually help them. But as a system a lot remains.

(Interviewee No. 23; June 2023)

The data from the document and the survey above revealed that in many ways, in the HEIs campus environment, favoring students without disabilities over SWDs was a challenge, having a serious negative impact on how Ethiopian public HEIs manage disability diversity which was supposed to provide an equal campus environment for non-disabled students and SWDs diversity as part of the DDM process.

Limited Disability -Inclusive Instruction

The mean and standard deviation score ($M= 4.03$, $SD= 0.917$) for challenge of disability diversity question 8 in Table 31 indicates that instructors make little or no adjustments to accommodate SWDs diversity in their instructional activities. As per the findings, there appears to be a disturbing lack of effort on the part of the instructors at the chosen Ethiopian public HEIs to modify their instructional activities to accommodate SWDs addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model. Due to this challenge learning obstacles would be maintained and SWDs chances of academic achievement are will be hampered. Instructors would prevent SWDs from fully engaging in the educational process when they do not make the appropriate accommodations, such as providing accessible resources, using inclusive teaching techniques, or giving alternate alternatives for evaluation. This action is indicative of a lack of understanding, compassion, and dedication to inclusive education. In order to improve instructors' comprehension of disability inclusion and provide them with the skills they need to successfully engage and accommodate SWDs, it is imperative that educational institutions provide priority to professional development and training programs for instructors at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs.

Disability Exclusion: Seeking Departure

The respondents were asked about their perception at their HEIs, whether they are planning leaving their HEIs because they felt isolated or unwelcomed due to their disability diversity or not, as indicated in Table 31, item 9, having the mean and standard deviation value of ($M= 4.01$, $SD= 1.139$). This shows that a worrying tendency is noticed at the chosen public HEIs in Ethiopia: SWDs are thinking about quitting the university because they feel alone or rejected because of their disability relating to the negative psychological climate dimension of the DLE model by expressing feelings of isolation and unwelcomeness due to disability. This scenario exposes serious flaws in the setting that should be created to provide SWDs with help and inclusion. Insufficient knowledge, comprehension, and proactive efforts in tackling disability-related issues are indicated by the feelings of alienation and unwelcomeness. Disability inclusion measures, including campaigns to raise awareness of disabilities, accessibility upgrades, and services designed to meet the specific requirements of SWDs, must be given top priority by these institutions. It further suggests that the institutions can keep SWDs from leaving and guarantee that all SWDs or not feel appreciated, supported, and equipped to succeed in their academic

endeavors by fostering an atmosphere that celebrates diversity, encourages inclusivity, and offers the required resources. This result is in line with current research (Ndlovu, 2019), which discovered that even when SWDs are aware of the challenges and requirements associated with their disability, they may frequently encounter significant inequalities in treatment, access to resources that could eventually cause them to leave their HEIs.

The combined qualitative and quantitative data, with a grand mean of 4.08, indicates that SWDs at Ethiopian public HEIs often face substantial challenges in navigating their educational environments. These environments frequently fail to adequately address the diverse needs of these students. The key obstacles they encounter include physical and attitudinal barriers, a lack of emphasis on disability-related issues, insecure file processing for SWDs, ignoring or overlooking the needs of SWDs, and insufficient provision of access to counseling and other supportive services. In essence, the findings suggest that Ethiopian public HEIs struggle to create inclusive and accessible environments that effectively support students with diverse disabilities and their specific needs. Overall, the data paints a picture of educational settings that fall short in addressing the diverse requirements of SWDs. These institutions seem to struggle with creating truly inclusive and responsive environments that cater to the unique needs of this student population.

4. 16 Satisfaction on Disability Diversity Management

***Research Question 5:** To what extent are students satisfied with the gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs?*

Based on the information gathered from the quantitative survey responses, the research group's response on how satisfied they were with the DDM was evaluated in terms of mean and standard deviation values. The information that participants in the research should be aware of is compiled in Table 32.

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	At this campus, I am overall satisfied with my interactions with other students and faculty.	247	4.04	.953

2	I am satisfied with the fair and equitable treatment given for students with disability in classrooms and classroom settings (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.).	247	2.38	.723
3	I am satisfied with overall the campus experience/environment regarding disability diversity management, equity, and inclusion.	247	2.83	1.091
4	I am satisfied with the regulations and laws that protect disability diversity in this university.	247	2.44	1.117
5	I am satisfied with this university's sufficient programs and resources to foster the success of a disability diversity management.	247	2.46	1.232
6	I feel satisfied with the recognition given to disability diversity in this university.	247	2.33	1.145
7	This university's process for investigating acts of disability discrimination or harassment is satisfactory.	247	3.92	1.039
8	At this campus, I am very satisfied with top leadership response for incidents of disability discrimination or harassment.	247	2.88	1.399
9	I am satisfied with commitment of this campus's top leadership to disability diversity and equity.	247	2.57	1.090
Overall Average		247	2.87	

Table 32: *Satisfaction on Disability Diversity Management*

Satisfaction in Interactions

Table 32's mean and standard deviation scores for DDM satisfaction item 1 (M= 4.04, SD= 0.953) show that most respondents said they are generally satisfied with their contacts with instructors and other students on their HEIs. This result suggests that, when it comes to their contacts with other students and teachers, SWDs at the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen are generally satisfied indicating a positive psychological climate from DLE model in terms of disability diversity and inclusion. Interviewee # 10 corroborated this as follows:

In general, since a lot needs to be done, I cannot say I am satisfied. There are a number of things remained to be improved as a system in this university towards DDM. (Interviewee No. 8; May 2023). Not, I am not satisfied. Since this university

failed to assign exam readers, recorders and the like, how can I become satisfied with the top management? If you ask me in percent, I will give it below 50%.

(Interviewee No. 10; April 2023)

It also implies that attempts have been made to provide a welcoming atmosphere that encourages wholesome connections and assistance for SWDs. SWDs' satisfaction with their social connections with other students suggests that they feel accepted and a part of the student body. Similarly, positive experiences with faculty interactions imply that faculty members are understanding, accommodating, and supportive of the needs of SWDs. This good feedback suggests that these HEIs are moving closer to fostering accessibility and diversity. However, in the qualitative data, the opposite appears to prevail.

Satisfaction on Equitable Treatment

Respondents were asked in Table 32 DDM satisfaction item 2 if they were satisfied with the fair and equitable treatment given for SWDs diversity in classrooms and classroom settings (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.) with the data's mean and standard deviation ($M= 2.38$, $SD= .723$). The results of this study suggest that there is cause for worry because of the dissatisfaction that SWDs at the five Ethiopian public HEIs exhibited over the fair and equal treatment in classrooms and associated settings addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model by expressing dissatisfaction. It implies that these academic settings face serious obstacles or shortcomings when it comes to meeting the requirements of SWDs. A lack of inclusive teaching methods, accessibility measures, or specially designed support systems for SWDs may be the cause of the dissatisfaction. This also suggests that the institutions may not be as committed to providing equitable opportunity for all students, regardless of disabilities. In order to provide an inclusive learning environment that meets the various requirements of SWDs, it is imperative that this issue be addressed quickly and thoroughly. Interviewee #12 corroborated this as follows:

I can't claim we've completely satisfied them. Because there is no an inclusive policy at the university level. It would have an inclusive policy if it were autonomous. The university has created the policy document, which is being weighted till it is authorized. [. . .] if it is authorized, it will be a useful guidance tool for us. Some government rules that restrict things will be lifted if the university is independent. Because the university has the authority to make its own decisions.

For example, we do not have a carrier for sign language interpreters; if the institution were independent, it would create a carrier job with a compensation scale and hire permanent staff. As a result, we cannot claim to have satisfied them. Let me rate the degree of satisfaction as 7 out of 10. Make it 70% out of 100%, and I'm giving it 70% because of this university's personal endeavors, such as paying money, providing washing service, providing photocopy service, and providing supplies acquired with millions of Ethiopian Birr. A single SWD diversity may have a material budget up to 5,000 (five thousand Ethiopian Birr). So, the remaining 30% of discontent is with the technical left.

(Interviewee #. 12; June 2023)

The statistics and the interview data revealed that, while DDM in HEIs is the process of creating and maintaining a more positive diversified learning environment (Hurtado et al., 2012) so as to bring satisfactions with the fair and equitable treatment given for SWDs in classrooms and classroom settings at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, however, they are generally not satisfied with the fair and equitable treatment given for SWDs in classrooms at the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen indicating that DDM is still has to go a long way towards achieving satisfaction on fairness and equitability. This inquiry therefore confirms the results of previous research conducted in other settings, where a majority of students expressed dissatisfaction with the classroom atmosphere while being satisfied with the university's readiness to assist (Wilson et al., 2000). This is a great illustration of a direct quotation from the interview in the Wilson et al., 2000 study on page 42:

It's been great to see more accessible door- ways, ramps and bathrooms, but I won't be here to enjoy them if my needs in the class- room are not met. What about special programs for students with learning disabilities? (pp.42)

Satisfaction on Disability Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The vast majority of survey participants strongly agreed that they were not satisfied with the overall experience in terms of disability diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus. Table 32's DDM satisfaction item 3 responses from the respondents' mean and standard deviation were 2.83 and 1.091, respectively. This result suggests that there is cause for concern regarding the general campus experience and environment with regard to DDM, equity, and inclusion, as reported by

SWDs at the five Ethiopian public HEIs. It implies that developing an inclusive and accessible HEIs for SWDs presents challenges pertaining to the psychological climate of the DLE model by indicating dissatisfaction with the overall campus experience and environment. The lack of knowledge, comprehension, and application of laws and procedures that support disability diversity, equity, and inclusion may be the root of the dissatisfaction.

It also indicates that it draws attention to the necessity of all-encompassing policies aimed at removing challenges and enhancing SWDs' experiences on HEIs in a variety of contexts, including as social interactions, academic assistance, facilities, and services. The HEIs must put a high priority on disability inclusion and create tactical plans that help create a friendly and encouraging atmosphere for all students. In order to make the campus genuinely inclusive and accessible to SWDs, stakeholders including administrators, teachers, staff, and students must work together. One participant described the status of satisfaction in his university by stating,

Satisfaction touches on a number of things. Instructors, infrastructure, systems and the like will lead them to it. From this general perspective, I do not think that our students are satisfied. But I am sure they are happy with the teaching and learning process.

(Interviewee #. 9; June 2023)

From the standpoint of disability diversity, equity, and inclusion, it is therefore likely that they are dissatisfied with the overall campus environment and experience. The findings from recent local research conducted by Kabtyimer (2020) align with this observation. The study highlights that the primary issue for the majority of SWDs in Ethiopian HEIs is the absence of an inclusive educational environment that addresses their specific needs. This lack of inclusivity leads to dissatisfaction among SWDs during their university experience. This lack of accessibility can significantly impact their educational journey and contribute to their dissatisfaction. The findings from other studies also support this finding. Armstrong et al. (2010) argue that the idea of inclusion, diversity, and equity in education gained prominence in the latter part of the twentieth century primarily in countries located in the global North. In contrast, developing countries have historically placed less emphasis on these principles, which can lead to dissatisfaction among students.

Satisfaction with Disability Diversity Regulations

The findings from Table 32, specifically the average response and standard deviation for item 4 assessing satisfaction with DDM policies, indicate a strong consensus among respondents regarding their dissatisfaction with the policies and laws that safeguard disability diversity in their institution ($M = 2.44$, $SD = 1.117$). These results are concerning as they reflect the dissatisfaction expressed by SWDs at the five selected Ethiopian public HEIs regarding the rules and policies designed to protect disability diversity. This dissatisfaction aligns with the historical legacy of exclusion dimension of the DLE model, illustrating discontent with the existing regulations and laws that aim to safeguard disability diversity. Respondent number 3 stated the following:

We did not satisfy them shortly, because the measurement of satisfaction is many. Due to various reasons, the student's satisfaction was far below the expected. Since this university is too old, a lot needs to be done for making satisfactory job. The newly opened universities are by far better than ours. But we do have a good start up work. Since the students will even tell you as they are not satisfied, how can we say we have done satisfactory job? Even student's degree of satisfaction will differ. The degree satisfaction between the blind and the deaf cannot be equal since the deaf may at least learn by receiving translation from interpreters. However, pupils using wheelchairs won't be completely happy because the surroundings aren't suited for them.

(Interviewee #. 3; June 2023)

It suggests that the current laws and regulations may be insufficient or have gaps in effectively protecting the rights and interests of SWDs within these institutions. The dissatisfaction suggests that SWDs believe these policies are not being implemented, enforced, or known about effectively, which might lead to a lack of appropriate accommodations and assistance. Resch's findings from (2023) emphasize the importance of addressing the dissatisfaction by SWDs and replicating similar studies conducted in various settings. These studies highlight the impact of diversity policies on all students, with a particular focus on SWDs who tend to express dissatisfaction.

Satisfactory Disability Diversity Programs

The majority of respondents claimed they are dissatisfied with the HEI's sufficient programs and resources to support the attainment of DDM, as indicated by their mean and standard

deviation scores for DDM satisfaction item 5 in Table 32 ($M = 2.46$, $SD = 1.232$). The result shows that there is cause for concern. SWDs at the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen for the study expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of resources and programs to support the success of DDM addressing the structural diversity dimension of the DLE model. It implies that there are gaps in the programs and support networks designed to help SWDs succeed academically and in life at these HEIs. The dissatisfaction suggests that SWDs believe there are insufficient resources, services, and programs to meet their unique demands and difficulties. This might involve mentorship programs, counseling services, assistive technology, training on disability awareness, and accessible accommodations.

The complete involvement and progress of SWDs in their academic endeavors may be impeded by the lack of these resources or their inadequate availability. The result also suggests that it is critical that HEIs give resource allocation top priority and create all-encompassing programs that address the various demands of SWDs. To establish a comprehensive and inclusive approach to disability diversity management, coordination amongst diverse stakeholders is necessary, including administrators, teachers, disability support offices, and students.

Satisfaction with Disability Diversity Recognition

The majority of respondents are satisfied with the HEI's acknowledgement of disability diversity, according to the mean and standard deviation scores for DDM satisfaction item 6 in Table 32 ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 1.145$). The results suggest that disability diversity is not being acknowledged to the extent that SWDs at the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen are dissatisfied about this pertaining to the psychological climate of the DLE model by indicating dissatisfaction. This is a serious problem. It implies that the special experiences and contributions of SWDs at these HEIs would not be fully recognized, acknowledged, or valued. The dissatisfaction suggests that SWDs believe there is a dearth of disability diversity visibility, representation, and inclusiveness. This might show up as a lack of disability-focused gatherings or campaigns that highlight the accomplishments and viewpoints of SWDs. Lack of acknowledgment can make SWDs feel excluded and marginalized, which lowers their feeling of overall satisfaction and belonging in the HEI's community. It is also implied by the result that HEIs must actively celebrate and promote disability diversity in order to create an atmosphere where all students' varied experiences and talents are valued. For SWDs' views to be heard and their contributions

recognized, this calls for institutional commitment, awareness-raising efforts, and SWD participation in decision-making processes.

Satisfaction with Disability Discrimination Investigation Process

According to Table 32's average response and standard deviation for DDM satisfaction question 7 ($M= 3.92$, $SD= 1.039$), the majority of respondents found their university's process for investigating cases of disability discrimination or harassment to be satisfactory. The investigation's finding shows that the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen for the study had a good procedure for looking into cases of harassment or discrimination against SWDs raises alarms as well addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model by expressing satisfaction with the HEI's process for investigating acts of disability discrimination or harassment. It means that these issues have been addressed and resolved by the institutions via the use of efficient methods. Accessibility, punctuality, impartiality, openness, and the participation of pertinent parties including SWDs in the inquiry process are all critical considerations.

Satisfaction with the Leadership Response

According to the average and standard deviation ratings for DDM satisfaction item 8 in Table 32, ($M=2.88$, $SD= 1.399$), the campus community is very dissatisfied with senior leadership's response to incidents of harassment or discrimination based on a person's disability diversity. The result suggests that there is cause for worry regarding the way in which senior leadership responding instances for harassment or discrimination against SWDs at the five public HEIs in Ethiopia that were chosen relating to the behavioral component of the DLE model by expressing dissatisfaction. It implies that the senior leadership of the institutions may not have addressed and managed these situations with all due diligence. The discontent suggests that when it comes to resolving and preventing disability discrimination or harassment, SWDs see a lack of timely and effective action, as well as a lack of support and advocacy from the top leadership. SWDs may become frustrated, feel marginalized, and lose trust as a result of this unsatisfactory reaction.

The rights and well-being of SWDs must be given top priority by HEI leadership in order to show that they are committed to creating a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere. This calls for putting in place strict standards, educating employees, and making sure that instances of harassment or discrimination are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. To prevent and successfully respond to such occurrences, senior leadership should actively interact with SWDs,

solicit their feedback, and seriously consider their concerns. In this regard, this investigation replicates the findings of similar studies in other contexts where students have frequently protested against a lack of response to incidents of harassment or discrimination against SWDs diversity, inclusion, racism, discrimination, or the lack of action and structural transformation for diversity in HEIs (Singh Sandhu et al., 2022).

Satisfaction with Leadership's Disability Diversity Commitment

The respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the top leadership of their campus in relation to whether or not they are devoted to DDM and equity, as per Table 32, DDM satisfaction item 9. As seen by the mean and standard deviation values of ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 1.090$), the majority of respondents were not satisfied with their HEIs' top leadership's dedication to disability diversity and equity addressing the behavioral component of the DLE model by expressing dissatisfaction. This result suggests that there is cause for worry regarding the commitment of the campus's top leadership to disability diversity and equity, as indicated by the unhappiness stated by SWDs at the five Ethiopian public HEIs that were chosen. It implies that the top leadership may not be genuinely committed to fostering and guaranteeing disability diversity and fairness on HEIs, nor have they taken any aggressive steps in this regard. The dissatisfaction suggests that SWDs believe there aren't enough obvious efforts that put their needs first and encourage diversity. Hence, this study adds to the literature by demonstrating that most of SWDs diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs were not satisfied with their campus' top leadership's dedication to DDM and equity.

The research's key finding, based on the grand mean of 2.87 and the qualitative data, is that SWDs in Ethiopian public HEIs express dissatisfaction with the DDM on their HEIs. The study identified several areas that require improvement in order to achieve greater satisfaction and equity for SWDs. To address student dissatisfaction, HEIs must prioritize disability inclusion, create strategic plans to foster a welcoming environment (e.g. mentorship, counseling, assistive tech, disability training, accessible accommodations), and prioritize resource allocation for holistic programs addressing diverse student needs, to build a more satisfactory and equitable campus experience.

4.16.1 The Correlation Between Curricular and Co-curricular Activities and DDM satisfaction

Sub Research Question 5.1: *Is there a significant positive correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities and GDM & DDM satisfaction at public Ethiopian HEIs?*

One of the sub basic research questions of the current study was to test whether there is a significant positive correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities and GDM & DDM satisfaction at public Ethiopian HEIs. In the results given below, it was attempted to answer those questions from the DDM point of view.

Variables	1	2	3
Curricular Perceptions for DDM	1.00		
Extra-Curricular Perceptions for DDM	.388**	1.00	
Satisfaction on DDM	.273**	.355**	1.00

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 33: *Correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities & DDM satisfaction*

As shown in Table 33, satisfaction on DDM was significantly moderately correlated with the two variables, The widely-used rules specified by Cohen regard a correlation of $r=.1$ as small, $r=.3$ as moderate, and $r=.5$ as large. Here, then, we see a moderate positive correlation ranging from ($r = .355$, $p < .01$) for extra-curricular perceptions for DDM to ($r = .273$, $p < .01$) for curricular perceptions. Thus, there are statistically moderate relationships between satisfaction, curricular and extracurricular, for DDM because all of the two tailed p value was less than .01, Satisfaction on DDM was significantly correlated with the variables mentioned. The extra-curricular perceptions for DDM were also moderately correlated with the curricular perceptions for DDM. Cohen's frequently used guidelines classify a correlation of $r=.1$ as minor, $r=.3$ as moderate, and $r=.5$ as strong. We detect a moderate association here, ranging from ($r = .3.88$, $p < .01$) for curricular views of DDM. Because all of the two tailed p value was less than .01, Extra-Curricular Perceptions for DDM was significantly correlated with the variables mentioned.

The finding that satisfaction with DDM initiatives had moderate positive correlations with curricular and extracurricular perceptions, and were statistically significant, suggests that increased student satisfaction with DDM efforts at the Ethiopian public HEIs is closely linked to and supportive of the integration of disability diversity content into both the academic curriculum and extracurricular activities.

4.16. 2 T -Statistics for Male and Female Respondents on Satisfaction for DDM

Sub Research Question 5.2: *Is there statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on satisfaction for GDM & DDM?*

As stated above, one of the current study's sub-basic research questions was to establish whether or not there was statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on satisfaction for GDM & DDM at public Ethiopian HEIs. The following results sought to offer solutions to such questions from the DDM point of view.

Group Statistics					Independent Sample T-test			
	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
T-test of Satisfaction for DDM	Male	165	26.2545	4.17404	.32495	2.218	245	.027
	Female	82	25.0854	3.28183	.36242			

Table 34: *Independent Sample T-Test of Respondents Satisfaction for DDM Based on Sex*

As shown in Table 34, there was no significant mean difference between the sample population ($p=0.027$). This means that, because $p > 0.05$, there was statistically significant difference in satisfaction on disability diversity management between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen.

The finding of a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with DDM between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs ($p=0.027$, $p<0.05$) indicates that gender was a significant factor influencing satisfaction with the institutions' efforts and provisions related to supporting SWDs. This suggests that there were notable differences in how male and female students experienced and evaluated the effectiveness of the HEIs' DDM practices and resources. This seems to contradict with more recent study (Bini & Masserini, 2016), which discovered that gender differences do not affect satisfaction—that is, men are not less satisfied than women. In this instance, nevertheless, there is a gender difference in satisfaction; however, females are less satisfied than male.

4.17 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the results and analysis of the study. The purpose of this convergent parallel mixed research (QUAN + QUAL) study was to critically examine and provide insight into the perception, practices, and challenges of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. 642 quantitative participants and 37 qualitative took part in this study. The data were gathered through survey questionnaires personal interviews, document analysis and observation. Two types of survey questionnaires with 57 and 51 items were prepared in accordance with Hurtado's et al., (2012), Diversified Learning Environment (DLE) model. It was helpful to use descriptive statistics like percentage, frequency, mean, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics, such as ANOVA, linear regression, and multiple regression, were also used depending on the research question as well as the objective of the study. A narrative inquiry approach was also used by completing semi-structured interviews which provided space for the participants to tell their lived experiences. This chapter completed the triangulation of the presentation and conversation. Empirical materials, primarily the data gathered from the survey and semi structured interview conducted with the participants, demonstrated that the GDM & DDM at the five Ethiopian public HEIs used for the study were viewed moderately. However, since much more development is anticipated, the policy practice for GDM & DDM was still mild enough. The respondents also talked about their experiences with their HEIs' diversity management. The level of commitment from the senior leaders for GDM & DDM was graded as lower. Regarding the respondents' satisfaction, a sizable portion of both the quantitative and qualitative respondents said that HEIs still needed to do a lot more work before they were pleased. The findings of this study are summarized in the next chapter, along with conclusions, recommendations and implications.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the purpose, summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations, for GDM & DDM at the chosen five Ethiopian public HEIs. It overall provides measurable recommendations for both HEIs & for policy makers that might be used to solve the study's problem. It is preceded by the presentation and analysis of research findings from which conclusion was made. After fully answering the basic research questions, recommendations for future research were also provided since the researcher had found researchable dimensions on the same topic.

"Data are just summaries of thousands of stories-tell a few of those stories to help make the data meaningful."

— Dan Heath.

5.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to critically examine and provide insight into the perception, practices, and challenges of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. It was carried out utilizing convergent parallel-mixed techniques using quantitative and qualitative approaches (QUAN+QUAL). By using suggestions from Hurtado's et al., (2012), Diversified Learning Environment (DLE) model as a the conceptual framework foundation, specifically, the study aimed to assess the respondents' overall perceptions regarding GDM and DDM at Ethiopian public HEIs, including examining how respondents perceived the use of curricular and extracurricular activities in relation to GDM and DDM, determining the extent to which respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM-related coursework related to their perceptions of extracurricular activities, and analyzing if there was a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents' perceptions. Additionally, the study explored how policy for GDM and DDM were practiced at Ethiopian public HEIs, assessing whether policy practices related to the commitment of senior leaders, and investigating the relationships between perceptions and practices of GDM & DDM. The study also evaluated the commitment of senior leaders to

managing gender and disability diversity, determined if there was a significant positive correlation or regression between HEIs' senior leaders' commitment and students' satisfaction, identified the challenges respondents faced in relation to gender and disability diversity, and assessed the extent to which students were satisfied with the GDM & DDM, including examining if there was a significant positive correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities and GDM and DDM satisfaction, and analyzing if there was a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents' satisfaction. The study, which included 642 undergraduate regular students for quantitative research and 37 participants for qualitative research, was directed by the following five primary research topics and their sub questions:

1. What are the respondents' overall perception regarding GDM & DDM at Ethiopian public HEIs?
 - 1.1 *How do respondents perceive the use of curricular activities in relation to GDM & DDM?*
 - 1.2 *What do respondents perceive about the use of extracurricular activities aimed at promoting gender and disability diversity?*
 - 1.3 *To what extent do respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM related coursework relate to their perceptions of extracurricular activities?*
 - 1.4 *Is there statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on perception for GDM & DDM?*
2. How are policies for GDM & DDM practiced at Ethiopian public HEIs?
 - 2.1 *Do policy practices for managing gender and disability diversity relate to the commitment of senior leaders?*
 - 2.2 *What are the relationships between perceptions and policy practices of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs?*
3. How is the commitment of senior leaders to managing gender and disability diversity?
 - 3.1 *Does HEIs senior leaders' commitment for GDM & DDM have significant positive correlation or regression to students' satisfaction?*
4. What challenges do respondents' face in relation to gender & disability diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs?
5. To what extent are students satisfied with the gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs?

The study was conducted in 5 (five) Ethiopian public HEIs namely, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa Science & Technology University, Debreberhan University, Selale University & Kotebe University of Education were sampled for the study using convenience sampling techniques.

5.2 Summary of the Main Findings

The following themes comprised the summary of the main findings: demographic information; overall perceptions for gender and disability diversity management; curricular perceptions for gender & disability diversity management; extra-curricular perceptions for gender & disability diversity management; gender & disability diversity management related policy practice; senior leaders commitment for gender & disability diversity management; challenges of gender & disability diversity management, and satisfaction on gender & disability diversity management. The following categories provided answers to both the major research questions and the supporting sub research questions.

Category 1: Demographic Information

Three hundred ninety-five (n=395, i.e., 216 male & 179 females) undergraduate students, two hundred forty-seven (n=247, i.e., 165 male & 82 females)) undergraduate SWDs; totally six hundred forty-two (n=642 i.e., 381 male & 261 females) filled the questionnaires and returned. Four academic vice deans, five student deans, ten students, ten instructors, five gender directorate directors, three special need support center heads; totally thirty-seven (n=37, i.e., 22 male & 15 females) qualitative respondents were interviewed. Furthermore, data were collected from documents related to the topic. After the data was collected, presentation, analysis and interpretation were done.

Category 2: Overall Perceptions for GDM & DDM

Main Research Question 1: *What are the respondents' overall perception regarding GDM & DDM at Ethiopian public HEIs?*

The overall perceptions of GDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs were as follows: The three highest rated dimension was fair and equitable treatment (M=4.25, SD=1.046), then same opportunities (M=4.04, SD=.980) and values making friends (M=3.99, SD=1.098). The three

lowest rated subscales were protecting and assisting ($M=2.54$, $SD=1.05$), GDM priority ($M=2.56$, $SD=.973$) and respect and support ($M=2.7$, $SD=1.077$).

The overall perceptions of DDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs were as follows: The three highest rated dimension was uncomfortable ($M=4.28$, $SD=1.019$), then value on making friends ($M=4.21$, $SD=.942$) and enjoy same rights ($M=4.18$, $SD=.952$). The three lowest rated subscales were accessibility ($M=2.41$, $SD=.966$), respect and support ($M=2.67$, $SD=1.105$), and protecting and assisting SWDs ($M=2.69$, $SD=1.184$).

According to the study's overall findings, both quantitative and qualitative, the respondents at Ethiopian public HEIs generally had a positive perception of the diversity management processes at their institutions. Quantitatively, the study found a grand mean score of 3.34 for GDM and 3.4 for DDM, indicating a relatively favorable perception among the respondents. Qualitatively, the respondents perceived that there were efforts by the HEIs to accommodate and include both male and female students, as well as SWDs. However, they felt that there were limitations in the fair and equitable treatment of both genders and SWDs. Some respondents also felt that the full accessibility of the campus for SWDs could be improved. There were suggestions that the institutions should strengthen their GDM and DDM frameworks to ensure greater respect and support for students of all genders and disability backgrounds.

The findings highlight the need for Ethiopian public HEIs to continue enhancing their diversity management policies, infrastructure, and support systems to foster a truly inclusive environment for all students, addressing both gender and disability-related concerns. While the overall perceptions were positive, there is still room for improvement in ensuring equal opportunities and accessibility for all.

Category 3: Curricular Perceptions for GDM & DDM

Sub Research Question 1.1: How do respondents perceive the use of curricular activities in relation to GDM & DDM?

The curricular perceptions for GDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs were as follows: the three highest rated subscales are: interest ($M=3.87$, $SD=1.104$), then equitable treatment ($M=3.84$, $SD=1.075$), and comfortable on asking ($M=3.81$, $SD=1.184$). The three lowest

rated subscales were reading materials ($M=2.37$, $SD=1.109$), training ($M=2.39$, $SD=.754$) and harm of stereotyping ($M=2.40$, $SD=1.123$).

The curricular perceptions for DDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs were as follows: the two highest rated subscales are positive campus climate ($M=4.06$, $SD=.937$) and personal attention ($M=3.94$, $SD=1.103$). The three lowest rated subscales were encouragement ($M=2.25$, $SD=.902$), training ($M=2.39$, $SD=1.106$) and reading materials ($M=2.35$, $SD=1.112$).

The qualitative responses from participants, the document analysis, and the observational data, along with the overall mean scores for both gender (2.96) and disability (2.4), suggest that respondents perceive the current curriculum in Ethiopian public HEIs to be lacking in content and approaches that adequately address issues of gender and disability diversity. There appears to be a need to incorporate more inclusive and diversity-focused materials throughout the curriculum in order to better support students from diverse gender and disability backgrounds. The data indicates that the current curriculum does not sufficiently cater to the needs and experiences of these student populations.

Category 4: Extra-curricular Perceptions for GDM & DDM

Sub Research Question 1.2: What do respondents perceive about the use of extracurricular activities aimed at promoting gender and disability diversity?

The extra-curricular perceptions for GDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs were as follows: the three highest rated subscales are life skills training ($M=3.93$, $SD=1.068$), festivals ($M=3.73$, $SD=1.154$) and representing the interests ($M=3.69$, $SD=1.160$). The three lowest rated subscales were using leaflets ($M=2.63$, $SD=.954$), invited guest speakers ($M=3.57$, $SD=1.208$) and clubs, ($M=3.64$, $SD=1.141$).

The extra-curricular perceptions for DDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs were as follows: the two highest rated subscales are associations and clubs ($M=3.94$, $SD=1.099$) and life skills ($M=3.91$, $SD=.996$). The two lowest rated subscales were disability-related festivals ($M=2.41$, $SD=.786$) and use leaflets, posters, university radio programs, ($M=2.97$, $SD=1.226$).

Sub Research Question 1.3: To what extent do respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM related coursework relate to their perceptions of extracurricular activities?

According to a Pearson correlation value of ($r= 0.150$), there is a low -positive association between views of GDM related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. And, with a p value of 0.003, it was fairly significant. Because values between 0 and 0.3 (0 and 0.3) indicate a weak positive linear relationship via a shaky linear rule, there is a weak and positive relationship ($p=0.388$) between perceptions of DDM related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities at the five Ethiopian public HEIs selected. It was also statistically significant, with a p value of 0.000.

The statistical significance of these relationships suggests that the curricular and extracurricular aspects of GDM & DDM at the HEIs are related and perceived as interconnected by students, even if the strength of the association is relatively modest.

Sub Research Question 1.4: *Is there statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on perception for GDM & DDM?*

The sample population had no significant mean difference ($p=0.738$). This suggests that there was no significant difference in perceptions of gender diversity management between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen, because $p > 0.05$. However, the sample population's mean differed significantly ($p=0.022$). Because p was less than 0.05, this indicates that there was a significant difference in perceptions of disability diversity management between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs selected. The difference in findings between gender and DDM suggests that there may be room for improvement in how disability diversity is being handled, as the male and female perspectives on this differ significantly, unlike their similar perceptions on GDM

Overall, based on the qualitative data and the grand mean of 3.58 (for both GDM & DDM), the study found that respondents generally had positive perceptions towards the use of extracurricular activities aimed at promoting gender & disability diversity at Ethiopian public HEIs. Respondents reported that HEIs made efforts to promote inclusion of both male and female students, as well as SWDs, in campus clubs, sports teams, and other extracurricular programs. However, respondents noted lower participation levels for female students and SWDs compared to their male and non-disabled peers, and expressed a desire for HEIs to continue strengthening diversity and accessibility initiatives to further enhance equal opportunities in extracurricular involvement.

Category 5: GDM & DDM Related Policy Practice

Main Research Question 2: *How are policies for GDM & DDM practiced at Ethiopian public HEIs?*

The three most rated subscales in GDM related policy practice at the chosen five Ethiopian public HEIs are disciplinary procedure ($M=4.26$, $SD=1.022$), discrimination prohibited ($M=4.21$, $SD=.946$), and affirmative action ($M=4.20$, $SD=.$). Effectively conveyed ($M=2.51$, $SD=.935$), specific policies ($M=3.85$, $SD=.913$), and mission statement ($M=2.62$, $SD=0.80$) were the three lowest ranked subscales.

The three most rated subscales in DDM related policy practice at the chosen five Ethiopian public HEIs are discrimination prohibited ($M=4.21$, $SD=.942$), implementation of policies ($M=4.2$, $SD=.979$), and specific policies & programs ($M=4.18$, $SD=.952$). Disciplinary procedures ($M=2.26$, $SD=.896$), communicated ($M=2.44$, $SD=.872$), and affirmative action ($M=2.60$, $SD=.949$) were the three lowest ranked subscales.

Sub Research Question 2.1: *Do policy practices for managing gender and disability diversity relate to the commitment of senior leaders?*

There is a strong positive relationship ($r= 0.613$ for GDM, & $r=0.698$ for DDM) between policy practices and the commitment of top management at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. And, with a p value of 0.000, it was perfectly significant. In other words, the data shows a strong, statistically significant positive relationship between the policy practices implemented at these HEIs and the level of commitment demonstrated by their top management. This suggests the two factors are closely linked in the context being studied.

Sub Research Question 2.2: *What are the relationships between perceptions and policy practices of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs?*

Practice for GDM was significantly correlated with the three variables except with extra-curricular perceptions for GDM. Here, then, we see a larger and moderate positive correlation ranging from ($r=.852$, $p<.01$) for policy practice for GDM to ($r=.089$, $p<.01$) for extra-curricular perceptions for GDM to ($r=.219$, $p<.01$) for Curricular Perceptions for GDM and with Overall Perceptions for GDM ($r=.126$, $p<.01$). Thus, there are statistically moderate and larger relationships between perceptions, curricular extracurricular, and policy practice for GDM.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient = 0.698, demonstrating a strong correlation between policy practices and top management commitment at the five Ethiopian public HEIs with a p value of 0.000, which is absolutely significant.

DDM practice was substantially linked with all four factors. Cohen's frequently used guidelines classify a correlation of $r=.1$ as minor, $r=.3$ as moderate, and $r=.5$ as strong. Here, we show a greater and somewhat favorable association ranging from ($r =.490$, $p.<01$) for overall perceptions to ($r =.385$, $p.<01$) for curricular perceptions to ($r =.416$, $p.<01$) for extra-curricular views and with DDM policy ($r =.563$, $p.<01$).

This means, the findings indicate that there are statistically significant and moderate to strong relationships between perceptions, curricular, extracurricular, and policy practices for both GDM and DDM in the context of the Ethiopian public higher education institutions studied. The findings suggest that positive perceptions, integration of gender diversity into the curriculum and extracurricular activities, and well-designed institutional policies are closely linked and mutually reinforcing factors for successfully implementing GDM and diversity and DDM practices in the Ethiopian public higher education context.

The study findings suggest that, overall, Ethiopian public HEIs have policies in place to manage both gender diversity (GDM grand mean = 3.87) and disability diversity (DDM grand mean = 3.4). This indicates Ethiopian public HEIs have policies in place to manage gender & disability diversity. However, the data also points to limitations in the effective implementation and communication of these diversity policies. The qualitative findings suggest the actual execution and impact of the GDM and DDM policies are somewhat constrained. Furthermore, the institutions appear to have significant shortcomings when it comes to clear disciplinary procedures for reporting prejudice or discrimination related to disability issues (DDM mean = 2.26). They also seem to have limitations in using affirmative action policies to equitably manage disability diversity (DDM mean = 2.6). In summary, while the public HEIs have diversity management policies on paper, there are gaps between the stated commitments and the practical realization of inclusive practices, especially pertaining to disability-related diversity. Strengthening policy implementation, communication, and accountability mechanisms could help these institutions foster a more truly inclusive environment for all students.

Category 6: Senior Leaders Commitment for GDM & DDM

Main Research Question 3: *How is the commitment of senior leaders to managing gender and disability diversity?*

The three highest scored subscales for GDM leadership commitment at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs are: treating with equal respect ($M=4.09$, $SD=1.080$), respond to discrimination ($M=4.05$, $SD=1.166$), and establish the campus vision ($M=3.86$, $SD=1.075$). Committed ($M=2.56$, $SD=1.225$), create campus environment ($M=2.86$, $SD=1.281$), and shows in action ($M=3.17$, $SD=1.080$) were the three lowest scored subscales.

The three highest scored subscales for DDM top leadership commitment at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs are: establish campus vision ($M=4.58$, $SD=.952$), respond on instances of disability ($M=4.28$, $SD=1.019$), and treats with equal respect ($M=4.20$, $SD=.979$). Commitment to handling ($M=2.65$, $SD=1.220$), creating a campus environment ($M=2.67$, $SD=1.098$), and action ($M=3.04$, $SD=1.263$) were the three lowest scored subscales.

Sub Research Question 3.1 *Does HEIs senior leaders' commitment for GDM & DDM have significant positive correlation or regression to students' satisfaction?*

Pearson Correlation Coefficient ($r= 0.227$), ($p=0.000$) demonstrating a fairly weak relationship between leadership commitment for GDM and student satisfaction at the five Ethiopian public HEIs. Similarly, since the p-value is less than (<0.05), we may conclude that it is a statistically significant.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient = 0.475, showing a reasonably strong relationship between DDM leadership commitment and student contentment at Ethiopia's five public higher education institutions. Similarly, we may infer that there is a statistically significant difference ($p=0.000$) if the p-value is smaller than (0.05). The findings suggest that while leadership commitment has a strong and statistically significant relationship with student satisfaction for DDM initiatives, the relationship between leadership commitment and student satisfaction is much weaker for GDM initiatives in the Ethiopian public higher education context.

Generally, it can be summarized as, the commitment of Ethiopian public HEIs' senior leaders to students' GDM & DDM & is positive ($M=3.43$, and $M=3.58$), however, their efforts in creating a campus environment that truly welcomes and embraces gender and disability diversity were limited ($M=2.86$ for GDM & $M=2.67$ for DDM). Additionally, the institutions did not

adequately handle matters related to gender and disability diversity in a fitting manner ($M=2.56$ for GDM & $M=2.65$ for DDM). The findings suggest that while Ethiopian public HEIs' senior leadership expresses a generally positive commitment to GDM & DDM among students, they have fallen short in creating a truly inclusive campus environment and in adequately addressing diversity-related issues. This disconnects between the stated commitment and the actual implementation points to a need for the institutions to strengthen their efforts to foster a more welcoming and responsive approach to gender and disability diversity on their campuses.

Category 7: Challenges respondents' face in relation to GDM & DDM

Main Research Question 4: *What challenges do respondents' face in relation to gender & disability diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs?*

Not giving much attention to gender issue ($M=4.21$, $SD=.946$), favoring males than females ($M=4.20$, $SD=.996$), and female's complaint was not secure ($M=4.2$, $SD=1.022$) were the three most ranked subscales of GDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. Access to counseling ($M=2.42$, $SD=1.13$), excluding reported case ($M=2.52$, $SD=1.17$), and planning to leave ($M=2.70$, $SD=1.195$) were the three lowest rated subscales.

Physical and attitudinal barriers ($M=4.28$, $SD=1.019$), not placing too much attention for SWDs ($M=4.21$, $SD=.942$), and access to counseling ($M=4.2$, $SD=.979$) were the three most ranked subscales of DDM at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs. Fewer students without disabilities over SWDs ($M=3.86$, $SD=.900$), shortage of research ($M=3.96$, $SD=.953$), and planning to leave ($M=4.01$, $SD=1.139$) were the three lowest rated subscales.

It can be summarized that in Ethiopia public HEIs, students of both genders and SWDs often face significant challenges in navigating educational environments that do not adequately address their diverse needs.

Category 8: Satisfaction on GDM & DDM

Main Research Question 5: *To what extent are students satisfied with the gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs?*

The two highest rated subscales on GDM at the five Ethiopian public HEIs were satisfied with overall campus experience ($M=4.08$, $SD=1.026$) and satisfied with the HEIs sufficient

programs ($M=3.77$, $SD=1.066$). The three lowest-rated subscales were satisfied with the commitment ($M=2.38$, $SD=1.089$), satisfied with investigating discrimination ($M=2.46$, $SD=1.133$), and satisfied with the response for harassment ($M=2.53$, $SD=1.199$).

At the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, the two highest scored subscales on DDM satisfaction were satisfied with my interactions ($M=4.04$, $SD=.953$), satisfied with the process of investigation ($M=3.92$, $SD=1.039$). The three lowest-rated subscales were recognition ($M=2.33$, $SD=1.145$), satisfied with the fair and equitable treatment ($M=2.38$, $SD=.723$), and satisfied with the regulation and laws ($M=2.44$, $SD=1.117$).

The research's key finding is that students in Ethiopian public HEIs express dissatisfaction with the GDM & DDM on their HEIs. The study identified areas for improvement, such as ensuring equal opportunities and support for students of both genders and disabilities.

Sub Research Question 5. 1: Is there a significant positive correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities and GDM & DDM satisfaction at Ethiopian public HEIs?

Satisfaction on GDM was correlated with low values with the two variables, The widely-used rules specified by Cohen regard a correlation of $r=.1$ as small, $r=.3$ as moderate, and $r=.5$ as large. Here, then, we see a low negative correlation ranging from ($r = -.065$, $p < .01$) for extra-curricular perceptions for GDM to ($r = .151$ $p < .01$) for curricular perceptions. Thus, there are statistically low and moderate relationships between satisfaction, curricular and extracurricular, for GDM because all of the two tailed p value was less than .01, Satisfaction on GDM was significant with the variables mentioned.

The finding that satisfaction on GDM had low to moderate negative correlations with curricular and extracurricular perceptions, despite being statistically significant, suggests that increased student satisfaction with GDM does not necessarily translate into stronger integration of gender diversity content into the curriculum or extracurricular activities at the Ethiopian public higher education institutions studied.

Satisfaction with DDM was considerably moderately linked with the two variables. According to Cohen's frequently used guidelines, a correlation of $r=.1$ is considered minor, $r=.3$ is considered moderate, and $r=.5$ is considered big. In this case, we show a somewhat favorable association ranging from ($r = .355$, $p < .01$) for extra-curricular perceptions of DDM to ($r = .273$,

$p < .01$) for curricular 209 perceptions. Thus, because all of the two-tailed p values were smaller than .01, satisfaction on DDM was substantially linked with the factors indicated.

The finding that satisfaction with DDM initiatives had moderate positive correlations with curricular and extracurricular perceptions, and were statistically significant, suggests that increased student satisfaction with DDM efforts at the Ethiopian public HEIs is closely linked to and supportive of the integration of disability diversity content into both the academic curriculum and extracurricular activities.

Sub Research Question 5. 2: Is there statistically significant difference between male and female respondents on satisfaction for GDM & DDM?

Because ($p=0.791$), $p > 0.05$, there was no statistically significant difference in satisfaction on GDM between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen to this study. The finding of no statistically significant difference in GDM satisfaction between male and female respondents suggests that gender is not a significant factor influencing this aspect of the student experience at the Ethiopian public HEIs studied, implying equity in GDM practices and support provided to students regardless of their gender.

The sample population had no significant mean difference ($p=0.027$). This shows that there was a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with DDM between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs chosen, since $p > 0.05$. The finding of a statistically significant difference in satisfaction with DDM between male and female respondents at the five Ethiopian public HEIs ($p=0.027$, $p < 0.05$) indicates that gender was a significant factor influencing satisfaction of the institutions' efforts and provisions related to supporting students with disabilities. This suggests that there were notable differences in how male and female students experienced and evaluated the HEIs' DDM practices and resources.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Conclusions from the Reviewed Literature

According to all the reviewed research papers on GDM & DDM, the author has gained knowledge that from the start of the millennium, there has been a continuous increase in the number of females in Ethiopian public HEIs, owing mostly to the large development of the HEIs

system and the influence of equality policies and efforts. Nonetheless, two decades after the implementation of preferred admission standards for socially and historically disadvantaged groups, inequality in access to and accomplishment in HEIs remains a major problem.

Evidence suggested that despite being prevalent across multiple educational levels, the issue of gender diversity imbalance in Ethiopian HEIs has only recently gained governmental attention. Research also indicates that the gender diversity disparity widens as one advances up the educational ladder in the country. However, it has been argued that the forms and causes of gender diversity imbalance in the nation's HEIs have received scant scientific scrutiny. What's interesting is that female's socialization and the low expectations they've been exposed to at home and in society as a whole prohibit them from excelling in HEIs, even when they do.

Empirical findings advocate that gender diversity equality is not a heated issue in Ethiopia yet. It is documented in policy documents as well as educational, legal, and political agendas. The Constitution (FDRE, 1995) recognizes the degree gender diversity disparity and institutes affirmative action in the workplace as well as other social services such as education and training. The Higher Education Proclamation reiterates the significance of giving "disadvantaged groups," particularly women, a differential entrance advantage. The Government's Strategic Framework for Gender Equality (GSFGE) in HEIs emphasized a number of approaches to increase female's diversity participation in HEIs in conformity with these legal and regulatory rules.

Despite the fact that the FDRE constitution and HEIs declaration provide due respect to disability diversity problems, research suggests that Ethiopian HEIs are not well-equipped to accommodate SWDs diversity. Thus, many Ethiopian SWDs diversity have academic and other obstacles in Ethiopian public HEIs due to a lack of appropriate special support services, supplies, and so on. According to the Ethiopian Education Development Road Map, disability centers and other service centers that assist SWDs diversity should be operated by specialists who are suited to the task. It is advisable to choose leaders and professionals who have faced comparable challenges so that they can understand the situation. The light of the challenge of managing disability diversity in HEIs.

Many of the reviewed articles reflect emerging trends that variety of barriers prevent SWDs diversity from fully participating in society. A significant proportion of Ethiopian HEIs continue to have built-in circumstances that represent significant hurdles, forcing SWDs diversity to seek

assistance from others. As a result, significant challenges remain in the way of SWDs diversity academic success due to a lack of appropriate teaching resources, computers, and assistive technology, as well as a lack of curriculum or material modifications.

Evidence from the reviewed literature showed that Ethiopian public HEIs provide little to no assistance for SWDs diversity and do not have a specific policy for them. Furthermore, Ethiopian HEIs students had a negative attitude toward peers who were obviously with disability. For these reasons, it is natural that SWDs diversity in HEIs confront problems such as a lack of awareness about disability diversity, misperceptions by instructors and students, negative attitudes, and a lack of appropriate training materials. HEIs and instructors have a tough time adapting SWDs diversity because they force them to conform to institutional regulations rather than their own demands.

5.3.2 Conclusions from the overall key findings

This PhD dissertation has revealed important insights into the perceptions, practices and challenges of GDM and DDM within Ethiopian public HEIs. The findings indicate that while respondents generally held positive perceptions of these practices, they also perceived significant gaps in the current curriculum's ability to adequately address gender and disability diversity. The study found that respondents perceived extracurricular activities aimed at promoting diversity positively, yet noted lower participation levels for female students and SWDs compared to their male and non-disabled peers. Interestingly, a positive relationship was observed between perceptions of DDM-related coursework and perceptions of diversity-focused extracurricular programming, suggesting that academic efforts to incorporate DDM may be associated with increased student engagement in related activities.

The study also uncovered disparities in perceptions between male and female respondents, highlighting the need for a more nuanced approach to addressing the unique challenges faced by different demographic groups. While diversity management policies are in place, their effective implementation remains a challenge, underscoring the critical role of senior leadership commitment in driving successful diversity initiatives. The theory-practice gap is readily visible in the MoE's yearly education abstracts and the WEF's annual global HEIs enrolment gender gap rankings and SWDs diversity challenges which requires thoughtful reconsideration. For these reasons, it is understandable that guaranteeing equitable access to higher education for SWDs,

women, and men has become a critical aim of the UN's SDG 10 & SDG 5, despite the fact that gender and disability diversity inequality remains in numerous HEIs. The positive correlation found between senior leaders' commitment and student satisfaction emphasizes the importance of fostering an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all students. Moreover, the findings point to the value of a holistic approach, where curricular and extracurricular components work in tandem to cultivate a culture of inclusion.

The study also reveals that student at Ethiopian public HEIs express dissatisfaction with the institution's GDM and DDM efforts. This underscores the need for a more concerted and collaborative effort among key stakeholders, including policymakers, university leaders, faculty, staff, and students, to address the concerns and experiences of both gender and SWD populations. Capacity building and professional development for HEIs' personnel are also crucial to enhance the implementation and sustainability of GDM and DDM initiatives.

The insights gained from this study provide a strong foundation for informed decision-making and strategic planning in the practice of GDM & DDM within Ethiopian public HEIs. By addressing the complexities and nuances evidenced by this research, institutions can pave the way for a more inclusive and empowering academic landscape that celebrates diversity and fosters the success of all students.

More generally, evidence from this study's finding showed that in reality, not everything is terrible. It should also be emphasized that while this study has shown success stories in terms of advancements and good consequences, there is still a long way to go in terms of the overall gender and SWDs diversity management picture. Thus, from the current study's findings it can be also concluded that, while full implementation of HEIs' GDM & DDM has a long and difficult road, it is also an urgent one because both genders and SWDs diversity must have equal educational opportunities that provide them with the tools to build a dignified and productive future.

On a broader level, the current study identified major most observed challenges (negative attitudes, a lack of educational resources, physical inaccessibility, budgetary constraints, an inaccessible library, and inaccessible classroom structures). In its widest sense, this PhD dissertation discloses that despite some signs of progress in GDM and DDM in the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, the majority of females and SWDs diversity were unsatisfied with their HEIs' GDM & DDM, and top management's commitment fell far short of their expectations.

Overall, the findings of the present doctoral dissertation show that, because there are currently promising trials for GDM and DDM, there is room for improvement in the management of gender and disability diversity at the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs if the necessary perceptions and commitment, as well as a sufficient budget, are present so as to make them (both genders and SWDs) satisfied.

5.4. Recommendations

The recommendations listed below are based on the findings and conclusions summary.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Higher Education Institutions

1. For Overall Perception of GDM & DDM:

From the findings in RQ1, while the overall perceptions of respondents regarding GDM and DDM at public HEIs in Ethiopia are positive, there are limitations in the support provided and a need for greater prioritization of gender and disability diversity.

It is recommended that these HEIs build upon their current efforts to further strengthen their diversity management frameworks. This should involve enhancing the support systems in place to ensure more equitable treatment and improved accessibility for all students, regardless of their gender or disability status.

2. For Curricular Perception on GDM & DDM:

Based on the findings from RQ: 1.1, that the respondents perceive the current curriculum in Ethiopian public HEIs to be lacking in content and approaches that adequately address gender and disability diversity, it is recommended that these HEIs undertake a comprehensive review and revision of their curriculum. This should involve incorporating more inclusive and diversity-focused materials across all academic programs to better support and cater to the needs and experiences of students from both gender and disability backgrounds. By making such curricular reforms, the HEIs can demonstrate a stronger commitment to promoting a truly inclusive learning environment that celebrates and reflects the diversity of their student population.

3. For Extra-Curricular Perception of GDM & DDM:

Based on the finding from RQ: 1.2, while respondents generally perceived the use of extracurricular activities positively in terms of promoting gender and disability diversity

at Ethiopian public HEIs, female students and SWDs had limited involvement in campus clubs, sports teams, and other extracurricular programs. It is recommended that these institutions build on their current efforts to further enhance equal opportunities for participation. This should involve strengthening diversity and accessibility initiatives to increase the involvement of female students and SWDs in campus clubs, sports teams, and other extracurricular programs. The HEIs should also regularly monitor and evaluate the inclusivity of their extracurricular offerings, and actively engage with the student community to identify and address any barriers to equal participation. By doing so, the HEIs can create a more vibrant and inclusive campus environment that celebrates the diversity of their student population.

The findings from RQ: 1.3, suggest that there is a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between perceptions of DDM-related coursework and perceptions of extracurricular activities at the five Ethiopian public HEIs studied. To better understand this relationship, HEIs should consider: 1. Conducting further research to explore the nature and factors underlying this relationship in more depth. 2. Evaluating the content and delivery of DDM-related coursework to ensure it is effectively integrated with and supporting the extracurricular activities focused on DDM.

The findings from RQ: 1.4, suggest that there was no significant difference in perceptions of gender diversity management between male and female respondents, as the p-value of 0.738 was greater than 0.05. However, there was a significant difference in perceptions of disability diversity management between male and female respondents, as the p-value of 0.022 was less than 0.05. It is recommended to address the significant difference in perceptions between male and female respondents on disability diversity management, the five Ethiopian public HEIs should conduct a thorough review and implement targeted interventions to enhance disability inclusion and ensure more equitable experiences for all students.

4. For Policy Practice of GDM & DDM:

From RQ: 2, based on the finding that while Ethiopian public HEIs have policies in place to manage gender and disability diversity, there are limitations in the effective implementation and communication of these policies, it is recommended that the institutions undertake the following: 1. Strengthen the implementation of their existing diversity management policies by enhancing accountability mechanisms, clear disciplinary

procedures, and the use of affirmative action measures, particularly in relation to disability-related diversity. 2. Improve the communication and transparency of these diversity policies to ensure that all students are aware of the institutions' commitments and the available support systems. 3. Regularly monitor and evaluate the impact of the diversity management policies, and engage with the student community to identify and address any gaps between the stated commitments and the actual practices on the ground.

The findings from RQ: 2.1 suggest a strong positive relationship between policy practices and senior leaders' commitment for both GDM and DDM at the selected Ethiopian public HEIs. To leverage this relationship, the institutions should: 1. Ensure that GDM and DDM policies are developed collaboratively with senior leadership to foster their strong commitment and support. 2. Regularly review and update GDM and DDM policies to align with evolving best practices and the institution's diversity and inclusion goals. 3. Implement robust mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of GDM and DDM policy implementation, using the insights to further strengthen the commitment of senior leaders.

Based on the strong correlations found at RQ 2.2 between perceptions, curricular, extracurricular, and policy practices for both GDM and diversity and DDM, the HEIs should develop and implement comprehensive policies and programs that holistically address all of these interrelated factors in order to effectively support and advance GDM and DDM initiatives within their institutional contexts.

5. For Senior Leaders' Commitment on GDM & DDM:

Taking into account the results of RQ: 3, while the commitment of Ethiopian public HEIs' senior leaders to students' gender and disability diversity management is generally positive, their efforts in creating a truly inclusive campus environment and adequately addressing diversity-related issues are limited, it is recommended that the institutions take the following actions: 1. Strengthen the senior leadership's commitment to fostering a welcoming and responsive approach to gender and disability diversity in HEIs. This should involve setting clear priorities, allocating sufficient resources, and actively championing diversity and inclusion initiatives. 2. Enhance the institutions' capacity to create a more inclusive campus environment by improving policies, procedures, and support systems that cater to the needs of students from both gender and disability backgrounds. 3. Establish robust mechanisms to promptly and effectively address any issues related to gender and

disability diversity, ensuring that concerns are handled in a fair and appropriate manner. 4. Regularly assess the impact of the senior leadership's efforts and engage with the broader campus community to identify areas for improvement in the institutions' approach to diversity management.

The findings from RQ: 3.1 suggest that while leadership commitment has a strong and statistically significant relationship with student satisfaction for DDM initiatives, the relationship between leadership commitment and student satisfaction is much weaker for GDM initiatives in the Ethiopian public HEIs' context. Based on the findings, HEIs should prioritize stronger leadership commitment and support for DDM initiatives, as this appears to have a stronger positive impact on student satisfaction compared to the weaker relationship observed for GDM initiatives. Additionally, the institutions should investigate the factors contributing to the weaker connection between leadership commitment and student satisfaction for GDM, and develop strategies to strengthen this relationship.

6. For Challenges on GDM & DDM:

Based on the finding from RQ: 4, that students at Ethiopian public HEIs, particularly female students and SWDs, face significant challenges in navigating educational environments that do not adequately address their diverse needs, the following recommendations are proposed:

6. 1. Address the issue of gender bias and discrimination by prioritizing initiatives that promote gender equity, such as:

Ensuring equal access and opportunities for female students in all aspects of campus life. Strengthening mechanisms for reporting and addressing gender-based complaints in a secure manner. Providing gender-sensitive counseling and support services

6.2. Improve the accessibility and inclusivity of the HEI's environment for SWDS by:

Removing physical and attitudinal barriers that limit their participation. Enhancing the availability and quality of support services, including counseling. Conducting research to better understand and address the specific challenges faced by SWDs.

7. For Satisfaction with GDM & DDM:

Considering the findings of RQ 5 that students at Ethiopian public HEIs express dissatisfaction with GDM & DDM on their HEIs, the following recommendations are proposed:

7.1. Address the areas of greatest concern regarding GDM:

Improve the commitment and responsiveness of the institution's leadership in addressing gender-related issues, such as discrimination and harassment. Strengthen the investigation and resolution processes for gender-based complaints to ensure they are handled in a fair and effective manner. Enhance the overall support and resources available to female students to foster a more inclusive and equitable campus experience.

7.2. Improve the management of disability diversity on HEIs:

Ensure that SWDs are recognized and provided with fair and equitable treatment, in line with relevant regulations and laws. Enhance the processes for investigating and addressing disability-related issues to promote a more responsive and supportive environment. Increase the visibility and accessibility of support services and resources available to SWDs.

7.3. Foster a more inclusive HEI's culture:

Promote greater awareness and understanding of gender and disability diversity among the HEIs' community. Actively engage students in the development and implementation of diversity management initiatives to ensure their needs and perspectives are reflected. Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the institution's efforts to manage gender and disability diversity, and make adjustments as needed.

7.4. Address the observed differences in satisfaction levels between male and female students:

Investigate the underlying causes of the statistically significant difference in satisfaction with DDM between male and female students. Develop targeted interventions to address any gender-based disparities in the experiences and perceptions of students.

The findings from RQ: 5.1, for GDM, there is a low to moderate negative correlation between satisfaction and curricular/extracurricular perceptions, indicating that

efforts to improve GDM satisfaction may not be strongly linked to these activities. 2. In contrast, for DDM, there is a moderate positive correlation between satisfaction and both curricular and extracurricular perceptions. To address these findings, the HEIs should:

1. Investigate the factors driving GDM satisfaction beyond curricular and extracurricular activities, and develop strategies to more effectively integrate GDM into the broader student experience.

2. Leverage the positive relationship between DDM satisfaction and curricular/extracurricular activities to enhance the overall student experience and support for SWDs.

Based on the findings from RQ: 5.2, the recommendations are as follows: 1. Gender Diversity Management: Since there was no statistically significant difference in GDM satisfaction between male and female respondents ($p=0.791 > 0.05$), HEIs should continue their efforts to ensure gender equity in the GDM initiatives and ensure that both male and female students are equally satisfied with the GDM efforts. 2. Disability Diversity Management: The study found a statistically significant difference in DDM satisfaction between male and female respondents ($p=0.027 < 0.05$), with the sample population showing a significant mean difference. HEIs should investigate the underlying reasons for this gender-based disparity in DDM satisfaction and implement targeted interventions to address the specific needs and concerns of both male and female SWDs. This could involve reviewing DDM policies, practices, and support services to ensure they are inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of all students, regardless of gender.

Overall, the results of this study, which have created practical applications and are based on a well-proven DLE model founded with two theories, show that the old African saying is still accurate: *“If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.”* Leaders of Ethiopian public HEIs needs to spend more in GDM & DDM, which recognizes and cherishes meaning that is created jointly, if they wish to go far.

5.4.2 Recommendations for FDRE Ministry of Education

1. Taking into account the overall findings from each of the study's five basic research questions (RQs), the background work for GDM & DDM should begin in elementary & secondary school. Therefore, in order to prepare students for the next levels of education

both academically and mentally, the Ministry of Education and all others involved in the field of education should take into consideration addressing the issues of SWDs as well as gender. This can be done by conducting an ongoing assessment of the diversity of SWDs and gender, and by offering supports, with a special focus on guidance and counseling and tutorial classes starting in elementary school.

2. Based on the finding from sub RQ: 1.1, it is imperative and required to make certain that HEIs should build more inclusive curricula to ensure equality of opportunity for both gender and SWDs diversity. Inclusive Curriculum Framework (ICF) is a tool that HEIs providers may find valuable since it leads institutions to become more accessible (spatially, practically, theoretically, and culturally). Second, it reflects student diversity (through co-construction methodologies, recognizes that variety has intrinsic educational worth) and prepares students to constructively participate to a global and varied economy. Anyone in HEIs may utilize the ICF to inform inclusive improvements at every level (teaching session, module, program, and institution) and throughout all components of development (from idea to review) (McDuff et al, 2020).
3. Considering the findings of sub RQ:2, it is urgent and vital to make sure that raise perceptions among HEIs management about GDM and DDM, particularly the legal foundation and implementation as outlined in the constitution, proclamations, and directives.
4. In light of the results of sub-RQ: 5, it is imperative and urgent to make sure that mechanisms for implementation and accountability are established in order to meet the goals of gender and disability diversity. This calls for all management job descriptions to incorporate gender and disability diversity features and obligations, as well as incorporate them into performance review procedures.
5. Based on the finding from RQ: 2, it is timely and critical to ensure that GDM and DDM policies, directives, and guidelines are implemented consistently and transparently across all Ethiopian public HEIs.

5.4.3 Recommendations for Policy Makers

1. Based on the finding from RQ: 2, policymakers need to critically assess their prior policies towards Ethiopian public HEIs diversity in general, and GDM and DDM in particular, in light of the new data presented here. Furthermore, there is growing agreement that both

genders and SWDs diversity are special interest groups that must be addressed through a well-crafted policy statement. Higher-level policy documents should focus more on strengthening GDM and DDM implementation at Ethiopian public HEIs, taking into account the needs of the twenty-first century. It is also wise to incorporate GDM and DDM practices from advanced HEIs.

2. In light of the finding to sub-RQ: 2.1, it is timely and critical to ensure that in collaboration with the Education Strategy Centre and appropriate Ministries such as the Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth Affairs, and the Association of Persons with Disabilities, develop a comprehensive affirmative action policy with its strategy for females and SWDs diversity in HEIs.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

The following five suggestions from the study's findings have been passed to future researchers. First, being the sample composed of from the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs only, the empirical evidence provided cannot be generalized to the Ethiopian private HEIs. It would be interesting to examine this subject in the Ethiopian private HEIs context too in the future. Similarly, the study is more valuable if conducted at the national level. To obtain additional generality, future researchers should broaden the area of the study and raise the sample size.

Second, although the outcomes of this study can give many insights, methodologically, the population of qualitative respondents from whom the interviewee groups were created was not adequately representative of the selected five Ethiopian public HEIs, and much less of the expectation. Further inquiry should widen the research population to other public HEIs, as well as triangulate interview data with surveys the latter of which would widen accessibility and aid in representativeness of the findings.

Third, this doctoral dissertation analysis did not operate any differentiation by individual HEIs. Since different HEIs could influence the practice of GDM & DDM differently, additional future studies may address this gap by making comparison analysis.

Fourth, the scope of this study did not include curricular and extra-curricular practices for managing gender and disability diversity; rather, the perception was touched. As a result, the

practical application of both curricular and extra-curricular practice should be examined in future study from the standpoint of diversity management context.

Finally, since contexts are rapidly changing and modern organizations, including HEIs, are faced with new challenges of diversity management in both Ethiopian public and private HEIs, detailed future research needs to be done by exploring how specific types diversity dimensions (like age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, qualification etc.) impacting the teaching learning process.

5.6 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this convergent parallel mixed research (QUAN + QUAL) study is to critically examine and provide insight into the perception, practices, and challenges of gender and disability diversity management in Ethiopian public HEIs. It was carried out utilizing convergent parallel-mixed techniques using quantitative and qualitative approaches (QUAN+QUAL). By using suggestions from Hurtado's et al., (2012), Diversified Learning Environment (DLE) model as a the conceptual framework foundation, specifically, the study aimed to assess the respondents' overall perceptions regarding GDM and DDM at Ethiopian public HEIs, including examining how respondents perceived the use of curricular and extracurricular activities in relation to GDM and DDM, determining the extent to which respondents' perceptions of GDM and DDM-related coursework related to their perceptions of extracurricular activities, and analyzing if there was a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents' perceptions. Additionally, the study explored how policy for GDM and DDM were practiced at Ethiopian public HEIs, assessing whether policy practices related to the commitment of senior leaders, and investigating the relationships between perceptions and practices of GDM & DDM. The study also evaluated the commitment of senior leaders to managing gender and disability diversity, determined if there was a significant positive correlation between HEIs' senior leaders' commitment and students' satisfaction, identified the challenges respondents faced in relation to gender and disability diversity, and assessed the extent to which students were satisfied with the GDM & DDM, including examining if there was a significant positive correlation between curricular and co-curricular activities and GDM and DDM satisfaction, and analyzing if there was a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents' satisfaction. This chapter began by summarizing the aims of the investigation, methodology, main findings and

significance of its findings. Then it shed light on some of the conclusions from the reviewed literature and from the empirical research followed by providing recommendations for HEIs, and for policy makers. Lastly, the suggested areas of further research were covered.

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ANNEXES

Annex-1: Questionnaire for Undergraduate Students

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions:

Perceptions, Practices and Challenges

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE FILLED BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Dear Participant,

I'm Easaw Alemayehu, a PhD candidate in the Educational Planning and Management Department at Addis Ababa University (AAU). I'm now working on a dissertation titled "***Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions: Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges***". The aim of this survey is to collect data for my dissertation.

Your university has been chosen as the research's study location, and the relevant management body of your university has been made aware of the study by a letter from AAU dated _____ Ref. No.-----.

Your participation in the study and the information you contribute will be crucial to the study's success. Your answers to the survey's questions will only be utilized for the purpose of the study; The information you provided will be kept as anonymous all the time. Therefore, feel free to answer the questions honestly and completely. You are allowed to refrain from answering any questions you don't feel comfortable answering, as well as to stop participating in the study at any time if you're not feeling comfortable. You don't need to justify the reason for leaving

I appreciate your cooperation and time in advance.

Thank you,

Easaw Alemayehu (easaw2000@gmail.com)

I: General Information Sex: _____ Disability: _____

Put (X) to the number corresponding to the degree of your agreement or disagreement
SA = **Strongly Agree** A = **Agree** U = **Undecided** D = **Disagree** SD = **Strongly Disagree**

II.	Overall Perceptions for Gender Diversity Management	Rating Scale				
		SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	There is respect and support for gender diversity.					
2	This university makes gender diversity management a priority.					
3	Both genders treated fairly and equitably in this campus in general.					
4	I believe that both genders have the same opportunities on campus regardless of their identities.					
5	I believe that this university has an inclusive environment for people of all gender.					
6	Students value making friends with other students who have a different gender than them.					
7	I feel uncomfortable around students whose gender is different from mine.					
8	If I raised a concern about gender diversity discrimination, I am confident that my university would do what is right.					
9	At this campus, gender diversity equality means that female and male enjoy the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities.					
10	Protecting and assisting female students is the only responsibility of specialized departments such as gender office.					
11	I feel that due to my gender, in this university, I have to work harder than others to be valued equally.					
12	Overall, I feel as both genders opinion is valued by this university's community.					
III.	Curricular Perceptions for Gender Diversity Management	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	For the most part, in this campus, course materials include both genders students' interest.					
2	In classroom settings, I receive fair and equitable treatment (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.).					
3	In this campus, there is a climate in which female students are comfortable on asking and answering diversified questions.					
4	I have received adequate diversity training to engage with students in this campus.					
5	The university library has wide variety of reading materials on gender diversity issue.					
6	In classes, the same amount of attention will be paid to all students regardless of their gender.					
7	In class, instructors make students aware of the harm of stereotyping other students on the basis of their gender.					
8	In class, instructors encourage both gender students to participate in discussions and ask questions.					

9	Students get more personal attention from instructors who are similar to them in gender.					
IV.	Extra-curricular Perceptions for Gender Diversity Management	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	A life skills training with gender diversity topics was offered on this campus.					
2	Lectures on gender diversity awareness were given on this campus by invited guests who represented various gender groups.					
3	The programming, events, and co-curricular activities I have seen or experienced at this university have represented the interests of both genders.					
4	At this campus, there are association and clubs that appeal to gender issues.					
5	The gender club on campus hosts festivities and festivals for both genders.					
6	This university's extra-curricular use leaflets, posters, university radio programs, etc for disseminating perceptions about gender diversity.					
V.	Gender Diversity Management Related Policy Practice	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	This campus's mission statement specifically refers to the value of having gender diversity.					
2	By the campus's legislation, related policies and internal code of conduct, it is clearly written that discrimination against gender is not allowed.					
3	This university has clear disciplinary procedures for anyone to report prejudice or discriminatory experiences on gender issues.					
4	In this university, gender diversity related policies, legislations and guidelines are effectively communicated to both gender students.					
5	The implementation of policy, rules and regulation that protect gender diversity is weak in this university.					
6	This campus is using affirmative action policy to manage gender diversity fairly.					

7	This university has specific policies, programmes or initiatives to help gender diversity.					
VI.	Senior Leaders' Commitment for Gender Diversity Management	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The senior leaders of this campus are committed to create a campus environment that welcomes gender diversity.					
2	Senior leaders of this campus are committed to handle gender diversity matters satisfactorily.					
3	Senior leaders shows that gender diversity is important through its actions.					
4	Senior leaders on this university responds to instances of gender-based harassment or discrimination with the necessary action.					
5	In this campus, senior leaders establish the campus vision for gender diversity.					
6	In this campus, senior leaders treat students of various gender with equal respect.					
VII.	Challenges respondents' face in relation to GDM	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	At this university, physical and attitudinal barriers have strong negative impact on gender diversity management.					
2	Not putting too much emphasis for gender diversity management is one of the challenges.					
3	At this campus, the process to file a female's complaint was not secure.					
4	Purposely omitting or excluding a reported harmful practice against female in this campus is a challenge.					
5	No sufficient provision of access to counseling for female students who have experienced harassment was a challenge at this campus.					
6	The climate of the campus favors males' than females.					
7	Instructors in this campus do little or no modifications to accommodate students with gender diversity in their instructional activities.					

8	I am planning leaving this university because I felt isolated or unwelcomed due to my gender.					
VIII.	Satisfaction from Gender Diversity Management	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	At this campus, I am overall satisfied with my interactions with other students and faculty.					
2	I am satisfied with the fair and equitable treatment given for both gender in classrooms and classroom settings (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.).					
3	I am satisfied with overall the campus experience/environment regarding gender diversity, equity, and inclusion.					
4	I am satisfied with the regulations and laws that protect gender diversity in this university.					
5	I am satisfied with this university's sufficient programs and resources to foster the success of a gender diversity management.					
6	I feel satisfied with the recognition given to gender diversity in this university.					
7	This university's process for investigating acts of gender discrimination or harassment is satisfactory.					
8	At this campus, I am very satisfied with top leadership response for incidents of gender discrimination or harassment.					
9	I am satisfied with commitment of this campus's top leadership to gender diversity and equity.					

Regarding the management of gender diversity in this university, kindly provide any further ideas, viewpoints, or recommendations you may have. (Please refrain from providing any information that might be used to contact or identify you.

I appreciate your contribution to this dissertation. I value your time and suggestion.

Annex-2: Questionnaire for Students with Disability

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions: Perceptions, Practices and Challenges

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE FILLED BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

Dear Participant,

I'm Easaw Alemayehu, a PhD candidate in the Educational Planning and Management Department at Addis Ababa University (AAU). I'm now working on a dissertation titled “*Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions: Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges*”. The aim of this survey is to collect data for my dissertation.

Your university has been chosen as the research's study location, and the relevant management body of your university has been made aware of the study by a letter from AAU dated _____ Ref. No. -----.

Your participation in the study and the information you contribute will be crucial to the study's success. Your answers to the survey's questions will only be utilized for the purpose of the study. The information you provided will be kept as anonymous all the time. Therefore, feel free to answer the questions honestly and completely. You are allowed to refrain from answering any questions you don't feel comfortable answering, as well as to stop participating in the study at any time if you're not feeling comfortable.

I appreciate your cooperation and time in advance.

Thank you,

Easaw Alemayehu (easaw2000@gmail.com)

I: General Information Sex: _____ Disability: _____

Put (X) to the number corresponding to the degree of your agreement or disagreement
SA = **Strongly Agree** A = **Agree** U = **Undecided** D = **Disagree** SD = **Strongly Disagree**

II.	Overall Perceptions of Disability Diversity Management in Your University/Campus	Rating Scale				
		SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	There is respect and support for students with disability.					

2	Non disabled students value making friends with students with disability.					
3	I feel uncomfortable around members of the campus whose disability is different from mine.					
4	This campus is fully accessible for students with disabilities.					
5	Disability diversity equality means that disabled and non-disabled enjoy the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities.					
6	Protecting and assisting students with disability diversity is the only responsibility of officially assigned offices in the university and specialized organizations that work outside the university.					
III.	Curricular Perceptions for Disability Diversity Management	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Most part of the course materials include a variety of disabled students' interests.					
2	There is a positive campus climate in which disabled students are comfortable on asking and answering diversified questions.					
3	Disabled students receive adequate diversity training to engage with non-disabled students.					
4	The university library has a wide variety of reading materials on disability diversity issues.					
5	In classes, the same amount of attention will be paid to all students regardless of their disability.					
6	In class, instructors make students aware of the harm of stereotyping other students on the basis of their disability.					
7	In class, instructors encourage disabled students to participate in discussions and ask questions.					
8	Students get more personal attention from instructors who are similar to them in disability.					
IV.	Extra-curricular Perceptions for Disability Diversity Management	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Life skills training with topics related to disability diversity is offered on this campus.					
2	Invited speakers from several disability organizations delivered talks on disability diversity awareness on this campus.					
3	There are associations and clubs that appeal to disability issues.					
4	Disability-related festivals and festivities are organized by the campus's disability club.					

5	This university's extra-curricular uses leaflets, posters, university radio programs, etc for disseminating perceptions about disability diversity.					
V.	Disability Diversity Management Related Policy Practice	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	This campus's mission statement specifically refers to the value of having disability diversity.					
2	By the campus's legislation, related policies and internal code of conduct, it is clearly written that discrimination against disability is not allowed.					
3	This university has clear disciplinary procedures for anyone to report prejudice or discriminatory experiences on disability issues.					
4	In this university, diversity related policies, legislations and guidelines are effectively communicated to students with disability diversity.					
5	This university has specific policies, programs or initiatives that contribute to managing disability diversity.					
6	The implementation of policies, rules and regulations that protect disability diversity is weak in this university.					
7	This campus is using an affirmative action policy to fairly manage disability diversity.					
VII.	Senior Leaders' Commitment for Disability Diversity Management	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The senior leaders are committed to creating a campus environment that welcomes disability diversity.					
2	The senior leaders are committed to handling disability diversity matters satisfactorily.					
3	Senior leaders shows that disability diversity is important through its actions.					
4	Senior leaders respond to instances of disability-based harassment or discrimination with the necessary action.					
5	Senior leaders are accountable and responsible for a healthy campus climate.					

6	The senior leaders establish the campus vision for disability diversity.					
7	The senior leaders treat disabled students with equal respect.					
VII.	Challenges respondents' face in relation to DDM	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Physical and attitudinal barriers have a strong negative impact on disability diversity management.					
2	Not putting too much emphasis on disability diversity management is one of the challenges.					
3	There is a shortage of disability diversity management related research.					
4	The process to file students with disabilities complaints was not secure.					
5	There is a practice of deliberately ignoring or excluding disabled harmful practices reported by students with disabilities.					
6	There is no sufficient provision of access to counseling for students with disabilities who have experienced harassment.					
7	In many ways, the campus environment favors students without disabilities over students with disabilities.					
8	Instructors do little or no modifications to accommodate students with disability diversity in their instructional activities.					
9	I am planning leaving this university because I felt isolated or unwelcomed due to my disability.					
VIII.	Satisfaction on Disability Diversity Management	SD	D	U	A	SA
		1	2	3	4	5
1	At this campus, I am overall satisfied with my interactions with other students and faculty.					
2	I am satisfied with the fair and equitable treatment given for students with disability in classrooms and classroom settings (e.g., labs, recitation sessions, clinical environments, etc.).					
3	I am satisfied with overall the campus experience/environment regarding disability diversity management, equity, and inclusion.					

4	I am satisfied with the regulations and laws that protect disability diversity in this university.					
5	I am satisfied with this university's sufficient programs and resources to foster the success of a disability diversity management.					
6	I feel satisfied with the recognition given to disability diversity in this university.					
7	This university's process for investigating acts of disability discrimination or harassment is satisfactory.					
8	At this campus, I am very satisfied with top leadership response for incidents of disability discrimination or harassment.					
9	I am satisfied with commitment of this campus's top leadership to disability diversity and equity.					

Regarding the management of disability diversity in this university, kindly provide any further ideas, viewpoints, or recommendations you may have. (Please refrain from providing any information that might be used to contact or identify you.

I appreciate your contribution to this dissertation. I value your time and suggestions.

Annex-3: Interview Questions for Vice Academic Presidents

1. Does this campus's mission statement specifically refer to the value of having gender & disability diversity?
2. Is their respect and support for gender and disability diversity in this university?
3. Is this university makes gender and disability diversity management a priority?
4. Will both genders and students with disabilities treated fairly and equitably in this campus in general?
5. Will both genders and students with disabilities have the same opportunities on campus regardless of their identities?
6. Is this university having an inclusive environment for people of all gender and disabilities?

7. If students raised a concern about gender or disability diversity discrimination, the university would do what is right?
8. Do both genders & students with disability enjoy the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities at this university?
9. Does this campus offer a life skills training with gender & disability diversity topics?
10. At this campus, are there association and clubs that appeal to gender and disability issues?
11. Does in the campus's legislation, related policies and internal code of conduct, is it clearly written that discrimination against gender & disability is not allowed?
12. What are some of the challenges that face during GDM & DDM? List them

Annex -4: Interview Questions for Students' Deans

1. Does this university has clear disciplinary procedures for anyone to report prejudice or discriminatory experiences on gender or disability issues?
2. Does in this university gender & disability diversity related policies, legislations and guidelines are effectively communicated to both gender and students with disability?
3. To what extent the implementation of policy, rules and regulation that protect gender & disability diversity is strong in this university?
4. Does this campus is using affirmative action policy to manage gender and disability diversity fairly?
5. Does this university has specific policies, programs or initiatives to help gender and disability diversity?
6. Have you seen students while value making friends with other students who have a different gender and disability than them?
7. Does the top leadership of this campus is committed to create a campus environment that welcomes gender and disability diversity?
8. To what extent does top leadership on this university responds to instances of gender or disability-based harassment or discrimination with the necessary action?
9. Do you think that in this campus, top leadership treats students of various gender and disability with equal respect?
10. What unforgettable experience do you have while managing GDM & DDM at this university?
11. What are some of the challenges that face during GDM & DDM?

Annex -5: Interview Questions for Instructors

1. Do course materials include both genders & disability students' interest?

2. In classroom settings, will you give fair and equitable treatment for both gender and students with disability?
3. To what extent does this university have a climate in which female & students with disability are comfortable on asking and answering diversified questions?
4. In classes, will you give the same amount of attention to all students regardless of their gender and disability?
5. Have you received adequate GDM &DDM training to engage with students in this campus?
6. In class, will you encourage both gender & students with disabilities to participate in discussions and ask questions?
7. Does the top leadership show that gender and disability diversity is important through its actions?
8. To what extent does at this camp, when female & students with disability speak up in meetings/classes, their opinion even if controversial is valued?
9. Do you think that the implementation of GDM and DDM will increase student satisfaction in this campus?
10. While you teach, what unforgettable experience do you have in relation to GDM & DDM at this university?
11. What are some of the challenges that face during GDM & DDM?

Annex -6: Interview Questions for Students

1. To what extent do students value making friends with other students who have a different gender or disability than them?
2. Will you feel uncomfortable around students whose gender or disability is different from yours?
3. Do you think that protecting and assisting female and disabled students is the only responsibility of specialized departments such as gender or special need office?
4. Do you feel that due to your gender or disability, in this university, you have to work harder than others to be valued equally?
5. Do you feel that both genders and students with disabilities opinion is valued by this university's community?
6. To what extent does your university library has wide variety of reading materials on GDM & DDM issue?
7. To what extent do in class, instructors make students aware of the harm of stereotyping other students on the basis of their gender or disability?
8. Will students get more personal attention from instructors who are similar to them in gender or disability?

9. Do you have an experience of being told you are overreacting or being too sensitive due to your gender or disability?
10. Do you have an experience of feeling marginalized because of your gender or disability?
11. Do you have an experience of being verbally bullied or intimidated due to your gender or disability?
12. Do you have an experience of having your contributions devalued or dismissed due to your gender or disability?
13. Does physical and attitudinal barriers have strong negative impact on GDM & DDM?
14. Does not putting too much emphasis for GDM & DDM is one of the challenges?
15. Are the top leadership of this university committed enough for GDM & DDM?
16. Are you satisfied with the GDM & DDM of this university?
17. Are you satisfied with the regulations and laws that protect gender and students with disability in this university?

Annex -7: Observation Check List for GDM

Name of the Observed University: _____

Observation Date: _____

Round of the observation: 1st Round _____ 2nd Round: _____ 3rd Round; _____

No	Observation Criteria	Yes	No	Evidence Documentation
1	Does the institution have policies and practices that promote gender diversity in enrollment and admission processes?			
2	Does the classroom composition reflect a balanced representation of genders?			
3	Do the curriculum and course materials demonstrate inclusivity and diverse representation of genders?			
4	Do teaching and learning practices foster equal opportunities and engagement for students of all genders?			
5	Are student support services accessible and catering to the specific needs of students of all genders?			
6	Does the campus climate and culture actively promote gender diversity and inclusivity?			
7	Do student organizations and extracurricular activities demonstrate gender diversity and equal opportunities for participation?			
8	Do campus policies and practices effectively address gender diversity management, including anti-discrimination and harassment measures?			

9	Do student perspectives indicate a positive experience regarding gender diversity and inclusivity?			
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Annex -8: Observation Check List for DDM

Name of the Observed University: _____

Observation Date: _____

Round of the observation: 1st Round _____ 2nd Round: _____ 3rd Round; _____

No	Observation Criteria	Yes	No	Evidence Documentation
1	Is there braille paper in this university?			
2	Are there text books written in braille for students with disability in this university?			
3	Is there digital voice recorder/tape recorder for students with disability in this university?			
4	Is there Computers with JAWs software for students with disability?			
5	Has this university volunteer reading services for students with disability?			
6	Is there sign language interpreter for students with disability in this university?			
7	Is there extra wheel- chair for students with disability in this university?			
8	Is the physical environment of the campus conducive for students with disability?			
9	Is there a designated office or department responsible for coordinating disability services and accommodations?			
10	Does the institution collaborate with external organizations or disability advocacy groups to enhance disability diversity management?			

Annex -9: Letter from AAU to FDRE Ministry of Education

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
የትምህርትና የሰላም ጥናት ኮሌጅ
አዲስ አበባ፣ ኢትዮጵያ



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND
BEHAVIORAL STUDIES
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Date: 02/07/2015 EC

TO: FDRE Ministry of Education

Easaw Alemayehu is a PhD student in Department of Educational Planning and Management. He/she is currently writing on the title:

Gender and Disability Diversity Management
in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions
Perceptions, Practices and Challenges

This is therefore, to kindly request your good office to offer him/in with the requested information.
The department would like to thank your good office in advance for your cooperation. Providing.

Thank you

Demozie Dagne (PhD)
Chairman, Department of Educational Planning and Management



Mr Easaw
- Please prepare a draft
letter and submit it in
Soft copy to the Secretary
AB

☎
239780

✉
A.A.U 1176

Fax 011(1)24-27-19

E-Mail

Annex -10: Letter from FDRE Ministry of Education to HEIs



የኢትዮጵያ ፌዴራላዊ ዲሞክራሲያዊ ሪፐብሊክ
ትምህርት ሚኒስቴር

FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

ከ: +251 11 155 3133
 ፓ. ባ. 1367፣ አራሳ ክፍለ-ከተማ,
 አዲስ አበባ፣ ኢትዮጵያ
 ፒ: +251 11 155 3133
 P.O. BOX 1367, ARADA SUB-CITY,
 ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

www.moe.gov.et
 www.facebook.com/fdremoe
 @fdremoe
 info@moe.gov.et

መጠን 07 2015

ቀን/DATE: _____

ቁጥር/REF NO: 17/157/893/15

ለአዲስ አበባ ሳይንስና ቴክኖሎጂ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
 ለኮተቤ ትምህርት ዩኒቨርሲቲ
 ለሰላሌ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
 ለደብረብርሃን ዩኒቨርሲቲ

ጉዳይ: ትብብር ግድረገገ ይመለከታል

በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የትምህርት እትድና አመራር ትምህርት ክፍል የ3ኛ ዲግሪ ተማሪ የሆኑት አቶ ኤሳው አለማየሁ አሰፋ ለትምህርት ማሟያ የሚሆናቸውን "Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: Perceptions, Practices and Challenges" የምርምር ስራ በእናንተ ዩኒቨርሲቲ በመገኘት መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ በማቀዳቸው የድጋፍ ደብዳቤ እዲጃፍላቸው ጠይቀውናል።

በመሆኑም የተጠቀሰውን የምርምር መረጃ በእናንተ ዩኒቨርሲቲ በኩል መሰብሰብ እንዲችሉ የተለመደውን ትብብር እንድታደርጉላቸው እንጠይቃለን።

ግልባጭ፤

- ለምርምርና ማህበረሰብ ጉድኝት ጉዳዮች
- ትምህርት ሚኒስቴር
- ለአቶ ኤሳው አለማየሁ
- አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ



ከሠላምታ ጋር

(Signature)

በሰላምን ቢኖር በላይ (ዶ/ር)
 የምርምርና ማህበረሰብ ጉድኝት
 ዋና ሰራ አስፈጻሚ

Annex -11: Cooperation Letter from AAU College of Education

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
የትምህርትና የባሕርይ ጥናት ኮሌጅ
የድህረመረቃ ተባባሪ ዲን ጽ/ቤት



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND
BEHAVIORAL STUDIES
Associate Dean, for Graduate
Programs Office, Education

ቀን: ሚያዝያ 17/2015 ዓ. ም
ቁጥር: ድህምተዲ/40/2015/2023

ለ ዶ/ር አመቤት ሙሉጌታ
የአካዳሚክ ም/ፕሬዚዳንት

ከ አብዱላዚዝ ሁሴን
የትምህርትና ባህርይ ጥናት ኮሌጅ
የድህረመረቃ ተባባሪ ዲን ጽ/ቤት



Handwritten notes and signatures on the right side of the letter, including a signature and the text 'for Jelesite'.

ጉዳዩ የትብብር ድጋፍ ጥያቄን ይመለከታል

በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የትምህርትና ባህርይ ጥናት ኮሌጅ ስር በሚገኘው የትምህርት ዕቅድና አመራር ትምህርት ክፍል የ3ኛ ዲግሪ ተማሪ የሆኑት አቶ ኤሳው አለማየሁ አሰፋ ለትምህርት ማሟያ የሚሆናቸውን "Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: Perceptions, Practices and Challenges" የምርምር ስራ በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ በሚመለከታቸው ሁሉ በመገኘት መረጃ መሰብሰብ እንዲችሉ ለጽ/ቤታችን ሚያዝያ 17 ቀን 2015 ዓ. ም. በጻፉት ደብዳቤ ጠይቀዋል፡፡

በመሆኑም ይህንን የምርምር መረጃ በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ በሚመለከታቸው ሁሉ ተገኝተው መረጃውን መሰብሰብ እንዲችሉ ትብብር እንዲያገኙ በእናንተ መኩል አስፈላጊው የትብብር መመሪያ እንዲፈቀድላቸው በታላቅ አክብሮት እንጠይቃለን፡፡

ከማክበር ሰላምታ ጋር!

ግልባጭ፦

ለትምህርትና ባህርይ ጥናት ኮሌጅ ዲን
ለትምህርት ዕቅድና አመራር ትምህርት ክፍል
ለአቶ ኤሳው ዓለማየሁ



☎: 011 (1) 23 97 80

✉: 1176

Fax: 011 (1) 24-27-19

E-mail. coed@edu.aau.edu.et

Annex -12: Consent by the Interview Participant

I, _____, have heard the oral information about the PhD dissertation entitled: "**Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges.**". It has been presented to me by the researcher, and I accept to take part in the study. I would be willing to take part in the interview. I am aware that my involvement is entirely optional and that I am under no obligation to do so in the future. I understand that while the results of this study will be included in a research report, journal publications, and/or conference proceedings, my participation in this study will remain private. I am aware that neither my name nor any other personal information will be used in the study, and that the information will only be used for the reasons outlined in the letter.

I've been given a signed copy of the informed consent agreement and I accept to take part in the interview.

Participant Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's Name: Easaw Alemayehu Assefa

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Annex -13: Letter of Permission Debre Birhan University

LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM DEBRE BIRHAN UNIVERSITY

Ref.No: Ac/Vic/Pr/2-22/5619/33

Date: 11/05/2023

To: Mr. Easaw Alemayehu Assefa

From: Debre Birhan University

Subject: Permission for Data Collection

Dear Easaw,

The FDRE Ministry of Education has informed us that you are a doctoral student at Addis Ababa University College of Education and Behavioral Studies Department of Educational Planning and Management and has requested permission to use our university to gather information for your study, **"Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges."**

As long as you have the letter from MoE, we will cooperate and let you conduct interviews, observational studies, and questionnaire distribution and collection sessions. You can expressly contact the relevant offices to obtain the document you want by displaying this authorization letter in advance.



Good Luck!

Dereje Andargie Kidenemariam(PhD)
Academic Vice President

Annex -14: Letter of Permission from Salale University

LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM SELALE UNIVERSITY

Ref.No: SU/903/23/2015
Date: MAY 12/5/2023

To: Mr. Easaw Alemayehu Assefa
From: Selale University

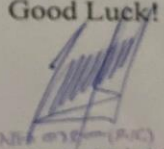
Subject: Permission for Data Collection

Dear Easaw,

The FDRE Ministry of Education has informed us that you are a doctoral student at Addis Ababa University College of Education and Behavioral Studies Department of Educational Planning and Management and has requested permission to use our university to gather information for your study, **"Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: Perceptions, Practices, and Challenges."**

As long as you have the letter from MoE, we will cooperate and let you conduct interviews, observational studies, and questionnaire distribution and collection sessions. You can expressly contact the relevant offices to obtain the document you want by displaying this authorization letter in advance.

Good Luck!


Eshetu Wendimu (PhD)
President for Research and
Community Service



Annex -15: Letter of Evidence from Kotebe University of Education

በኢ.ፌ.ዲ.ሪ. የትምህርት ሚኒስቴር
ኮተቤ የትምህርት ዩኒቨርሲቲ

 F.D.R.E. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
KOTEBE UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION

ቁጥር/ Ref.: 218/5049/2015 ቀን/Date: 12/09/2015

➔ ለ አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
ከ ኮተቤ ትምህርት ዩኒቨርሲቲ

ጉዳዩ:- መረጃ መስጠትን ይመለከታል

ከላይ በርእሱ ለመግለጽ እንደተሞከረው በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የትምህርት ዕቅድና አመራር ትምህርት ክፍል የዶክተሬት ዲግሪ (ፒ.ኤች.ዲ) ተማሪ የሆኑት አቶ ኤሳው አለማየሁ አሰፋ በዩኒቨርሲቲያችን ተገኝተው ለ Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions; Perception, Practices and Challenges የምርምር ሰራቸው

1. ከተማሪዎች የፅሁፍ መጠየቅ በትኩረት ሰብስበዋል።
2. ከዲፕሎማ ስመምህራን፣ ከተማሪዎች እና ከግቢው ክፍሎች በአድዋ የተቀረፀ የድምፅ መረጃ ሰብስበዋል
3. በቼክ ሊስት የታገዘ የዳሰሳ (Obseervation) ማድረጋቸውን እየገለጹን ለወደፊቱ መልካሙን ሁሉ እንዲገጥማቸው እንመኛለን።

ግልጽ:-

> ለአካዳሚክ ጉዳዮች ም/ፕራዘዳንት ጽ/ቤት
ኪ.ት.ዩ

ከሰላምታ ጋር

 ፊ.ዲ.ዲ. ገመዳ (ፓ.ሲ)
ዶ/ር ገመዳ ገብረገብ (Ph.D)
Vice President for Academic Aff.

251 (0) 116-601276
251 (0) 116-352706

31248
info@kuc.edu.et

ፋክስ - 251-116-60-09-22
Website : www.kuc.edu.et

አዲስ አበባ ኢትዮጵያ
Addis Ababa Ethiopia

Annex -16: Letter of Evidence from Salale University

 Salale university
ሰላሌ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

Ref. No / ቁጥር: WCYD/SIU/357/2015
Date/ ቀን: 04/09/2015

ለአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
ከ ሰላሌ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

ጉዳይ:- መረጃ መስጠትን ይመለከታል።

ከላይ በርእሱ ለመግለፅ እንደተሞከረው በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የትምህርት ዕቅድና ትምህርት ክፍል የዶክትሬት ዲግሪ (ፒ.ኤች.ዲ) ተማሪ የሆኑት አቶ ኤሳው አለማየሁ አሰፋ በዩኒቨርሲቲያችን ተገኝተው ለ Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions; Perception, Practices and Challenges የምርምር ስራቸው ፡

1.ከተማሪዎች የፅሁፍ መጠይቅ በትንሹ ሰበሰበዋል።

2.ከዲናች፣ከመምህርን፣ ከተማሪዎች እና ከተገቢው ክፍሎች በአድዩ የተቀረፀ የድምፅ መረጃ ሰበሰበዋል

3.በቼክ ሊስት የታገዘ የዲሰሳ (Observation) ማድረጋቸውን እየገለፅን ለወደፊቱ መልካሙን ሁሉ እንዲገኝማቸው በመመኘት ነው ።

ገልጻች
ሰላሌ
ሰ/የ

 ከሰላምታ ጋር
ሀገ/ታምራት
Hana Tamirat
የሴቶች፣ሀገናት እና ወጣቶች
ዲሬክቶር
Women, Children and Youth
Affairs Directorate
Salale/ Fiche

Tel: 0118736860 In Reply, Please refer to our Ref.No ፓ.ሲ.ዩ. 245
Website: WWW.Slu.edu.et እባክዎን መልስ ሲሰጡን የእኛን ደብዳቤ ቁጥር ይጥቀሱ።

Annex -17: Letter of Evidence from Debre Berhan University

ደብረ ብርሃን ዩኒቨርሲቲ ሴቶች ሕፃናትና ወጣቶች ዳይሬክቶሬት		DEBRE BERHAN UNIVERESITY WOMEN, CHILDREN & YOUTH DIRECTORATE
ቁጥር/Ref.NO ደ/የ/ሴ/ሕ/ወ/1- /6068 / 01-01/21 ቀን/Date 03/09/2015ዓ.ም		
ለአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ደብረ ብርሃን ዩኒቨርሲቲ፤ <u>ጉዳዩ፣ መረጃ መስጠትን ይመለከታል፤</u> በዩኒቨርሲቲያችሁ በትምህርትና ባህሪ ጥናት ኮሌጅ ስር በሚገኘው የትምህርት እቅድና አመራር ትምህርት ክፍል የደክተራት /ፒ.ኤች.ዲ/ ዲግሪ ተማሪ የሆኑት አቶ ኤሳው አለማየሁ አሰፋ በዩኒቨርሲቲያችን ተገኝተው 1.ከተማሪዎች መጠይቅ በመስብሰብ 2.በዲግሪና መምህሮች እንዲሁም በተገቢው ክፍሎች የድምፅ ቀረፃ ያለው ቃለ መጠይቅ በማድረግ 3.የቅኝት መረጃ በመስብሰብ ለጥናታቸው መረጃ መውሰዳቸውን ስናሳውቅ መልካሙን ሁሉ በመመኘት ነው።		
አሰፋ ለሰፋውስቴ Addis Asfawesen የሴቶች ሕፃናትና ወጣቶች ዳይሬክቶሬት ዳይሬክተር Women, children & youth directorat Director		
		
445 መልስ ሲጽፉልን የኛን ደብዳቤ ቁጥር ይጥቀሱ። ☎ +251-116816805 E-mail: dbugender@dbu.edu.et In replying, please quote our ref. no. Fax +251-116812065		

Annex -18: Letter of Evidence from Addis Ababa University

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
የልዩ የልዩ የትምህርት ማዕከል



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
Special Needs Support Center

Date: Oct. 12/2023

Ref no: snsc/028/2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to inform you that Mr. Easaw Alemayehu Assefa, who is undertaking a PhD dissertation at Addis Ababa University's College of Education & Behavioral Studies, working on a dissertation titled "Gender and Disability Diversity Management in Ethiopian Public Higher Education Institutions: Perception, Practices, and Challenges," visited our special needs support center on several occasions and:

- compiling information on students with impairments who are currently enrolled
- once conducted interviews with the center's director, pupils with impairments, and other concerned parties.
- used the observation check list to conduct observations.
- gathered survey information from the disabled pupils

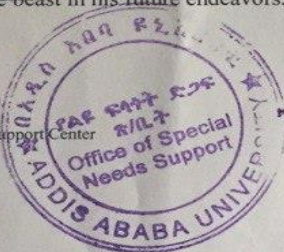
We wish him all the best in his future endeavors..

With Regards,

Yirgashewa Bekele (PhD)

Director, Special Needs Support Center

Addis Ababa University



Office +25111242838

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned graduate student, declare that this PhD dissertation is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of materials used for the dissertation have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Easaw Alemayehu Assefa

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Addis Ababa University

This thesis has been submitted for examination by my approval

Supervisor's Name: Professor Abebaw Yirga Adamu

Signature: _____

Date: _____