



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMERCE GRADUATE STUDIES
PROGRAM DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

ASSESSING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN THE
ETHIOPIAN FINANCIAL SECTOR: THE CASE OF DAHSEN BANK S.C

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A Project Work submitted to Addis Ababa University School of commerce in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the Award of Master of Arts Degree in Business Leadership

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June 2023

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

STATEMENT OF DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted at any university for a degree.

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STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies This is to Certify that the thesis prepared by Meley Atakilt, entitled: “Assessing the participation of women in Leadership positions in the Ethiopian financial sector: the case of Dashen Bank S.C” in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Business Leadership complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Seifu Mamo, for his support and insights that helped me write this work.

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to family members Atakilt, Dr. Menberetsehai and Dr. Teklegiorgis for supporting me throughout the entire paper.

To all relatives, friends, and others who in one way or another shared their support, either morally, financially and physically, thank you.

Lastly, I appreciate the support and encouragement I received from Dashen Bank, including the respondents to this study.

Above all, thanks to the Great Almighty God, for his countless love and wisdom.

Thank you!

Abstract

Women constitute nearly half of Ethiopia's population. However, they are relegated to lower-level professions across the board rather than held in any kind of leadership capacity. The yearly report of Dashen Bank, for the period 2015 to 2022 reveals that the number of women participating in executive position is minimal to none. The purpose of this study was to assess the participation of women in leadership positions in Dashen Bank. The target population of the study were women in executive positions, senior level positions, middle level positions, line management and clerical/support staff. The research is a descriptive type of study as it tried to investigate the reasons or factors hindering women from reaching top leadership positions. This research used a mixed research approach. Both primary and secondary data have been used in the study. From primary data source, the tools used were structured interviews and questionnaires containing closed-ended questions. Based on information gathered from the Dashen Bank's human resource department, a total of 141 female respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique to fill out the questionnaire. A well-structured interview was conducted with a selected few women who held the positions of senior and executive level leadership positions. The research showed that Dashen Bank has a small number of women in positions of leadership and that this may be due to a variety of different factors. Scio-cultural factors, gender stereotypes, organizational factors and personal/individual factors all played a role in explaining why fewer women held senior positions in the bank. From all the factors, personal/individual factors such as fear of failure and work-life balance were shown to have major influence on the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions. It's crucial to provide trainings and developmental programs to women to prepare them for leadership positions. Efforts should be intensified to increase the percentage of young women enrolling in school since this influences the percentage of women joining the labor force. The research recommends that providing female employees with greater access to childcare and flexible work arrangements are some of the ways that may help them deal with the stress of work-life balance.

Keywords: *Leadership, gender, underrepresentation, Dashen Bank*

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Leadership can be explained as the process through which a person inspires a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers (John Gardner, 1993).

Hill, C., Miller, K., & Handley, G (2016) as cited in Keohane (2012), state that leadership may take place in formal hierarchies as well as informal groups, inside and outside of organizations, with and without administrative responsibilities, and in any combination of the above mentioned settings. The ability to lead may develop over time or arise in times of crisis. Leadership may be used in different situations and can evolve through time and in response to new challenges.

Traditionally, cultures wrongly felt women lacked leadership skills. They supported those in authority rather than managing an organization, despite their skills and competence (Etagegne 2018). Leadership is somehow still seen as a male trait, despite the fact that contemporary perspectives on leadership in organizations and elsewhere support a style that is far apart from stereotypically masculine leadership and more in line with feminine tendencies (Easaw Alemayehu, 2021). The opinion that strong male leaders are seen as more typical, which enhances their credibility as leaders, but domineering women are seen as out of the norm, which hurts their credibility (Manuela Tremmel and Ingrid Wahl 2023).

One of the societal expectations from women is that they give birth to babies and nurse them (Dupe Adesubomi 2014). At the same time, they have their careers to pursue and even get to the top. The patriarchal influence that men exert over women and the societal norms that confine them to responsibilities inside the home are two of the challenges that women face. Those of them who are in leadership positions in work organizations must exert more effort to improve the organizational roles since the roles they are required to execute in these areas are very time-consuming and demanding (Dupe Adesubomi 2014).

Many national strategies and frameworks have been developed and implemented in Ethiopia to further gender equality. They include the first National Policy on Women in 1993 and a constitution that guarantees women's rights, including the use of Affirmative Action, dating back

to 1995 (Women, U.N. (2014). Research has identified the patriarchal system as the primary reason for political, economic, and social discrimination against women.

Women are expected to act in a submissive role to men since it is what society values and expects. More women are entering male-dominated fields, but gender inequality in hiring and advancement is still common (Dupe Adesubomi 2014). While women's rights have continuously increased in many parts of the globe and despite the fact that there have been significant attempts to enhance diversity in the workplace and legislative provisions for gender parity, women are still underrepresented in senior management positions. It will take time to establish gender equality and women's empowerment even though governments have pledged to do so but haven't followed through (Meron Aragaw 2018). Ethiopia has adopted a number of laws to support the empowerment of women. Women had 38.8% of the seats in parliament as of February 2021 (UN women 2022). The FDRE constitution places a heavy emphasis on the significance of gender equality as a prerequisite for the full achievement of all other rights and human freedoms. Moreover, it includes a section expressly dedicated to talking about women's rights and makes an effort to confront the widespread gender bias in attitudes and behaviors (Dina Assefa 2019).

According to Tsegal Dawa and Duptho Ugyen (2022), there are several reasons why there aren't enough women in leadership positions in the education sector, including gender biases, lack of role models, laws that address gender inequality, and stress of work-life balance. A research conducted by Tomas (Tomas, 2018) revealed that organizational, socio-cultural and personal factors including attitudes and family obligations as well as institutional elements make leadership in Jimma town administration less appealing to women.

According to SH Appelbaum, L Audet, and JC Miller (2003), when it comes to leadership evaluations, males perform significantly better on measures that evaluate a focus on strategic planning and organizational vision while women perform better on scales that test an emphasis on production and achieving goals. Specifically in financial sectors, a research conducted by Lahti (2013), argues that there is a link between organizational and financial success, as shown by the fact that companies with more women in senior management or the board of directors have higher financial results.

This research study focused on executive positions, senior level positions, middle level leadership positions, line management, and clerical/support staff. For the purpose of this study, leadership is

taken in the context of a person's position, seniority, or hierarchy standing and the decision making ability of a person.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Women constitute nearly half of Ethiopia's population. However, they are relegated to lower-level professions across the board rather than held in any kind of leadership capacity. Moreover, it is found that having women in leadership roles is critical for companies to achieve their goals, but according to several researches conducted, poor female representation is the consequence of a variety of barriers (Wubante Ayalew 2018). The majority of people in administrative and decision-making positions today are men, and they favor promoting other men over highly qualified women who are just as competent as men (Meron Aragaw 2018). As compared to men, women have a harder time climbing the corporate ladder and competing for roles that were traditionally occupied by men. Several companies and the government have taken action to remove barriers for women seeking executive positions (Rahel, 2013).

Due to several reasons, women encounter significant barriers while trying to participate in management positions. According to Endale 2014, which cites Bartol et al., 2003, Hoyt, 2005, and Powell et al., 2002, it has been shown that traditional and persistent barriers hinder women from actively seeking positions of leadership. Women are underrepresented in banking executive positions compared to males (Sahay & Cihak). The gap is especially wide in less developed countries like Ethiopia. Sahay and Cihak found that having more women on boards in the financial industry was associated with stronger banks. There is widespread consensus that there has to be substantial rise in the number of women occupying positions of power and influence (Tsegyal Dawa and Duptho Ugyen 2022). It is anticipated that improved decision making that takes into consideration male and female representations would result in growth that is both more equal and more sustainable (Tsegyal Dawa and Duptho Ugyen 2022).

The yearly report of Dashen Bank, for the period 2015 to 2022 reveals that the number of women participating in executive position is minimal to none. It's only in the year of 2020 that women became a member of the board of directors of the bank. The yearly reports reveal that women account for just 2% of highest level directors and board members (Dashen Bank annual report

2015-2022). As stated in Dashen Banks HR report, there is only 1 woman in executive position but 12 males. There are 44 men in senior level positions but only 4 women.

Therefore, the research investigated the factors that contribute to the scarcity of female leaders at Dashen Bank. This study determined what factors contribute to the hindrance of women's advancement to leadership positions.

1.3 Research Questions

The research made an attempt to answer the following questions

General Question

1. What are the main reasons for the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in Dashen Bank?

Specific Questions

1. What type of influence does gender stereotypes and biases against women have on women's leadership involvement in Dashen Bank?
2. What are the socio-cultural factors that influence women's leadership engagement in Dashen Bank?
3. What are the organizational factors that influence women's leadership involvement in Dashen Bank?
4. What are the individual/personal obstacles that prevent women from attaining the top leadership positions in Dashen Bank?

1.4 Objectives of the study

General Objective:

- To examine women leadership participation in the finance sector, specifically in Dashen Bank SC.

Specific Objective:

- To investigate whether gender stereotype influence women progression to leadership positions
- To investigate whether sociocultural variables influence women's leadership engagement in the bank
- To identify whether organizational variables influence women's leadership involvement in the bank
- To identify whether individual/personal obstacles prevent women from attaining the top leadership positions.

1.5 Significance of the study

The study's findings will reveal how many women participate in the financial industry specifically, Dashen Bank and suggest ways to boost their representation in leadership roles. The bank will be able to use the study's results to develop policies and programs to promote gender equality in the workplace, and upper management at corporations will be able to put the study's findings to good use in their strategic human resource planning. In identifying the most significant barriers preventing women from obtaining leadership positions, the study's results may be utilized to influence gender-related legislation and the development and maintenance of gender-aware workplaces.

The study will also be able to pin point the main factors that have hindered women from attaining leadership position in the bank under study which will help raise awareness. These barriers must be continually addressed and challenged if women are to continue to have the same level of representation and opportunity as men in positions of leadership.

In addition to this, researchers in the future who want to replicate this study may utilize the results as secondary data. The research will serve as a foundation for further research and conclusive study on women's issues.

1.6 Scope of the study

The research study was limited to the branches in Addis Ababa and did not include any branches outside of Addis Ababa. Due to time and budget constraints, the research distributed questionnaires to employees working in the head office and other randomly selected branches that were at close proximity to the researcher. Within the financial institution, women who held executive positions, senior positions, middle level management positions, line management positions and clerical positions were the primary focus of the research. A well-structured interview was conducted with a selected few female who held the positions of senior and executive level leadership positions.

The research is a descriptive type of study as it tried to investigate the reasons or factors hindering women from reaching top leadership positions.

1.7 About Dashen Bank

Aspiring to be the “Best in class Bank in Africa”, the name Dashen Bank was inspired by Ethiopia’s tallest mountain, Mount Dashen. In September 1995, eleven visionary shareholders and seasoned bankers established Dashen Bank with an initial capital of Birr 14.9 million. Dashen was established on January 1, 1996, with eleven fully functioning branches after receiving a license from the Central Bank of Ethiopia (Dashen bank country profile 2023).

Despite considerable progress in Dashen Bank to increase the representation of women in the bank in senior-management and decision-making roles, there are still a lot of unspoken promotion practices, laws and norms that need to be in place before women may reach the top levels of leadership (Bayush 2020). According to the yearly report of Dashen Bank, the number of women participating in executive positions such as the board of directors is extremely low. It’s only in the year of 2020 that women became a member of the Board of Directors of the bank. Although the percentage of women employees is only 30%, the bank has developed policies to increase the number to 50% in the coming years.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The study was confined to a single bank due to time and budget constraints. Therefore, the research may not have an adequate representation of the entire financial industry. Additionally, the study was conducted on managerial and non-managerial female employees of Dashen Bank, head office and Addis Ababa branches only. Due to this, the study may not be generalizable to other banks in the country. It was extremely difficult to persuade the employees of the bank to complete out the questionnaire, which was one of the obstacles encountered. Not all questionnaires were distributed through a drop-off and pick-up method; almost half of the questionnaires were emailed to respondents on behalf of the researcher by the chief officer of the bank. Furthermore the researcher believes that, due to their demanding and hectic work schedules, the respondents may not have given the questionnaires sufficient attention and thought.

1.9 Operational definition of terms

Leadership: For the purpose of this study, the term leadership refers to a woman working in Dashen Bank, who has established an unquestionable rapport with her followers in order to bring about change. The term leadership refers to a person's position, seniority, or hierarchy standing and the decision making power.

Gender: refers to the sexual identity of an individual. In this paper, it refers to male/female or man/woman employees of the bank.

Gender stereotypes: A gender stereotype is a preconceived notion about the qualities and roles that women and men are expected to have in society (UN Women, 2016).

Organizational variables: refers to the structure and culture of the organization as well as human resource policies and strategies of the bank.

Sociocultural variables: refers to the norms and values that have been placed on women by society.

Individual variables: refers to women's outlook and behavior in the workplace regarding the feeling of inferiority and the level of assertiveness and work life balance.

1.10 Structure of the study

The paper is broken down into five sections. Background of the study, Description of the problem, General objectives of the study, research questions, the study's significance, scope of the study, and background of the bank are all covered in chapter one. The second chapter is a literature review of previous research on the topic. The research methods will be outlined in chapter three. The results and discussion of the study will be presented and analyzed in chapter four, and the research conclusion will be in chapter five. Ultimately, based on the problem description, recommendations will be made concerning the raised research concerns.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter summarizes the research that has been done on the subject up to this point. The research problem is backed by a review of the supporting literature. Books, journals, articles, thesis, and dissertations were the primary source of the literature review. The chapter is classified into two main sections: Theoretical review and Empirical review. The theoretical review contains the concept and meaning of leadership style, the glass ceiling effect, gender equality and empowerment and the significance of having female leaders respectively. The Empirical review contains status of women in leadership, women in leadership in Ethiopia, factors affecting women in leadership, women's education in less developed countries and women in the financial sector.

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 The concept and meaning of leadership

Leadership may be defined in a variety of ways. Yetewale (2014) describes leadership as the 'process of persuading others to comprehend and agree on what has to be done and how it do it', with reference to Gary Yulk's definition of management. Leadership is frequently related with a person's position, seniority, hierarchy or standing. However, it is a trait that anyone, including those without leadership position, can possess or acquire.

According to John Gardner (1993), leadership can also be explained as "the process through which a person inspires a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers", whether or not these goals are explicitly stated. Insight and self-awareness, structure, constant communication and reinforcement, the capability to spark a shared vision for the future, and the skillful recruitment of action-motivated followers are all necessary ingredients for successful leadership (Klingborg DJ, Moore DA, Varea-Hammond S.2006). There isn't a specific set of traits that all great leaders have; rather, they succeed at meeting the demands of their assigned tasks within the business while also showing genuine care for their subordinates (Donald J. (Klingborg DJ, Moore DA, Varea-Hammond S.2006). Self-confidence, strong communication and management skills, originality of thought, perseverance, being open to new experiences,

willingness to take risks, adaptability, poise under pressure, and a decisive action are all attributes of an effective leader (Nick Barney, Mary K. Pratt 2022).

Leadership, according to Bass & Riggio (2006), is “the ability to influence, inspire and guide individuals or groups toward the achievement of a common aim or objective.” Leadership requires setting an example by creating a path forward, making tough choices, and inspiring followers to do their best work. Being a leader requires a diverse set of skills, habits and personal traits that allow one to guide and influence people effectively. Bass and Riggio (2006) argue that leadership is not a static idea but rather one that can be seen from many different vantage points. Leadership is characterized by many key characteristics, including influence (the ability to affect the decisions and actions of others), vision and direction, decision-making and empowerment.

While leadership has been defined in a variety of ways, those with the following traits have been identified: Leadership is a process that incorporates influence, occurs in groups, and involves common goals (Beyene Workie, 2018).

2.1.2 Gender and leadership style

The World Health Organization defines gender as the characteristics that have been assigned to women, men, girls, and boys by society. This includes the norms, habits and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl, or boy, as well as links between them. Men and women approach leadership differently. As stated by Alemayehu, (Alemayehu, 2020), when examining disparities between male and female leaders, the characteristic approach to leadership is required since it considers that there are some common features among leaders and, as a consequence, distinct traits shared by male and female leaders. According to SH Appelbaum, L Audet, JC Miller (2003), new standards have evolved in the corporate world, and they are commonly referred to as feminine values. As they are based on consensual relationships and inspire a unique management approach to communications, leadership, negotiations, organization, and control, these values go counter to the competitive and domineering mentality commonly associated with traditional male management. The need of maintaining this delicate balancing act is becoming widely acknowledged (SH Appelbaum, L Audet, JC Miller, 2003)

SH Appelbaum, L Audet, JC Miller (2003) say that in accordance with conventional wisdom, a woman's way of leadership is different from that of a man. They suggest that women may have an advantage in leadership roles due to their innate strengths in areas such as communication, mediation, interpersonal skills, and empathy. Furthermore, SH Appelbaum, L Audet, JC Miller (2003) claim that empathy, communication, interpersonal skills, and strategic planning are all areas where women have been consistently shown to outperform men. They are not perceived as more outgoing or cooperative leaders, however. When it comes to leadership assessments, women do better on scales that evaluate an emphasis on output and attainment of objectives, while men are far better on scales that evaluate an emphasis on strategic planning and organizational vision (SH Appelbaum, L Audet, JC Miller 2003). An effective leader is someone who can motivate their team, create a shared vision, build strong relationship, and influence outcomes. According to studies, women are more likely to hold transformational leadership styles, which are better suited to today's enterprises (Hana, 2022).

Hailu (Hailu, 2013) argues that women and men have vastly different priorities at work. One possible conclusion is that these variances help explain the so-called gender gap. For most males, it's mostly about financial stability, personal freedom, and career advancement opportunities. Women, on the other hand, care more about the people they work with and the quality of their relationships at work and in their personal lives.

Kiamba (2009) claims that female leaders are pressured to lead in the same way as male leaders because they perceive their gender to be an obstacle. According to this viewpoint, women are more likely to be promoted and given credit for their contribution if they adopt leadership characteristics more typical of males.

2.1.3 The Glass Ceiling Effect

Citing (Cotter et al. 2001; Lorber 1994) Macarther & Samblanet (2010) state that the Glass Ceiling alludes to the fact that many women are unable to advance beyond a certain point in their vocations and professions despite having the necessary abilities and achievements.

As explained by Fritscher 2017, "the glass ceiling effect" refers to the pervasive resistance faced by minorities and women who want to advance to the top management levels of major businesses. Many women entered the workforce in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but many faced barriers to

advancement once they reached middle management. Fritscher 2017 further explains that women of reproductive age were stereotyped as being less committed to their jobs and less disciplined than men and older women in the workplace, leading to the coining of phrases like “glass ceiling” and “mother track” in the 1980s.

Fritscher (2017) argues that this was because of the widespread belief that new mothers would need significant time away from work, if not quite entirely. As a consequence, many businesses relegated young women to a “mother track” where they received little real responsibility and no advancement despite their hard work.

Lowe, M. (1988) stress that the idea of the “glass ceiling” has been widely examined and researched in academic literature and popular culture. In their book, the glass ceiling was blamed on a variety of factors, including gender stereotypes, a lack of access to crucial positions and networks, and a lack of mentors and role models. They argue that the glass ceiling effect is still a major issue in the workplace, despite the gains made in the decades after the book’s release.

According to recent studies, women continue to be disproportionately underrepresented in the workforce, and the gender gap in leadership positions that has not narrowed as much as it should have. People of color and people with disabilities are two more underrepresented categories that are now being explored in regard to the “glass ceiling”.

2.1.4 Gender Equality and Empowerment

Gender, according to Nomoto, R. (2017), is a social and cultural construction that differentiates between men and women and their responsibilities and roles in society. Therefore, gender roles and other characteristics change through time and among cultures. Gender stereotypes generalize about the characteristics, skills and actions of women and men.

There has been an upsurge of attention and discussion on gender equality concerns in the twenty-first century. Nonetheless, despite the emphasis and an increasing number of social movements centered on gender, gender disparity remains, especially in the workplace (Hideg, I & Kristic. A 2021).

Connell, R. W. (2005) argues that because of the effects of the prevailing patterns of gender inequality, women pushed for the inclusion of gender equality on the policy agenda. However, men are also active in the movement to advance gender parity. Gender inequality is rooted in a complex web of male and female interactions that permeates every aspect of society. Connell, R. W. (2005) further claim that significant institutional change, in addition to change in everyday life and individual action, are necessary to move towards a gender-equal society. This necessitates a lot of help from the community, especially from the male population.

According to Maggie Wooll (2021), pay disparities is just one manifestation of inequality in the workplace. Micro aggressions such as sexist comments or queries are common and continue to be a barrier to women's advancement in leadership roles. Maggie Wooll (2021) argues that gender discrimination in the workplace takes any forms such as uneven pay, advancement opportunities, sexual harassment and bias. In many cases, its effects are more subtle such as a greater incidence of weariness among women and a decrease in opportunities for mothers.

Nomoto, R. (2017) states that empowerment entails learning about discrimination and inequality, increasing self-confidence, making educated choices, having access to and control over resources and changing gender-based systems and institutions. Self-determination empowers. Women and girls need parity in rights (such as education and health) and resources and opportunities such as (land and work) and the freedom to actively pursue whatever they want to be fully empowered.

Empowering women and promoting gender equality are crucial to achieving sustainable development. Endalcachew Bayeh (2016), referring UN Women (2014) argues that achieving gender equality is crucial to building a fair and sustainable world and empowering women to play an integral role in doing so at home, in the workplace and in society at large.

2.1.5 Importance of having female leaders

Lahti 2013 argues that there are four main reasons why there should be more female leaders: equality, women's contribution as leaders, the significance of women being empowered to speak out and meritocracy. Regarding equality, both men and women should have access to the same educational and employment possibilities. Women's contribution to leadership should not be taken lightly. Women are transformational leaders, they have the ability to empathize, motivate and

communicate well. According to Lahti (2013), gender equality in the workplace means that both men and women have the same possibilities to advance in their professions and reach leadership roles when performance is not an issue. In contrast, the concept of meritocracy emphasizes the primacy of merit above other factors (such as gender) in determining one's success.

Lahti 2013 argues that there is a correlation between organizational and financial performance as demonstrated by the fact that organizations with more women in the board of directors or in senior management perform better financially.

Women leaders are transformative role models because they break through obstacles they face in the workplace. Because of the difficulty of their advancement, they grow incredibly as individuals. Raisa Ghazi (2022) argues that since women tend to be more cautious than males, which might encourage them to take moderate risks. Women also tend to have a more communal mindset than males. Ethical decision making is another reason why there should be more women in leadership roles. Raisa Ghazi (2022) suggest that there is evidence that shows businesses with more women on their boards make more moral choices.

Referencing McKinsey & Company (2007), an article written by The Carter Center, n.d (2022), argues that top executive teams in the UK fared best when they included a greater proportion of women. Women in leadership positions have the potential to contribute in novel ways. Even more importantly, female leaders have unique cultural and structural insights that contribute to effective outcomes. They will be able to see things that others miss because of their fresh outlook and heightened sensitivity (The Carter Center, n.d, 2022)

On the contrary, Radu, Deaconu and Frasinianu (2017) argue that it can't be concluded that either men or women are better leaders, but it can be said that the distinction between genders may be used for the advantage of a company. In order for businesses to thrive, a healthy mix of masculine and feminine is essential.

Radu, Deaconu and Frasinianu (2017) explain that advocating for a shift from a dominant-gender leadership model to one that recognizes how both genders may strengthen one another. This is warranted because modern leadership styles value originality, flexibility, intuition and focus on the team above technical proficiency.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Status of women in Leadership

It wasn't until the 18th century that women began working as spinners and weavers, although women first joined the profession in the 13th century. The church and other conservative groups that prioritize family values have long maintained the notion that women have no business being in the paid labor field. The labor market during those times was segregationist because it mirrored the sexual division of labor by assigning men to more important strategic positions and women to more menial domestic tasks. Due to the financial consequences of divorce, this fact further reinforced women's dependence on marriage (team, n.d. 2022).

According to the global gender gap report (2022), the percentage of women and men working in technical and professional fields as well as in positions of authority and management is tracked by the Global gender Gap Index. Gender-parity in this field throughout the world hit a record high of 42.7% in 2022. Using LinkedIn's high-frequency data, researchers can take a quick look at the state of gender equality in corporate leadership across 155 nations. Women make up 31% of all corporate executives worldwide, albeit that number varies widely by sector. In 2022, just a few sectors, including non-profits and membership organizations (47%), schools (46%) and health care and other personal services (45%), will have almost equal numbers of men and women in top positions (global gender gap report 2022).

According to the data, there has been significant improvement globally in participation of women in leadership in the past few years. Regardless of that, compared to the number of women in the workforce, more work needs to be done to empower women given that there are social and economic benefits for the company as a whole from the increased participation of women in leadership roles (global gender gap report 2022).

Figure 2. Gender disparities in labor force participation rates in selected developing countries, various years (2012–2017)

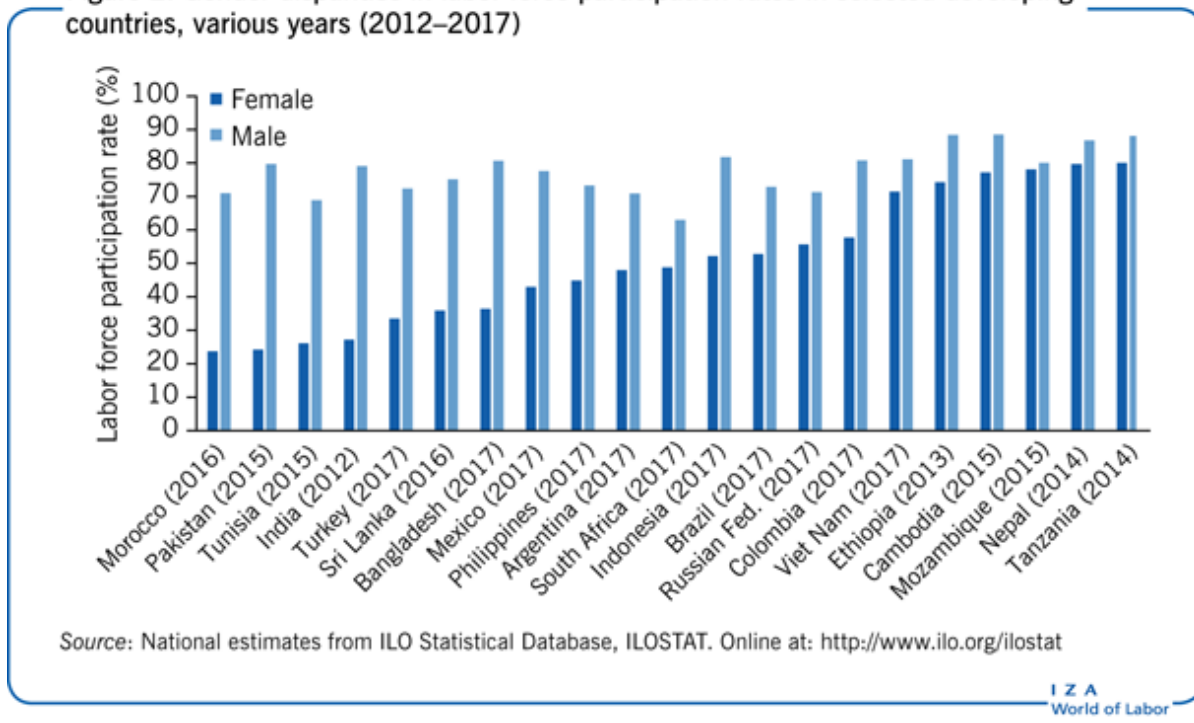


Figure 1 IZA -Female labor force participation and development (2018)

2.2.2 Women in Leadership in Ethiopia

There have been many powerful women in Ethiopian history, from military commanders to religious luminaries. Ye Kake Yewerdewt criticized patriarchal ideal and battled for women’s rights during the beginning of the 19th century. Women have also taken the initiative in socio-judicial decision-making processes such as those at the Sinqee institution. Harrar is home to a number of female Muslim academics who have taught and passed on Islamic knowledge, including the famous healer and spiritual leader Sitt Momina (Meron 2021).

Meron (2021) in her research “Women in Ethiopia” states that traditional beliefs about a woman’s place in household management have long been a cultural barrier to Ethiopian women achieving leadership roles outside the home. Hence, there are not nearly enough women in authoritative positions in Ethiopia. These cultural norms not only contribute to the pervasive propensity to discount women’s contributions to public life, but also explain why there is a scarcity of data showing historical trends in women’s political involvement in Ethiopia. Hence, there has been no comprehensive study of the historical roles of Ethiopian women.

According to the Ethiopian Gender Development Index for 2021, there is still a 44% gap to close before gender parity is achieved in the country. This implies that there are more men than women with diplomas and college degrees, which in turn suggests that males will hold most positions of leadership.

The FDRE administration has introduced a variety of reinforcing instruments to increase women's representation in all levels of decision-making and leadership. However, women's roles remains much lower than that of males (Thomas, 2018).

2.2.3 Factors affecting women in Leadership

Divergent treatment of women in management is often attributed to the widespread belief that women are incapable of serving in leadership roles (Brown 1997). In the majority of nations, it is uncommon to find women in senior leadership positions. According to Endale (2014), this scarcity of female participation is a result of organizational structures, negative attitudes toward women's participation, and traditional and cultural expectations regarding women's roles. In addition, an excessive amount of family responsibilities, cultural expectations and stereotypes limit women's participation in leadership positions. These impediments continue to be among the most serious contributors preventing women from reaching top management positions.

A. Societal factors

The impact of societal variables on individual and organizational behavior is often indirect. Women's leadership may be influenced by the norms and values that society places on individuals and organizations. Changing societal issues is time-consuming and challenging since they affect many parts of life and are not easily controlled (Lahti 2013).

Bruktawit and Abeba (2018) write in *The Challenges of Women Leaders of Business Organizations in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*, in balancing work-family responsibilities that Ethiopians place a high value on social relationships with a particular emphasis on women and that women's inability to meet such demands places a heavy emotional burden on their well-being and leads to work-family imbalances. Having to juggle career and family commitments, as well as societal expectations is a struggle that many women face.

Hill, C., Miller, K., & Handley, G (2016) in an article titled ‘Barriers and Bias’s’ argue that it may be difficult for women in leadership roles to juggle work and home responsibilities, especially if they are single mothers. Women are more likely than men to have unpredictable work schedules due to caring for children and other family members. Women who are unable to take paid leave after giving birth are more likely to give up their jobs permanently. Due to lack of or inability to take a paid leave, many women who have children decide to quit the industry. Employees are cautious to take advantage of family-friendly policies because they fear having their commitment to the company questioned. Males are less likely than women to be in dual-career partnership or to leave their jobs for a significant other. These choices are impacted by cultural norms, gender socialization and economic factors.

Mbugua (2007) claims, based on an argument made by Kamau (2006), that women in the vast majority of African civilizations are characterized by their roles in relation to men. A wife’s major duty, for instance, is to encourage her husband while he pursues his career goals by being a positive influence on him. Every aspect of housekeeping falls on her shoulders when her husband is away at school or job. After satisfying culturally approved responsibilities, only then may women follow their professional objectives.

Based on findings from Hana’s (2015) study, it seems that patriarchal culture is to blame for the paucity of women in senior roles in the commercial bank of Ethiopia. Domestic duties and family upkeep fall predominantly on women in this society, whereas men are considered to be the leaders of their households. Family and institutional backing help women climb the corporate ladder. Challenges that women in leadership positions face include meeting societal expectations for their professions and maintaining a work-life balance.

A research conducted by Bayush (2021) found that women’s participation in education, career advancement and other areas where they may reach their full potential lagged behind their participation in more conventional roles like housework because of cultural norms. Moreover, gender stereotypes show that males are seen to be more capable leaders than women.

B. Stereotypes and Biases

In their study, Von Hippel, C., Sekaquaptewa, D., & McFarlane, M. (2015), discovered that to the extent that women experienced stereotype threat in their workplace, they reported lower well-being at work and were less likely to recommend their field to other women; these results were mediated by identity dissociation. Von Hippel, C., Sekaquaptewa, D., & McFarlane, M. (2015), argue that because women are in the minority in stereotypically masculine disciplines such as finance and banking, women in these fields may experience implicit bias or fear of being negatively stereotyped at work.

Despite this fact, stereotypes about gender disparities in the workplace continue to be widely held. Both genders have a tendency to depict “typical” men and women as submissive. Also, traditionally masculine characteristics have been favored above feminine ones. For instance, a woman’s caring and sense of community are less prized than a man’s focus on success (Mbugua 2007).

Additionally, gender stereotypes clarify the overrepresentation of women and men in certain fields. Women are disproportionately represented in caregiving professions including nursing, education, social work, especially child care. The construction industry and managerial positions that call on physical endurance, risk-taking or decisiveness are dominated by males. Such bias against women is also present in institutional norms and policies. It has been argued that men are more often promoted to management roles because they are likely to work long hours and lead by example in male-dominated fields. Women’s desires for job stability or the pressures of modern society to balance work and family life may also contribute to occupational, sectoral or temporal segregation (Etagegne 2019).

C. Organizational factors

The ideas, values and attitudes of an organizations leadership and employees are collectively referred to as its “culture”. Customers and suppliers, for example, will have different impressions of a company based on the culture of that company. It’s reflected in things like the required uniform and working hours. It also has an impact on workplace amenities and layout. Executives are often responsible for sharing the culture of a company.

The removal of stereotypical gender roles, improved work-life balance and the freedom to be one's true self at work are all possible results of an inclusive workplace culture that places an emphasis on gender equality. Males may experience fewer feelings of obligation to succeed, decreased hyper competition, enhanced relationships and a greater capacity to balance work and personal responsibilities, while females may experience fewer instances of micro aggressions or discrimination, better career progression and less pressure to conform (Cannon 2022).

When it comes to encouraging women to take up leadership roles, Lathi (2013) argues that organizations are crucial. The decision to designate a woman as the organization's head rests with the company itself. Women's access to leadership positions is influenced by both the external environment and the internal culture of a business.

Work excess, according to Bruktawit and Abeba (2018), is one of the most significant organizational factors contributing to difficulty. The typical work hours provided by the company are inconsistent with the job responsibilities assigned to the women. Employees are increasingly expected to produce results that exceed their capabilities.

Bayush 2021 found that although personal and cultural variables had a smaller role in explaining why fewer women hold top positions, organizational issues were significantly at fault. Organizational and institutional behavior, according to Bayush's research (2021), women's capacity for leadership is hampered by factors such as the absence of women in decision-making positions, inflexible working conditions and gender-friendly laws. Having insufficient chances for networking and guidance are one of the hindrances women face in organizations. Although obstacles vary from one company to the next, female executives are underrepresented because of prejudice in hiring, succession planning, promotions, and performance appraisals (Bayush 2021).

D. Individual obstacles of women

Both the organizational and the social levels have an impact on the ways in which women are treated in the workplace. Women, in addition to the customary expectations put upon them by men, have their own ideas about what they should be like and accomplish. One's outlook and behavior in the workplace as well as the degree to which one is encouraged to advance professionally, may be affected by the company's culture (Lahti 2013).

In 'The Challenges of Women Leaders of Business Organizations in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in Integrating Work-Family Responsibilities,' Bruktawit and Abeba (2018) state that the individual factors that influenced women's leadership behavior included their unfavorable family upbringing. The lack of assertiveness among female leaders negatively impacted their work-family balance. The majority of women leaders' mentality of embracing societal values, attempting to meet every life requirement and appearing competent in all domains was also one of the primary causes of their work-family balance difficulties.

According to a study conducted by Ashebir (2014), it was found that women are less likely to pursue leadership roles because they don't feel intrinsically motivated to do so. Social and psychological constraints also limit the number of women in positions of educational leadership.

2.2.4 Women's Education in developing countries

Emmanuel (2017), citing EFA (Education for all) states that women's lack of formal education limits their potential for contributing in advancing the nation compared to males. Emmanuel (2017) claims that education is exclusively accessible to males in several African and Asian countries. Women face barriers to work since most open positions are only movable if you have a college degree. Respect for the worth of a female existence is diminished by patriarchal institutions, early marriage, early childbearing and increased household and subsistence responsibilities of women in most developing countries.

Emmanuel (2017) further argues that the unaffordability of school supplies and the loss of important support at home and on the land are considered as too high of a price to pay for sending girls to school. Women have less influence and prestige since they are often not compensated for their work and lack expertise managing money. Unfortunately, investing in a girl's education is sometimes seen as a pointless in patriarchal societies.

According to Hana (2015), women's enrollment in universities has climbed steadily over the last several decades. However, their number remains much lower than those of men. The gender gap in higher education in the nation remains despite a rise in the number of female bachelor's degree recipients. It's commonly known that higher levels of education, workforce engagement and leadership ability all go hand in hand.

Eliminating gender imbalance in educational opportunities at all levels will boost women's standing and potential because education is crucial to human progress.

2.2.5 Women in the Financial Sector

Policymakers and business executives all across the globe have been interested in and concerned about the lack of women working in banking. Although women have made great strides toward equality and diversity in the banking business in several nations and areas, there is still a long way to go. The World Bank found that women are underrepresented at all levels of the banking industry, with just 38% of the worldwide banking workforce being female. Also, women are more common in lower-paying occupations like customer service than in higher-paying and more significant occupations like CEO and board member positions.

Despite these obstacles, there are instances of nations and organizations that are actively supporting the involvement of women in the banking industry. For instance, the government of Saudi Arabia has begun a drive to entice more women to work in the financial services industry, with the aim of raising women's involvement to 30% by the year 2030 (Ahmed Al Omran 2017). A women's Entrepreneurship Council has also been created in India to encourage women's access to capital and other resources.

Although research has been conducted regarding women's involvement in leadership positions, most previous studies have used a quantitative methodology, therefore, they lack the depth of understanding and nuance that a qualitative approach may offer.

2.2.6 Conceptual Framework

Hana (2015), referencing (Jabeen and Jadoon, 2009), claims that different attempts have been made by scholars to categorize the factors that are hindering women from attaining leadership positions. Out of all the frameworks developed, the Gender Organization System (GOS) framework is the most often used.

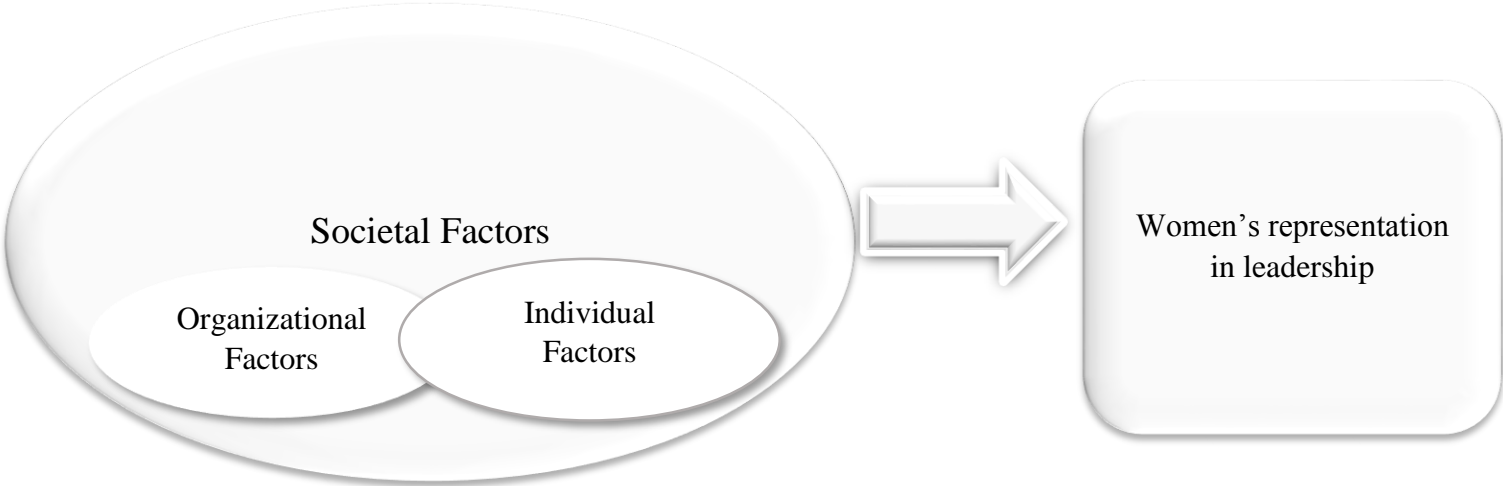
According to Fagenson (1990), the framework divides the factor into individual, organizational and societal factors and it assumes that women's advancement to organizational leadership is influenced by

the interaction of their own gender, the organization and the larger system that shapes people’s values, attitudes and behaviors. It also provides a thorough strategy for researching the barriers to women’s leadership engagement.

Fagenson (1990) argues that social and systemic variables inside the organization and individual characteristics within the person can all affect how far a woman can develop in her management career. The model also takes into account the interactions of all these variables.

The conceptual framework upon which the study is based is depicted in diagram 2.2.6 below

Figure 2.2.6: Conceptual Framework (GOS model)



Source: Adapted from Fagenson (1990)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methods that are used to achieve the objectives outlined in the introduction chapter are discussed below. Data collecting methods, tools, sample strategies and analytic methods will be discussed in detail.

3.1 Research Approach

Hammarberg, Kirkman and Lacey (2016) state that beliefs, attitudes, and ideas of social norms may be explored using qualitative research methods such focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and in-depth interviews. These methods are used to get an inner comprehension of a circumstance, experience, or event. Hammarberg, Kirkman and Lacey (2016) further explain that when more broad range or statistical information about views, attitudes, perspectives, beliefs, and preferences is required to answer the research issue, quantitative research methods are used.

The study's goal was to investigate the participation of women in leadership positions. Therefore, the researcher believes that using both qualitative and quantitative research approach was appropriate because using qualitative or quantitative method alone will not sufficiently answer the research questions.

3.2 Research Design

According to William M.K (2006), the research design is the overarching plan and method of analysis used to bring together all the parts of the study in a clear and coherent whole, guaranteeing a thorough exploration of the research subject.

The research was a descriptive research study that attempted to investigate the factors influencing the advancement of women in high leadership positions. Lisa. M (1999) defines descriptive research as a research design that answer questions like “who”, “what”, and “how” to learn about the present state of the phenomenon and to characterize what is out there. Since the researcher wanted to provide a comprehensive picture of a certain circumstance or phenomena, the researcher thinks the descriptive research approach was ideal. This research was a fact finding study, and its

findings were adequately and correctly interpreted. Since the purpose of the study was to identify the factors hindering women employees of Dashen Bank from climbing the ladder to reach top leadership positions, the researcher considers the descriptive research as the most applicable technique to use.

The data were collected through questionnaires and structured interviews with primary sources. A questionnaire was developed with reference to Hana 2015 and Bayush 2020. The questionnaires comprised of closed-ended questions. They were administered using the "drop and pick up later" technique. The interviews were conducted in-person with a number of the bank's executive and senior female employees.

3.3 Sources of Data

To accomplish the objective of the study, both primary and secondary data were collected. The researcher collected primary data via questionnaires containing closed-ended questions. Interviews were conducted as well. In addition to books, articles, published reports, and journals, different published and unpublished organization documents, such as human resource data and other documented sources from the bank's website, were used as secondary sources of data.

3.4 Sampling method and Population Size

The designated group which is important to a particular research is known as the target population. A population, according to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), is a collection of people or items that share similar attributes.

The study population in this regard comprised of women employees in Dashen Bank in Addis Ababa, who are working as directors, department managers, line managers, assistant managers and supervisors as well as female employees who have not yet attained managerial positions such as clerical female staff members. The study comprised of only women due to budget and time constraints.

This research used a purposive sampling technique that involves a deliberate choice of informants due to the qualities they possess. Female managers/non-managers working in Dashen Bank were purposively selected to take part in the quantitative study. As for the qualitative study, women who have a long tenure and with the highest positions, who are believed to have clear insight on this topic were purposefully selected. Researchers use purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling

method, to pick people or instances that fulfill specified criteria, features, experiences, or views in order to get comprehensive and detailed insights into a phenomena or research issue (Patton, M. Q. 2015)

According to the data obtained from human resource office of Dashen Bank, the total number of employees under the head office and city branches is 3748. Out of the 3748 employees, 1415 are female employees. Total number of females in managerial positions is 364.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda's (2003) recommendation that for descriptive research, at least a 10% - 30% ratio of the overall population is adequate. Taking 10% of the total female employee population, the sample size for this research is 141 female employees.

Shetty, S. (2018) states that qualitative studies aim towards saturation. A sample size between 10 and 30 people is recommended. Thus, this research aimed to conduct interviews with 10 Dashen Bank female employees.

Table 3. 4 position of respondents

Positions of respondents	Number of respondents
Executive Manager	1
Senior Managers	3
Branch Managers/Assistant branch managers	15
Line Managers	25
Assistant Mangers	15
Supervisors	10
Clerical staff members	75
Total number of participants	141

Source: Organized from HR documents of Dashen Bank, 2023

3.5 Data analysis method

Descriptive data analysis plays a crucial role in the field of quantitative methodology. It is an attempt to summarize a data set that a researcher has access to (Ashirwadam J.W. 2014).

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the investigation. Data collected through questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS, and the findings were presented using descriptive statistics including tables and charts. Moreover, content analysis was applied to interviews with top-level management.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

According to Haradhan (2017), when assessing a measuring instrument or tool for research, reliability and validity are the two most important and essential factors to consider. Validity is an assessment of what an instrument measures and how accurate it is. The level to which any measuring tool compensates for random error is known as reliability and it refers to the level of confidence that may be placed in the data gained via the use of an instrument (Haradhan, 2017). Using the statistical software SPSS, the researcher evaluated the tools' validity and reliability. A Cronbach Alpha of 0.70 or higher is regarded to be within a respectable range.

The reliability and validity results are presented in chapter four of the research paper.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

This research was conducted in accordance with Addis Ababa University School of Commerce's documented permission to conduct this study. The data was collected based on free will and consent of the respondents. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study and assured of confidentiality; questionnaires completed anonymously by respondents were considered confidential. The interview was conducted at the interviewees' discretion and with their permission.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the study's data presentation, interpretation and analysis. It consists of two sections: the first is the demographics of the respondents and the second is the data collected from the respondents via questionnaires and interview. Quantitative results of the research will be presented first followed by qualitative results. In order to answer the research questions, 141 questionnaires were prepared for employees and distributed to respondents. Of these questionnaires, 133 were completed and returned, 7 were unreturned and 1 was discarded due to missing data.

4.1 Demography of respondents

4.1.1 Response Rate

There were 133 responses out of 141 questionnaires sent to respondents, which is an acceptable response rate of 92%. All questionnaires were edited and verified for completeness before being incorporated into the data analysis.

4.1.2 Age of the respondents

Table 4.1.2 Age of respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Below 30 years	32	24.1
	31-45 years	66	49.6
	46 years and above	35	26.3
	Total	133	100.0

Source: Own survey, 2023

Table 4.1.2 displays the ages of the respondents, which fall into three categories: those aged below 30 years account for 32 (24.1%), those aged 31-45 years for 66 (49.6%) and those aged 46 years

and older account for 35 (26.5%). In addition, the majority of respondents are between the ages of 31 and 45, followed by those aged 46 and older and those younger than 30.

4.1.3 Educational level of the respondents

Table 4.1.3 Educational level of respondents

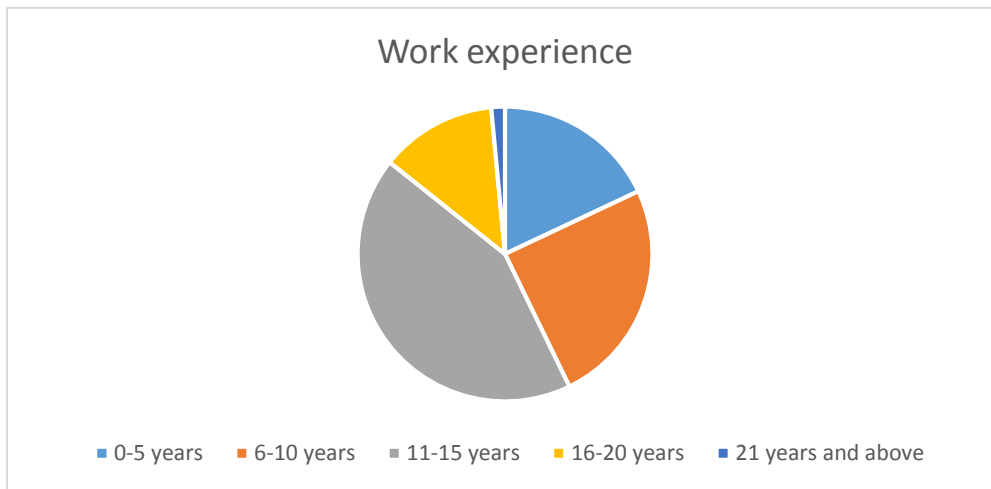
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Diploma	29	21.8
	First Degree BA/BSC	72	54.1
	Second Degree	32	24.1
	Total	133	100.0

Source: Own survey, 2023

The respondents' educational levels are displayed in table 4.1.2. Consequently, 72 (54.1%) of respondents were first-degree holders, 32 (24.1%) were second-degree holders and the remaining 29 (21.8%) were diploma holders. In addition, the majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree, followed by a second degree and a diploma. As a consequence, employees of Dashen Bank had the necessary educational background to execute their duties and create change within the bank.

4.1.4 Work experience of the respondents

Figure 4.14 work experience of respondents

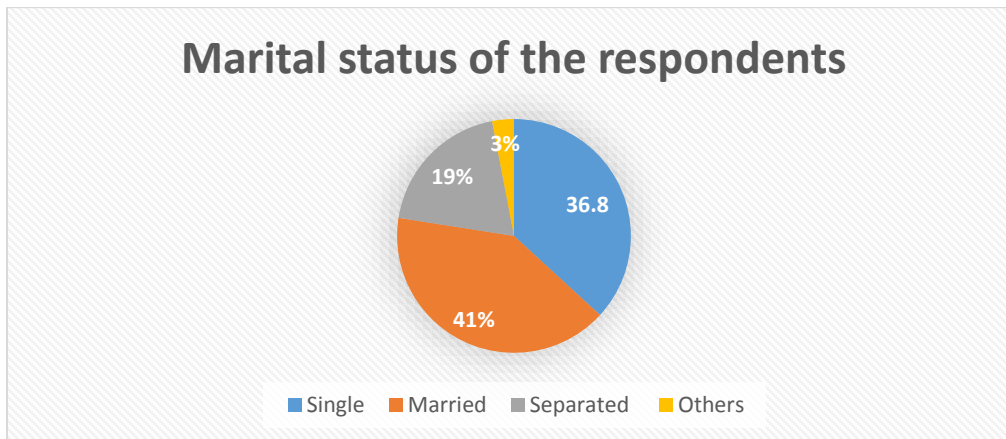


Source: Own survey, 2023

Figure 4.1.4 has five categories of work experience: 0-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years and 21 years and above. Accordingly, the first highest category of years of work experience are 11-15 years, which accounts for 57 (42.9%) of the respondents, followed by 6-10 years, which accounts for 33 (24.8%). Next is 0-5 years of experience, which accounts for 17 (12.8%) and 21 years and above accounts for 2 (1.5%) of the respondents. This indicates that the respondents; work experience provides sufficient exposure to the work area and has potential to bring change within the Dashen Bank.

4.1.5 Marital Status of the respondents

Figure 4.1.5 marital status of respondents



Source: Own survey, 2023

Figure 4.1.5 displays the marital status of the respondents; therefore, there are four marital status categories: single, married, separated and other. Accordingly, 54 (40.6%) were married, 49 (36.8%) were single, 26 (19.5%) were separated and 4 (3%) did not fall into any of these categories. Consequently, the respondent's marital status indicates that the majority of respondents were married. This indicates that they have a responsibility in their family.

4.1.6 Respondents current position in the organization

Table 4.1.6 current positions of respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Executive Manager	1	.8
	Senior Manager	3	2.3
	Branch Managers/Assistant branch managers	15	11.3
	Line Manager	24	18.0
	Assistant Manager	14	10.5
	Supervisor	10	7.5
	Clerical staff member	66	49.6
	Total	133	100

Source: Own survey, 2023

Table 4.1.6 depicts the current positions of respondents within the organization; accordingly, there was 1 (8%) executive manager, 3 (2.3%) senior managers, 15 (11.3%) branch managers/assistant branch managers, 24 (18%) line managers, 14 (10.5%) assistant managers, 10 (7.5%) supervisors and 66 (49.5%) clerical staff members. In addition the majority of the respondents hold clerical staff positions followed by line managers and branch managers, respectively. Consequently, the current state of the bank indicated that employees of Dashen Bank are in a respectable position to contribute to the bank's success.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

Likert scales were developed by Rensis Likert in 1932 and are ordinal scales with 5 or 7 points on which respondents indicate how much they agree or disagree with the subject at hand (Sullivan GM, Artino AR Jr, 2013).

For those who strongly disagree, the estimated mean value falls between 1 and 1.80; for those who disagree, the range is between 1.81 and 2.6; for those who are neutral, the range is between 2.61 and 3.4; for those who agree, the range is between 3.41 and 4.2; and for those who strongly agree, the range is between 4.21 and 5.00. Each component of the assessment in the questionnaire had a limit of 0.8. Thus, the difference between highest (5) and lowest (1) scores was divided by the maximum (5) score of the questionnaire, yielding a result of 0.8. The standard deviation was employed in the analysis of the data. While a significant standard deviation (compared to mean) denotes that the data points are far from the mean, a small standard deviation (relative to the mean itself) suggests that the data are near to the mean. How well the mean reflects the data is determined by standard deviation (Field, 2009). As a result, the interpretation of each variable is based on its mean, which is between the two ranges. Accordingly, if the mean is close to 1, it is assumed that the respondents did not agree with the presented problem or variable, while if it is close to 5, the opposite is true.

4.2.1 Women's participation in Leadership positions in Dashen Bank

4.2.1.1 Do you think that the number of women in leadership positions is few compared to men?

Table 4.2.1.1 number of women in leadership compared to men

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	61	45.9
	No	55	41.4
	Neutral	17	12.8
	Total	133	100.0

Source: own survey, 2023

4.2.1.1 Questions whether there are fewer women in executive roles at Dashen bank than there are men. Thus on these questions, 61 (45.9%) of the respondents answered “yes” the number of women is few compared to men, 55 (41.4%) of the respondents said “no” and 17 (12.8%) of respondents answered neutral. Therefore, it can be seen from 4.2.1.1 that there are less women in leadership roles than there are males.

4.2.1.2 In Dashen Bank, do you think that women have opportunities to advance as men?

Table 4.2.1.2 women have same opportunities to advance as men

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	More	18	13.5
	Fewer	47	35.3
	Same	68	51.1
	Total	133	100.0

Source: Own survey, 2023

Table 4.2.1.2 questioning “In Dashen Bank, do you think that women have opportunities to advance as men?” the responses indicate that the majority of respondent, 68 (51.1%), believe Dashen Bank provides equal opportunities to men and women. Then, 47 (35.3%) said Dashen Bank has fewer opportunities for women than for men, while the remaining 18 (13.5%) said Dashen Bank has more opportunities for women than men.

4.2.1.3 Do you think it is easy for women in Dashen Bank to climb the ladder to reach senior leadership positions?

Table 4.2.1.3 women to climb the ladder to reach leadership positions

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	42	31.6
	No	61	45.9
	Neutral	30	22.6
	Total	133	100.0

Source: Own survey, 2023

Table 4.2.1.3 enquiring that the possibility that women easily climb the ladder to reach senior leadership positions in Dashen Bank. The majority of respondents, 61 (45.9%) said “No”, followed by 42 (31.6%) “Yes” and 30 (22.6%), who said “neutral”. As a result, table 4.2.1.3 indicates that it is challenging for women to advance to senior leadership position at Dashen Bank.

4.2.1.4 Do you think that women are offered equal opportunities to compete for leadership positions as men in Dashen Bank?

Table 4.2.1.4 women offered equal opportunities to compete for leadership positions

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	51	38.3
	No	50	37.6
	Neutral	32	24.1
	Total	133	100.0

Source: Own survey, 2023

Table 4.2.1.4 examines whether women are offered equal opportunities to compete for leadership positions as men in Dashen Bank. The majority of respondents 51 (38.3%) said yes, while 50 (37.6%) said no and 32 (24.1%) were neutral. therefore, the above table indicates that in Dashen Bank, women don't have equal opportunities to compete for leadership positions.

4.2.1.5 Do you believe that Dashen Bank has an equal opportunity policy to ensure non-discrimination against women?

Table 4.2.1.5 Dashen bank has an equal opportunity policy

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	55	41.4
	No	52	39.1
	Neutral	26	19.5
	Total	133	100.0

Source: Own survey, 2023

Table 4.2.1.5 examines whether men and women have equal opportunities to compete for leadership positions in Dashen Bank. The majority of respondents 52 (39.1%), said “no” while 55 (41.4%) said “yes” and 26 (19.5%) were neutral. Therefore, table 4.2.1.5 indicates that women employees in Dashen Bank don't believe that they have equal opportunities to compete for leadership positions.

4.2.1.6 In Dashen Bank, do you think that women have opportunities to advance as men?

Table 4.2.1.6: women in Dashen Bank have the same opportunities for advancement

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	More	18	13.5
	Fewer	47	35.3
	Same	68	51.1
	Total	133	100.0

Source: Own survey, 2023

Table 4.2.1.6 questioning “Do you believe that women in Dashen Bank have the same opportunities for advancement as men?” the responses indicate that the majority of respondents, 68 (51.1%), believe Dashen Bank provides equal opportunities for men and women. Then 47 (35.3%) said Dashen Bank has fewer opportunities for women than men, while the remaining 18 (13.5%) said the opposite.

4.2.2 Socio-cultural factors affecting women in leadership

Table 4.2.2 socio-cultural factors

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Society allows women to develop themselves career-wise	133	3.2782	.94029
Society limits women to motherhood and staying in the house	133	3.1805	1.00630
Ethiopia's educational system enables women for leadership positions	133	3.5188	4.43574
There is limited educational opportunity for women in the society	133	3.1429	1.05989
A woman's marital status has an influence over her ambition to reach higher leadership position	133	3.0376	.94873
A woman's household responsibilities have an impact on her ambition to reach higher leadership positions?	133	3.1278	.97245
Socio-cultural factors	133	3.2143	.95513

Source: own survey, 2023

Table 4.2.2 shows whether or not socio-cultural factors hinder women from attaining leadership positions. According to the data, the majority of the respondents with an average mean of 3.21 believe that socio-cultural factors do indeed hinder women from reaching leadership positions. The first item for which the respondents gave a higher mean score was that Ethiopia's educational system enables women to leadership positions, which accounts for a mean of 3.51, the society allows women to develop themselves career-wise which accounts for a mean of 3.27, the society limits women to motherhood and staying in the house, which has a mean score of 3.18, there are a few opportunities for women to pursue higher education in the society, which has mean a score of 3.14, and a woman's household responsibilities have an impact on her ambition to reach higher leadership positions which has a mean score of 3.12, a woman's marital status has an influence over her ambition to reach higher leadership position which accounts 3.21 which lay in neutral level.

4.2.3 Gender stereotypes affecting women in leadership

Table 4.2.3 gender stereotypes

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Men feel that they are superior to women	133	3.2256	.96622
Women are emotionally fit for leadership positions	133	3.0451	.96816
Women managers are not competitive enough to be successful in the banking sector	133	3.0902	.94114
Women managers are less capable of contributing to an organization's overall goals than men are	133	2.9474	.96386
Leadership positions are more masculine and women don't have what it takes to compete	133	3.0000	.88763
Gender stereotypes	133	3.0617	.51709

Source: own survey, 2023

Table 4.2.3 shows whether gender stereotypes is the reason there are a few women in leadership positions. The first question in which the respondents gave a higher mean score was the question supposed that men feel that they are more superior to women which had a mean score of 3.22. Women managers are not competitive enough to be successful in the banking sector which had a mean score of 3.09. Women don't have what it takes to compete which is had a mean score of 3.00, women managers are less capable of contributing to an organization's overall goals than men which had a mean score of 2.94. The grand mean for gender stereotypes affecting women in leadership is 3.06 and lies in neutral level. As a result, the analysis reveal that almost all this variables scores lie between the two degrees of agreement at a neutral level. Thus, it implies that gender stereotypes may have an impact on women in leadership at Dashen Bank.

4.2.4 Organizational factors affecting women in leadership

Table 4.2.4 organizational factors

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The management of Dashen Bank is committed to hiring and selecting ore women for leadership positions	133	2.1053	1.21395
The bank’s top management encourages female and male employees equally to apply for specific leadership positions	133	3.0977	.86045
There must be a special consideration during hiring and promotion to benefit women	133	3.0526	.93999
Female employees get the required monitoring and support in their career development	133	3.2782	1.02509
The management of the bank doesn’t consider family responsibility as part of the burden female employees have	133	3.1504	1.01874
Organizational factors	133	2.9368	.53675

Source: own survey, 2023

Table 4.2.4 indicates whether organizational factors are believed to affect women in leadership. The first assessment in which the respondents gave a higher mean score was the question supposed that female employees get the required monitoring and support in their career development which had a score of 3.27, the management of the bank doesn’t consider family responsibility as part of the burden female employees have which accounts to 3.15. The bank’s top management encourages female and male employees equally to apply for specific leadership positions got a mean score of 3.09. There must be a special consideration during hiring and promotion to benefit women accounted for a mean of 3.05, the management of Dashen Bank is committed to hiring and selecting more women in leadership positions which accounts for 2.10. The grand mean for organizational factors affecting women in leadership is 2.93 and lies on a neutral level. Therefore, the analysis shows that the score of this factor fall between the two extreme levels at a neutral level. Therefore, organizational factors affect women in leadership at Dashen Bank.

4.2.5 Personal factors affecting women in leadership

Table 4.2.5 personal/individual factors

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
A woman can be in a higher leadership position and at the same time take care of her household responsibilities	133	3.1504	1.00375
Women have been able to balance their career with the responsibilities in their private life	133	3.6917	6.18672
Women have the required educational preparation which would enable them to get into leadership position	133	3.2481	.98785
Women have the capacity to assume the highest leadership position if they got the chance	133	2.9549	.93634
The patriarchy system has made women feel inferior to men	133	3.1880	1.05995
Personal factors	133	3.2391	1.47329

Source: own survey, 2023

Table 4.2.5 demonstrates whether personal factors affect women in leadership. The first assessment in which the respondents gave a higher mean score was the question whether women have been able to balance their career with the responsibilities in their private life which accounts for 3.69, a woman can be in a higher leadership position and at the same time take care of her household responsibilities which had a mean score of 3.15, women have the required educational preparation which would enable them to get into leadership position which accounts to a mean for 3.24. The patriarchy system has made women feel inferior to men, which accounts to 3.18 mean score. Women can assume the highest leadership position if they got the chance which had a mean score of 2.95. The average mean score for personal factors affecting women leadership is 3.23. Given that this variable's score is neutral, personal factors are influencing the number of women in leadership positions at Dashen Bank.

4.2.6 Summary of mean

Table 4.2.6 summary of mean

Factors	Mean Value	Standard Deviation
Socio-cultural factors	3.2143	0.95513
Gender Stereotypes	3.061	.51709
Organizational factors	2.9368	.53675
Personal Factors	3.2391	1.47329

As seen in table 4.2.6, the findings show that personal factors with a mean score of 3.24 and a standard deviation of 1.47 had the highest contribution to the underrepresentation of women followed by socio-cultural factors with a mean of 3.21 and standard deviation of 0.96. Organizational factors had the lowest contribution to the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions with a mean of 2.93 and standard deviation of 0.53.

4.3 Reliability and Validity of the Study

4.3.1 Reliability Test

The reliability of the research instrument refers to how consistently the same findings may be obtained while using the exact same parameters. Pilot testing (including testing and retesting) of the questionnaire helped ensure its reliability in collecting answers (Cook & Campbell, 1979:37). When it comes to assessing the reliability of the results, Cronbach Alpha statistics is the gold standard. Any scale with a Cronbach Alpha value below 0.70 should be disregarded since this indicates that the measurement is not dependable (Ursachi, Horodnic & Zait, 2015).

Cronbach Alpha results made on 20 respondents to test the reliability of the study are presented in table 4.3.1

Table 4.3.1 reliability test

Item	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
Socio-cultural factors	.702	6
Gender Stereotypes	.709	5
Organizational factors	.724	5
Personal factors	.853	5

Source: own survey, 2023

4.3.2 Validity Test

How successfully an instrument measures the constructs the researcher set out to assess is what is meant by “validity” (Haradhan, 2017). The questionnaire was constructed using a five-point Likert scale. In order to ensure validity of the instrument, SPSS experts and women in leadership positions within the bank were asked to examine it.

4.4 Interview Responses

The following is a summary of the responses provided by respondents from various positions at Dashen Bank.

A reply to the **first** interview question “do you think the current promotion practices of the bank gives equal chance to both men and women for higher positions? If No, why?”

The chief executive officer stated yes, the bank offers the same promotion opportunities to both genders as long as they possess the necessary qualifications for the position. In some instances, however, the recruiting process is biased against women.

The Executive secretary of Dashen Bank stated that she can confidently say that the bank offers the same promotion opportunities if they meet the necessary educational and professional requirements.

The executive assistant to the chief executive officer stated that the bank offers identical opportunities to everyone; it simply depends on their qualifications. Informally, however, the

system is patriarchal and the males at the top with the authority to employ senior executives are subconsciously biased against women. This impacts the proportion of women who attain leadership positions.

Senior Manager of HR operations, Senior Officer and Senior HR Information Officer argued that, without a doubt, the bank offers the same opportunities to both males and female employees. HR evaluates the qualifications of the applicant. Everyone is permitted to take the employment examination. When preparing for an exam, the only distinction I've observed is that men take time off to study, and if they don't, they study at work. Women, on the other hand, are focused on their tasks and do not make significant sacrifices to study for an exam.

The director stated that, while the bank does offer equal opportunities for advancement, only 30% of its employees are female. This indicates that the number of women in leadership positions is extremely low. There are only five female senior executives.

The assessment Administrative Officer responded affirmatively that everyone takes the same examination and vacancies are advertised publicly.

The **second** interview question inquired as to why women are underrepresented in senior management positions at the bank, such as President, Vice President, and Department Manager.

The Chief Executive Officer argued that the lack of education among women is the primary reason for the underrepresentation of women. Few women were able to complete secondary school and enroll in universities. The difficulty of maintaining a work-life balance is another factor. If the husband and wife do not share domestic responsibilities, the burden will fall solely on the woman. Thirdly, women's personal beliefs have a significant impact on their success. Fear of failure and lack of self-assurance are significant obstacles for women. Males have the perception that women are unable to function as effectively as males.

All respondents argued that masculine superiors perpetuate stereotypes. For instance, it's been observed that when a superior takes a day off, he ends to delegate tasks to his male colleagues rather than the women. In addition, the nation as a whole did not do a good job at providing the same opportunity for education to women. Women/girls have domestic obligation while the men/boys can focus merely on their education. Leadership development programs to encourage and prepare women for positions of leadership are not being provided to women. In addition, some

respondents stated that males tend to exaggerate their accomplishments, are adept at marketing themselves, and will almost always defend themselves. Despite their strong performance, women are typically timid and reserved. They fear that they are not competent enough. Superiors choose to delegate their male coworkers, which discourages women. Additionally, male superiors fear that hiring more women is risky because positions will be left vacant when women take maternity leave.

The **third** interview question was “what do you think are some of the steps or measures that Dashen Bank can take to overcome the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions? What practical steps do you think the bank must take to reduce the barriers faced by women such as flexible working hours, remote working, maternity leave and work-life balance?”

Dashen Bank aspires to establish a corporate environment that guarantees the equitable and equal distribution of opportunities between both genders. There are policies designed to accomplish this. In addition, the bank already provides unpaid leave to mothers who wish to extend their maternity leave. In addition, the headquarters has a modest daycare where mothers can feel comfortable leaving their children. The interviewees also specified the need for mentors, affirmative action to support women, policies that permit flexible work hours for women with children and exposing women by encouraging them to join associations. One respondent stated, “I am opposed to affirmative action because it fosters the notion that women achieved certain positions due to affirmative action and not their own abilities.”

The **fourth** interview question is about what institutional and societal changes need to be made for women to be empowered.

The majority of respondents believe that institutions must take affirmative action and create opportunities for women’s advancement. Every workplace must develop gender-related policies to assure women’s participation. Males play a crucial role in eradicating patriarchal attitudes; however, raising awareness is insufficient to accomplish this goal. There must be a mental transformation among the society. It is unfair that women have to hustle twice as hard as males to achieve the same level of success. A societal change that was recommended by the majority of the interviewees is that the Ethiopian government should increase its effort to enroll young women in school, which impacts the number of women in the labor force and college-educated women.

Raising family awareness and valuing women's education may boost women's formal education enrollment.

The **fifth** interview question asked about the benefits of having empowered women in the organization, and the respondents said having empowered women leads to more empowered women. Empowered women will be mentors to women who have just started their careers. Respondents said some women have better leadership skills than men because they pay attention to details; they take only calculated risks; and they lead with calm and gentle demeanor; therefore, empowering women will result in better organizational outcomes.

The **last** question of the interview was "what do you think is the role of a male manager or director in closing the gender gap and eliminating gender stereotypes?"

The respondents argued that informal groups play a significant role in employment and promotion in the majority of organizations. These organizations are composed of men with decision-making authority. Male supervisors are responsible for abandoning gender stereotypes and recognizing that women are equally capable of leadership if given the opportunity. In addition, male supervisors should have enough confidence in women to delegate responsibilities to them and it's the responsibility of male administrators to promote awareness among other male employees by setting a fine example.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's objectives, this chapter presents a summary of the results as well as conclusions and recommendations. It also includes explanations of the major results, inferences taken from those findings, and recommended next steps for women's involvement in Dashen Bank's leadership positions

5.1 Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Theoretical and empirical research indicate that the number of women in organizational leadership and decision-making positions is minimum due to several factors. The purpose of this research was to determine interventions needed to increase the number of women in leadership roles at Dashen Bank through analyzing the factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in such positions.

The findings revealed that indeed the number of women in leadership positions is few compared to men in Dashen Bank. However, the findings show that majority of respondents believe that women are offered equal opportunities to compete for leadership positions as men and they are aware that the bank has an equal opportunity policy to ensure non-discrimination against women.

According to the results, among the four factors, the main reasons for the underrepresentation of women in Dashen Bank are personal or individual factors such as the stress of maintaining a work-life balance and fear of failure.

It can be seen from the results that gender stereotypes and biases such as men feeling like they're superior to women and the belief that women are not aggressive enough for leadership roles seems to be hindering women from attaining higher leadership positions. When it comes to socio-cultural factors, the analysis shows that Ethiopia's educational system has the most impact on women's underrepresentation. As for organizational factors, the lack of training programs and lack of support and trust from superiors seems to be a factor that's hindering women's involvement in leadership roles. Finally, as for personal factors, women's inability to balance their career with the responsibilities in their private life is believed to be the major reason for the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions.

In conclusion, Dashen Bank provides equal promotion opportunities to both genders as long as they have the required qualifications. However, some gender stereotypes and biases may exist in promotion and delegation. In addition to that, it can be seen from the data that personal factors such as lack of training opportunities, difficulty maintaining a work-life balance, fear of failure and lack of confidence are some of the reasons believed to be the reasons for the underrepresentation of women in the bank. Moreover, organizational factors such as the lack of developmental programs to motivate women and bosses lack of confidence in women to delegate responsibility is a reason for the underrepresentation of women. Finally, the culture has an impact on how society views women, discouraging them from going after their careers.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the results of this research, the following recommendations are offered to help more women rise to leadership positions in the workplace:

- Recognizing women's contributions and abilities will inspire and motivate future women employees. Therefore it is recommended that upper management should provide a fresh mindset shift that promotes women to executive roles. Managers should start trusting women enough to delegate tasks and assign projects to them.
- Providing employees with greater access to child care and more accepting environment for flexible work arrangements (remote work, and flexible scheduling) are two ways recommended in which the bank may help their female employees deal with the stress work-life balance.
- To prepare women for leadership roles, it is important to provide both formal training in the form of planned training courses and workshops as well as informal training in the form of current workers sharing their expertise and experience.

- Programs designed specifically for women and held in a female-only setting help women become more confident in their abilities to advance in the professions they have chosen. It also encourages individuals to take charge of their own development and to recognize and work through obstacles they face in both their personal and professional lives. New employees need access to mentoring program that will help them acquire the experience and insight crucial to their career and personal development.

- The Ethiopian government should deepen its measures to boost the proportion of young women enrolling in school, which in turn affects the proportions of women entering the labor force and the proportion of college-educated women. The enrolment rate of women in formal education may be greatly improved by working to raise awareness at the family level and by reflecting the value of women's education.

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APPENDIX 1

Addis Ababa University School of commerce

Graduate Studies -MBA Program

Questionnaire to be filled by Employees of Dashen Bank S.C

This study is conducted in partial fulfillment for the Masters of Business Leadership (MBA) in Addis Ababa University School of commerce. It is conducted to assess the participation of women in Leadership positions in Dashen Bank.

This questionnaire survey is used to collect pertinent data from respondents. The survey will take 10 minutes to complete. The information you provided will be used only for academic purposes and hence remain confidential. Thus, you are not required to write your name, address and other personal information. Given the importance of the topic covered in the study, your genuine responses are vital for the success of this study.

So, you are kindly requested to fill the questionnaire honestly and responsibly. Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in this survey by sparing your precious time.

Part 1- Personal information

Please indicate your answer by ticking where appropriate.

1. Age: Below 30 years [] 30-45 [] above 45 years []

2. What is your marital status?

Single [] Married [] Separated [] other []

3. What is your highest academic/ professional qualification?

PhD [] First Degree [] Second Degree [] Diploma []

4. What is your work experience?

0- 5 years [] 6-10 [] 11-15 [] 16-20 [] 21-30 []

5. Please indicate your current position in your organization

Part 2- Women's representation in leadership positions

1. Do you think that the number of women in leadership positions are few compared to men? A) Yes [] B) No []
2. Do you think it is easy for women in Dashen Bank to climb the ladder to reach senior leadership positions?
[] Yes [] No [] Neutral
3. Do you think that women are offered equal opportunities to compete for leadership positions as men in Dashen Bank?
[] Yes [] No [] Neutral
4. Do you believe that Dashen Bank has an equal opportunity policy to ensure non-discrimination against women?
[] Yes [] No [] Neutral
5. In Dashen Bank, do you think that women have more, fewer or the same opportunities to advance as men?
[] more [] fewer [] same

Part 3- Factors hindering women from reaching leadership positions

The questionnaire will be on a five-point scale of “Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree”, “Neutral”, “Agree”, “Strongly Agree” (Indicate your choice by putting (√)

Socio-cultural factors affecting women in leadership	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The society allows women to develop themselves career wise					
The society limits women to motherhood and staying in the house					

Ethiopia's educational system enables women for leadership position					
There is limited educational opportunity for women in the society					
A woman's marital status has an influence over her ambition to reach higher leadership positions					
A woman's household responsibilities have an impact on her ambition to reach higher leadership positions?					

Gender Stereo-types affecting women in leadership	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Men feel that they are more superior to women					
Women are emotionally fit for leadership positions					
Women managers are not competitive enough to be successful in the banking sector					
Women managers are less capable of contributing to an organization's overall goals than men are					

Leadership positions are more masculine and that women don't have what it takes to compete					
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Organizational factors affecting women in leadership	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The management of Dashen Bank is committed in hiring and selecting more women in leadership positions					
The banks top management encourages female and male employees equally to apply for specific leadership positions in your respective workplace					
There must be a special consideration during hiring and promotion to benefit women					
Female employees get the required monitoring and support in their career development					
The management of the Bank doesn't consider family responsibility as a part of the burden female employees have					

Individual/personal factors affecting women in leadership	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A woman can be in higher leadership position and at the same time take care of her household responsibilities					

Women have been able to balance their career with the responsibilities in their private life					
Women have the required educational preparation which would enable them to get into leadership position					
Women have the capacity to assume the highest leadership position if they got the chance					
The patriarchy system has made women feel inferior to men					

~ Thank You~

APPENDIX 2

Interview Questions to be answered by female employees of Dashen Bank

Interviewee's name: _____

Interviewee's Position: _____

Date of Interview: _____

1. Do you think that the current promotion practices of the Bank give equal chance to both men and women for higher position? If No, why?
2. Do you have any reason for underrepresentation of women in senior management level in the Bank like in the position of President, Vice President or Department manager?
3. What do you think are some of the steps or measures that Dashen Bank can take to overcome the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions? What practical steps do you think that the bank must take to reduce the barriers faced by women such as flexible working hours, remote working, maternity leave and work-life balance?
4. What institutional and societal change needs to be made for women to be empowered?
5. What do you think are the benefits of having empowered women in the organization?
6. What do you think is the role of a male manager or director in closing the gender gap and eliminating gender stereotypes?