

MBA 79



Women in Management The Ethiopian Experience

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Abstract

This paper is prepared to explore the challenges women managers encounter in their careers. To this end relevant literature was reviewed to assess the state of research in the area. Furthermore, 25 women executives in different organizations were surveyed through interviews and using questionnaires. The questions were not only close-ended but open-ended questions so as to encourage transparent idea sharing. Cross tabulations were derived using related data. Analysis based on these tables led to the salient fact that women in managerial positions face gender based discrimination. Moreover, based on both the analysis and suggestions from the surveyed group, recommendations are given that are directed at tackling problems women face. Also, areas that would be of interest to other fellow researchers have been indicated.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1. General Background

The term gender represents the social construction and codification of differences between the two sexes and the social relationships between women and men (IRP – CNR/CSA, 2001). Cultural, religious and economic factors, among others, influence society's outlook towards gender.

There is a fundamental difference between gender and biological sex. While our biological sex is determined by nature, our gender roles and the way we behave as masculine or feminine in the society is a social construct that results from combining our biological constitution with how masculinity or femininity is interpreted and promulgated by the prevalent culture.

Our gender determines the different life experiences we will be exposed to. It may determine our access to education, to work and our ability to make decisions and act autonomously. As Julio Mosse puts it, "Our gender is perhaps the single most important factor in shaping who we become" [Mosse, 1993-4].

Every society has different 'scripts' for its members to follow as they learn to act out their feminine or masculine role, as much as every society has its own language. Despite

the obvious differences of gender roles in different societies, however, it is generally true that in every known culture women are considered in some degree inferior to men and are treated by the society accordingly. The reason why it is often so hard to challenge gender roles is because most societies in the world are patriarchal and through this power structure, the traditional gender roles in which women are subordinate to men is upheld and perpetuated:

Despite the subordinate status they have in society, and their exclusion from most of the privileges and opportunities availed to their male counterparts, women's contribution for the survival of the household and economic and social development of the society as producers and reproducers is indispensable.

As mothers and carers, and as producers and farmers, the work of women not only supports their families and communities but also the nation. Yet, throughout the world, the poorest people in the community are predominantly women. Women, on the whole, often work for no pay at all, if they are paid, they usually earn far less than men. Women face increasing levels of violence, because of their gender, and half a million die each year as a direct or indirect result of pregnancy.

Moreover, whichever facet of global politics and crisis we consider – the economic crisis, the pains of structural adjustment, or the continuing conflicts in different countries – we find that women and men are affected differently.

These multifaceted problems of gender inequality, discrimination, women's low economic and social status, and the quest for solution, started to attract international recognition and assumed a place in the international development agenda only recently – in the last four or more decade.

1.1.1. Management and Decision Making

Management is decision making and decision-making is management [Simon, 1960].

Many writers on organization theory have argued that decision-making is synonymous with managing while others would disagree. Popular images of management usually place decision making at the center of management life. [Simon 1960, Vroom 1974, Stewart 1988]

Inevitably, the importance placed on decision-making positions clearly holds considerable status and is extremely attractive in the minds of many people. Good managers, it is said, are those who make effective decisions.

While women's participation in the paid workforce is one of the most significant social changes over the past 40 years, women have not made substantial inroads into the elite levels of corporate power – whether in senior management within organizations or on the boards of these companies. The generated structures and practices operating within organizations result in qualitatively different career experiences and outcome for women and men, with the most senior levels of management having been identified as sites of hegemonic masculinity [Cockburn, 1991; Connell, 1987, 1995]. The causes of hegemonic masculinity

are multi-factorial and manifest themselves in a plethora of both individual and structural practices that have been highly resistant to change mechanisms, such as Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), affirmative action programmes and quota systems instigated in various ways in different organizations over the past 25 years [Bacchi, 1996; Poiner and Wills, 1991].

Female managers are, indeed, currently faced with lack of upward mobility in organizations. Recent reviews [Blau 1987, Dipboye 1987, Davidson 1992] all conclude that in comparison with their male counterparts, female managers are less likely to advance as far as or as fast up their organizational ladder.

1.1.2. Women Empowerment

The term empowerment refers to a range of activities, from individual self assertion to collective fighting, protest and enlistment that challenge basic power relations. For individuals and groups where class, caste, ethnicity and gender determine their access to resources and power, their empowerment begins when they not only recognize the systemic force that dominate them, but act to change existing power relationships. The empowerment of women is regarded now a days as a sine-qua-non of progress for a country, hence the issue of empowerment of women is of foremost importance to political thinkers, social scientists and reformers, development specialists, women activists, politicians, academicians and administrators. Moreover, most of the international, national,

regional and local level conference, seminars, workshops, and symposiums discuss the issue of women empowerment in one way or other.

Batliwala [1994] advocates that empowerment is both a process and a goal. She states that: ... the goals of women's empowerment are to challenge patriarchal ideology (male domination and women's subordination); transform the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and social inequality (the family, caste, class, religion, educational processes and institutions, the media, health practices and systems, laws and civil codes, political processes, development models, and government institutions); and enable women gain access to, and control of, both material and informational resources.

In the same token, several studies and available data show that women in Ethiopia are disadvantaged due to their sex most notably in rural areas. Promoting gender equality in Ethiopia is not only in the best interest of the society at large, but also fundamentally that of ensuring human and democratic rights of women.

1.1.3. Workplace Gender Discrimination

Many developing countries exhibit considerable gender inequality in almost all spheres of life. Such inequalities have undermined the potential contribution and role of women towards development. One of the many partial treatments against women is manifested in various workplaces, be it in private or public

sectors. Even those few proportions of women, who manage to join the workforce, are working mostly under unfavourable conditions and appalling wages. It has been documented that sex discrimination in the workforce is a bitter reality for women around the world. There are works that are traditionally considered as “women’s work”, which are often low-wage, low-skilled sectors. These sectors are also those with the least labour protections and oversight [HRW, 2003].

Workingwomen encounter discrimination in hiring processes and retention practices. Sexual harassment and violence in workplace are common and constant threat to working women’s lives and livelihoods.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Changing roles within the family, school and workplace all seem to foster the idea of the new role of women as a “global social fact” [Levi-Strauss, 1977]. Yet despite what is termed “the long march” towards the equality of men and women, there remains one indisputable difference: the all but total exclusion of women from positions of power. In the working world, women appear to be on a more or less equal footing with men: they now account for about half the number of civil service employees and one-third of professionals and middle managers.

In the USA, where feminist movements are more militant and where all forms of discrimination come under ready attack, only about 2 percent of members of boards of directors are women. Do women still choose to remain aloof from the higher realms [Lipovestky, 1997] – or are they being kept out? [Calas and Smircich, 1997]. In either case, the weight of historical reason could in some measure explain the tardiness of women to take up the reins of power. In all appearances it is evident they will soon be making up for lost time: some writers predict the arrival of women in positions of organizational power as a major trend in the twenty-first century. Similarly, close examination of the respective agendas of men and women also reveals an undeniable asymmetry: women still tend to put “family career” first, whereas for men their professional career has place of priority. A recent survey demonstrates little change since 1985, in this situation, which is nowadays explained as a demonstration of social conditioning rather than the so-called “natural” role of woman. But the organization as an institution as such has itself also a bearing on the kind of career guidance, which continues to exclude women from the top jobs [Kanter, 1977].

1.3. Aim of the Study

Organizations often do not tackle the issue of how their senior management's style (both real and perceived) may inhibit the progress of women into management roles, particularly as they progress from junior tiers to middle and senior management. Yet these form the backdrop of the managerial stage on which women and men's career roles are played out. The organizational context plays a crucial role in shaping the next

generation of managers. If women feel alienated from the advancement process, then the organization may miss out on what could be vital resource – a pool of talented and ambitious women seeking to develop their own careers to the advantage of both themselves and their employers.

The main aim of the study in general is to explore the various challenges that women in management have to meet so as to be successful in their career. At a specific level this study tries to explore the following aspects:

- The roles women perceive their spouses or partners play in their families in sharing home and family responsibilities and supporting the careers of these women;
- The possible barriers that impede women's career development and the extent to which organizations accommodate women and protect their interests and how;
- The significance of the numerical distribution of women at different levels of the organization for the experiences of women managers (how gender imbalance at different levels of the organization impacts women managers);
- Whether and why women were outnumbered at the top but were represented at lower levels of the management hierarchy;
- The visible and invisible barriers that keeps women from reaching upper levels of management;
- Problem of the glass ceiling that women in management face and the artificial barriers that prevent them from advancing upwards to higher levels of the managerial ladder;

- Whether women and men tend to bring different leadership styles to the work place;
- How women managers view their own management style as compared to their male counterparts;
- How career minded women use role models;
- The importance of role models for career minded young women;
- The impact of women being excluded from informal organizational network;
- Importance of mentoring relationship;
- Whether women-only networks as a strategy to support women leaders and managers and increase women's representation in senior positions.

1.4. Methodology

This study used a qualitative approach, whereby the perceptions and experiences of 25 women senior executives/managers were gathered through in-depth personal interviews along with distribution of questionnaire. Purposive and Snowball sampling techniques were used.

The study ensured representation of a cross section of women managers – public sector, private sector, NGO, government and institutional. Of the total respondents (interview and questionnaire) 8 percent, 12 percent, and 80 percent were in private, NGO and public sector respectively.

The interview comprised of a questionnaire of demographics covering: age, current position, highest educational qualifications, length of time in the current position, length of time in company, in management, personal relationship, responsibility for children and other dependants. Questions that traversed the experiences, roles, tasks and issues for the women in her senior role were then asked.

Not much has been written about the challenges women face in management positions in Ethiopia and the range of contributory factors to this have not been identified as such by researchers in the country. The study relies largely on primary data because of the insignificant number of studies conducted in this area in Ethiopia as compared to other countries.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Very little empirical work has been done so far to investigate the issue of women managers' representation in Ethiopia and the problems faced by them. Therefore, this study tries to investigate the barriers and challenges faced by women managers and how they succeeded despite these challenges.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

The study is confined to Addis Ababa and not the entire country. This may be replicated by future researchers in various regions of Ethiopia.

1.7. Scope of the Study

The study was conducted focusing on challenges faced by 25 successful managers working in different organizations. Those senior women managers who have been in their post for at least one year are the subjects of the study. This sample size may not be representative of other women managers found in other sectors and also those found in other parts of the country.

The Office

The family picture is on his desk.

- Ah, a solid, responsible family man.

The family picture is on HER desk.

- Umm, her family will come before her career.

HIS desk is cluttered.

- He's obviously a hard worker and a busy man.

HER desk is cluttered.

- She's obviously a disorganized scatterbrain.

HE is talking with his co-workers.

- He must be discussing the latest deal.

SHE is talking with her co-workers.

- She must be gossiping.

HE's not at his desk.

- He must be at a meeting.

SHE's not at her desk.

- She must be in the ladies' room.

HE's not in the office.

- He's meeting a customer.

SHE's not in the office.

- She must be out shopping.

HE's having lunch with the boss.

- He's on the way up.

SHE's having lunch with the boss.

- They must be having an affair.

Natasha Josefowitz
[N.Pwell: 1993 p. 101-102]

The boss criticized HIM.

- He'll improve his performance.

The boss criticized HER.

- She'll be very upset.

HE got an unfair deal.

- Did he get angry?

SHE got an unfair deal.

- Did she cry?

HE's getting married.

- He'll get more settled.

SHE's getting married.

- She'll be pregnant and leave.

HE's having a baby.

- He'll need a raise.

SHE's having a baby.

- She'll cost the company money in maternity benefits.

HE's going on a business trip.

- It's good for his career.

SHE's going on a business trip.

- What will her husband say?

HE's leaving for a better job.

- He knows how to recognize a good opportunity.

SHE's leaving for a better job.

- Women are not dependable.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

The growing interest in the study of women in management is triggered by the increasing roles that women have assumed in the labor market. Over the past few decades, changes in demographical, social, and economic forces have resulted in a large increase in the number of women in paid employment around the world (International Labor Review, 1998). The International Labor Office (ILO) report entitled *Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling* (1997) showed that this trend was prevalent in many regions of the world, with some regions such as Latin America and the Caribbean exhibiting double digit increases in the proportion of women in employment in a span of 20 years. In 1970, 38 percent of the world's workforce was women and by the year 2010, this statistic is expected to exceed 41 percent. [ILO, 1997]

In the UK, the proportion of women in employment increased by 16 percent between 1984 and 1993. In 1998, the Equal Opportunity Report (1999) disclosed that women constitute 44 percent of those of working age, including those in part-time jobs. Overall, 11.5 million women were in employment compared with 14.6 million men. By year 2001, it is predicted that about three-quarters of women in the UK will be employed [Davidson, 1997]. The trend in the UK mirrored the general trend in the European Community (EC) and the US labour markets. Economic activities of women have increased in every EC country and between 1985 and 1988, women filled 58 percent of the 4.8 million jobs created in the EC [Davidson and Cooper, 1993]. As of

1998, women constitute 41 percent of the European workforce [Vinnicombe, 2000]. In the US, women accounted for 38 percent of the USA total workforce in 1970, 43 percent in 1980, 45 percent in 1990, and 46 percent in 1998 [US Department of Labour 1990, 1998].

Contrary to what was observed in Europe and the USA, the rate of women's participation in paid employment in Asia has changed little between 1970 and 1990. In 1970, Asian women accounted for 38 percent of the total workforce and in 1990, the proportion was around 41 percent [ILO, 1997]. In some Asian countries, such as Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand, the rate of women's participation in the labour market averaged at 45 percent between 1975 and 1990 [Horton, 1996; Muzambar, 1994]. This is somewhat surprising in view of the intense economic growth that the region experienced in the 1980s.

In a study on the impact of industrialization on women in seven Asian countries (India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand), Horton [1996] revealed that women's participation rate in Asia have traditionally been high. For decades, Asian women were active participants in many rural economic activities, such as agriculture, domestic help, petty cash trading and handicraft making where flexible working allowed for combining childcare with work. Asian industrialization of the 1980s however caused huge sectoral migration of women from rural economy into production-related occupations, including the professional and managerial sectors [Horton, 1996]. The net effect of industrialization in Asia is therefore different from what is observed in Western

countries, where industrialization had increased the number of women in employment [Powell, 1993; Davidson, 1996].

In line with the increasing roles that women assumed in the economy, more women globally are pursuing careers in management. Moreover, cross-cultural studies on women as managers found that this rising trend is common in many countries; along with evidence indicating that women manager's worldwide shared a number of similarities [Adler and Izraeli, 1994].

2.1. Impediments to Women in Management

On a more general level, impediments to women's progress in the workplace are embedded in everyday terminology, with standard management words such as Chairman, Director, and Manager evoking images of males in positions of authority.

Outside of the workplace, the traditional positions held by women and the exercise of authority further reinforce stereotypical images e.g., the father/brother are often regarded as decision makers with emphasis on education being given to the males. The socialization process has an enormous effect on the attitudes of both men and women.

Characteristics associated with males and females have evolved which can be looked at in terms of management and the values associated with a 'good manager':

Valued	Devalued
- Rational	- Irrational
- Impersonal	- Personal
- Detached	- Involved
- Unemotional	- Emotional
- Authoritarian	- Nurturing
- Unsympathetic	- Sympathetic
- Dehumanized	- Humane

With the valued characteristics of management usually being associated with males, it is not unusual for many women to find that at some stage of their career, they reach an invisible 'stop' sign and progress within their organizations becomes stagnant.

Individuals base their actions in part on what they see as their potential for success in career and relationships. If women see less potential for career success than men due to personal, organizational or cultural factors, they will be less inclined to emphasize their careers in their actions. Even if women see the same potential for career success as men, they will be hindered in achieving it if such factors place greater career constraints on them. As a result, women's career patterns, although governed by the same processes, may be considerably different from those of men. [N.Powell. 1993]

2.1.1. Personal Factors

Personal factors have a considerable effect on women's success in both career and relationships with others. They influence and also reflect where emphasis is placed. There are two types of personal factors. The first pertains to the woman as a member of a family unit and includes career interruptions, dual-

career demands, and parenting demands. The second considers a woman as an individual and includes work motivation and career choices. [N.Powell 1993]

2.1.2. Career Interruptions, Dual - Career Demands and Parenting Demands

Women are more likely than men to take a "slow burn" path to career success. They may end up at the same level as men with similar personal characteristics, but they take a longer time to reach it because they make more accommodations to family and personal life along the way. However, when women make decisions that lead to gaps in their employment, history, their later advancement and earnings are likely to suffer. [L.Bailyn 1980]

The most often cited reason for women's career interruptions is to satisfy the demands of dual-career parenting. Family considerations are different for women and men, especially in the managerial ranks. Looking at the ranks of top management, over 90% of male top executives are married and have children, whereas less than half of female executives are married and have children. This may be because spouses of male managers are less likely to work outside the home and more likely to handle the bulk of family responsibilities than spouses of female managers. Some female executives may avoid having families, if they see the alternative as requiring them to be "superwomen". [C.D. Sutton, 1982]

Being required to juggle concerns for work and family has its benefits for women. By simultaneously playing different roles, a woman may be more able to escape from the negative aspects of any one role. Employment generally has a positive effect on women's mental and physical health, especially if they have positive feelings about it. Similarly, employed women with families derive more satisfaction from their jobs than do other women. However, "jugglers" are typically starved for time and feel under a great deal of pressure. [F.] Crosby, 1991]

Both female and male jugglers are likely to experience work-family conflict. Such conflict may come about because work interferes with family, such as when unusually long hours at work prevent a person from devoting the usual time or energy to family responsibilities, or because family interferes with work, such as when a child's overnight illness leads to tardiness or reduced functioning at work. [F.] Crosby, 1991]

Three types of work-family conflict may occur for individuals: time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based. [J.H. Carenhaus, 1985] *Time-based conflict* results from the limited time that is available to handle both work and family roles. Time spent working generally cannot be devoted to family activities and vice versa. Parents experience more time-based conflict than non-parents, parents of younger children (who are particularly demanding) more than parents of small families. Also men who are married to managerial/professional women

experience more of this conflict than those who are married to non-managerial/non-professional women, probably because they are expected to handle a greater share of the family responsibilities than they would otherwise.

Strain-based conflict results when strain in one role "spills over" into the other role. Family strains may decrease performance at work and thereby negatively affect career success. Or strain at work may affect one's behavior as a parent or spouse. This type of conflict occurs in married couples mostly when the husband and wife disagree about their responsibility for family roles or about the wife's employment status. Working women who have husbands with non-traditional attitudes are less affected by it.

Behavior-based conflict occurs when incompatible behaviors are required for work and family roles, such as aggressiveness and objectivity at work and warmth and nurturance at home. Managers who are carrying out the masculine stereotype at work, whether female or male, may feel caught between the emotional detachment exhibited at work and the openness expected at home. "Shifting gear" from one role to another is required to avoid this type of conflict.

Issues about the timing parenthood further complicate women's career decisions. Mothers may follow either of two patterns in the timing of parenthood; a sequential pattern, by pursuing either a career or motherhood first, or a simultaneous pattern, by having children and a career at the same time.

In a study cited by P.Daniels, over 70% of mothers used one of three sequential patterns: (a) motherhood follows employment, where the mother starts her career and then stops it with the birth of her first child; (b) employment brackets motherhood, where the mother interrupts her career, spends full time at home with the children, and then resumes her career after the children have grown; and (c) employment follows motherhood, where the mother completes her full-time parenting role before she begins her career. [P.Daniels, 1982]

Decisions about the timing of parenthood have a profound effect on women's lives due to the inescapable reality of the biological time clock regarding motherhood. This issue contributes to a significant difference between men's and women's careers. Few men see marriage or family as a constraint on the emphasis they place on their careers or on their career success. Men may choose to accommodate competing priorities between work, family and career decisions. Women, however, primarily handle the bulk of family responsibilities, even when both members of the couple have full-time jobs. Therefore, motherhood almost necessitates some type of accommodation in a woman's career. [A. Hochschild, 1989]

2.1.3. Work Motivation and Career Choices

Multiple and conflicting role demands, combined with stresses concerning the timing of parenthood, often lead to women making different career choices than do men. Astin [1984] suggested that basic work motivation is the same for men

and women, but that they make different choices because their early socialization and later opportunities are different. Furthermore, he suggested that if women do not see alternatives for childcare available to them and they wish to have a family, they may choose careers that allow for greater flexibility (such as the opportunity to work part-time) so that they can meet the demands of both roles. Rather than making a difference in work motivation between the sexes, this reflects the relative complexity of the social context in which women live. [H.S. Astin, 1984]

Accordingly, women do not seem to have less work or career motivation than men as much as a different perspective concerning what a career means. They take more of a holistic approach to their lives than men, with images of balance between work and relationships affecting their career decisions and choices. Because the structure of opportunity does not facilitate women's achieving the balance they seek, many are required to make trade-offs between their husband's needs, family demands, and their own work motivation. [N.Powell, 1993]

2.2. Organizational Factors

Organizational factors have a strong impact on the career success of women as well as their success in relationships with others. In particular, four types of organizational factors influence women's careers: (a) practices regarding alternative work schedules and family supports; (b) initial staffing decisions; (c) career pathing and promotion

decisions; and (d) mentoring, networking, and feedback practices. The later three types of factors contribute to a race difference in career development, with African American managers experiencing more restricted advancement opportunities and lower levels of career satisfaction, as well as a sex difference in career development.

Practices Regarding Alternative Work Schedules and Family Support. Many organizations now offer alternative work arrangements for working parents such as job sharing, flextime, telecommuting, corporate sabbaticals and part-time work in addition to assistance with childcare arrangements such as referral services, subsidies for off-site childcare, or on-site childcare facilities. Such practices help women, on whom the primary burden of childcare responsibilities usually rests, negotiate the demands both of a fulfilling career and a fulfilling family life. In helping women to achieve success in their relationships outside of work, these practices also help women to achieve career success by alleviating the distracting elements of family responsibilities during the workday. [M.C. Mattis, 1990]

Initial Staffing Decisions. Even career-primary women may experience difficulty in achieving career success to the same extent as equally qualified men. A more challenging initial position ordinarily leads to a more challenging managerial position, and a less stimulating one to a less mobile career path. If women's initial assignments lack challenge (which they often do) and do not lead to more central line assignments considered vital for future development, their opportunities for future advancement are restricted. [M.S. Taylor and D.R. Illgen, 1981]

Gaining line experience early in one's career enhances later career success, and gaining line experience at some point is considered desirable for movement to the upper management ranks. However, women often are hired into staff rather than line positions and subsequently find it difficult to move into a line capacity. When women are stuck in career paths that preclude line experiences, their prospects for career advancement are limited.

Laurie Larwood and Urs Gattiker confirmed this notion in a study that tracked older and younger women and men's career paths. Overall they found that men had greater professional standing, held line positions more often, and achieved higher positions in their departments than did women. Although it was possible to track the progress in men's careers clearly, showing how first jobs related eventually to hierarchical success, this process was more tenuous and less clear for women. However, the difference between career success of younger women and younger men was less than that between older women and older men. [L.Larwood and U.E. Gattiker]

Larwood and Gattiker's study demonstrated that changes indeed have taken place in the career development of women and men, whether due to conscious efforts by organizations to provide equal opportunities for both, a reduced effect of gender stereotypes overtime, or a change in the emphasis placed on career or the qualifications of younger women versus older women; the sex difference in career paths and success appears to be diminishing.

Career Pathing and Promotion Decisions. Women's jobs, including initial as well as later assignments, are less likely to be in job ladders that lead to hierarchical success. As a result, women have less well defined career paths than men. Some studies have found that women managers were promoted faster than men and were more satisfied than their male counterparts, yet men achieved a higher grade or level in the hierarchy. Even when women do not differ from men on total promotions achieved in a given period of time, they often receive smaller salary increases and hold lower salaries overall than men in equivalent positions. [L.K Stroh, 1992]

Although women are being promoted, their promotions do not seem to be as vital and may lead to less career success in objective terms than those obtained by men. What may be taking place is "pacification by promotion". Women may be given promotions to create the appearance of increasing responsibility and opportunity, but such promotions may be essentially hollow. This could explain why (a) many women feel that they are eventually blocked in their career advancement opportunities, coming up against what has been called a "glass ceiling" and (b) many corporations experience difficulty in attracting and retaining female managers and professionals. [D.P. Flanders, 1973]

Mentoring, networking, and feedback practices. Perhaps one of the reasons for the results above lies in the informal systems of development that exist in organizations. Much ado has been made about the impact of mentoring relationships on career success. Mentors play important development roles for individuals:

Mentors provide young adults with career-enhancing functions, such as sponsorship, coaching, facilitating exposure and visibility, and offering challenging work or protection, all of which help the younger person to establish a role in the organization, learn the ropes, and prepare for advancement. In the psychosocial sphere, the mentor offers role modeling, counseling, confirmation, and friendship, which help the young adult to develop a sense of professional identity and competence. [G.R. Roche, 1979]

Women need mentors to understand the realities of the male-dominated business culture as well as to be identified for promotion. However, according to most reports, women are less likely to develop these relationships than men. They may fail to recognize the importance of gaining a sponsor and naively assume that competence is the only requirement needed to get ahead in an organization. Even if they recognize the importance of having a mentor, they may lack the skills necessary or see greater barriers to gaining one. As a result, they may turn to peer instead of mentoring relationships, which provide them social support but not the career-enhancing support of individuals in power. [B.R. Ragins, 1989]

In addition, potential mentors may be reluctant to select female protégés. Because of concerns about issues of intimacy and sexual attraction, male-female mentoring relationships may involve tension and anxiety. Identifying a comfortable level of intimacy is often problematic, and such relationships can remain superficial with their full developmental potential untapped. The mere rumor of sexual involvement can damage

the careers of both individuals. As a result, some male executives prefer to groom and promote other men to leadership positions. They may also simply prefer to mentor people who are similar to themselves. These difficulties in establishing and carrying out cross-gender mentoring relationships present a major barrier to women's career success. [J.G. Clauson, 1984]

Why not then have women mentor other women? Mentoring relationships between women have been less in evidence because, until recently, there has been a paucity of upper-level women available to serve as mentors to younger, up-and-coming women. Tokenism arguments have been advanced to explain why such women have not reached out to younger women. According to Kanter, people in token positions enjoy the specialness their position affords and view others around them as a potential threat to their achievements. Upper-level women may cherish the sense of importance their unique status brings and be reluctant to mentor younger women. [R.M Kanter, 1977]

Mentors are not the only source of career support for women. Women's lack of advancement to high level of management often results from their having less fully developed informal networks than men. Women may be as adept as men in forming networks, but their networks are less effective because they are not as well integrated into the organization's dominant coalition. [K. Cannings, 1991]

Women's development also may be compromised by the type and quality of feedback they receive from their immediate superiors, which is not that received by men.

However, a Navy-based study found differences in the words used to evaluate the performance of female and male naval officers, not only in the content of the evaluations but also in the amount of information imparted. Evaluations of male officers were seen as more career enhancing than those of female officers. If women do not receive the same type of critical evaluation of their performance, as do men, it is more difficult for them to improve their job skills and be prepared for promotion opportunities that arise. [J. Swim, 1989]

2.3. Societal Factors

Societal factors such as legal requirements, government programs, and social mores are behind the influence of many of the organizational and personal factors on women's career development. These factors affect women's success in both career and relationships as well as their emphasis on career versus relationships.

Both legal and social changes in recent years have caused women's work to be more highly valued. Women have greater access to managerial positions and now populate many traditionally male-intensive occupations in greater proportions than before. However, sex-role expectations and discrimination continue to operate. Social mores still suggest that the woman must bear the primary responsibility for child raising, even if she pursues a full-time career. Despite the movement of women into many male-intensive occupations, there has been little movement of men into female-intensive occupations, probably because these occupations continue to receive the lowest wages.

Barriers remain to the successful implementation of workplace and government policies that would be considered "pro-women". Although there has been considerable change in attitudes toward the role of women in society, gender stereotypes continue to be deeply held and resistant to change. Writers such as Schwartz regard the commitment of working mothers to their careers as dissipated by parental responsibilities. And men as a group continue to suffer from stigmas associated with traditional definitions of career success. For example, male employees are often hesitant to voice family-related concerns for fear these concerns will conflict with the corporate image of the successful male. Companies often consider fathers who take paternity leave to be eccentrics who cannot possibly be serious about their careers. These attitudes represent a variation of broader social mores that continue to suggest that it is a woman's place, and not the man's responsibility, to tend to the home and children. [Schwartz, 1984]

Certainly government could do more to equalize this age-old battle between the sexes over household and family responsibilities. The requirement that most employers allow their employees to take unpaid leaves to care for a newborn or adopted child or an aging elder is a step in the right direction. However, the lack of governmental programs for child-care support continues to hinder working mothers. The growing numbers of single women with children – women whose income is critical for family survival – feel this strain most acutely. In "river of time" terms, rather than zigzagging from one bank of the river to other, these women must navigate straight upstream against a number of strong currents. Programs aimed at helping with family circumstances are necessary to

help low-income and single-parent women obtain any form of career success. [M.C. Mattis, 1990]

2.4. Cultural factors

There is an extensive body of literature concerning the cultural factors that can influence women, much of which has been promoted by the feminist debate. Attitudes concerning the role of women are influenced by personal experience and conditioning. The local culture within a geographic area exerts an influence on the expectations of, and by, the women within that community. Within the family unit conditioning results, in part, from family views and practices. Women who have careers can be powerful role models for daughters and younger women in the family and the community. By contrast, a less favorable influence can come from sex role stereotyping. Older managers, both men and women, may still carry stereotypes set some years ago. This attitude can create a barrier for women with whom they are working – this has been labeled “the culture trap”. A second trap is the “low expectation trap”, particularly in a male dominated organization. Feeling inadequate, a vicious circle can develop (Davidson & Cooper, 1983). Both men and women can experience the fear of success in jobs not commonly associated with their gender, and this can inhibit their development and achievements.

Cultural conditioning may have reinforced women to believe that power is “unlady like”. Yet it is essential that aspiring women managers understand the important role of

power in effective performance. For example, boys learn to put winning ahead of relationships, and to “play by the rules” of the situation. They suppress their individuality for the greater good of the team; they play competitive games that teach them to protect their feelings of self-worth, at the expense of relationships. Historically, they have not been encouraged to play sports that teach the “rules of the game”, as boys do. Many girls grew up playing “mummy” to dolls and learning household duties. Most young females were encouraged to foster long-term relationships, as well as to defer to others’ needs. Both sexes lost something in the transition from childhood to adulthood. Now, men are learning to get in touch with the feminine side to their personalities; women are learning how to function on higher levels in male-dominated businesses. [Sitterly, 1993]

There is a view that women may not naturally become assertive, or seek power, if they have been expected to take a development role that makes them more amenable to outside influences and be less self-reliant [Davidson & Cooper, 1992]. The dilemmas that women face have been labeled as “double binds” describing them as being womb/brain, silence/shame, sameness/ difference, femininity/competence, and aging/invisibility. Whatever choice the women make, she will be condemned. For example, if a woman is a full-time mother, her neighbor at a dinner will assume that she has nothing interesting to say; but if she is paid employment outside the home, she has either cut off feelings and emotions or else she neglects her children and exploits her husband.

2.5. Demographic Factors

Another caring role has emerged within many families as a result of demographic change. As we live longer, so caring for elderly relatives is creating a social dilemma in those countries where the bonds of extended family have loosened. The responsibility for the care of elderly relatives frequently falls to women, and some are finding themselves in the "sandwich generation". Initially they take a career break to care for young children, and then face the need to take early retirement to care for aging relatives [Wilcox, 1995]. This social dilemma has been addressed by Scandinavian governments, and other countries are following their lead by developing "family friendly" policies. Such policies enable leave to be taken at times of sickness in the family, or when there is a need to care for children or the elderly. Some far-sighted employers that provide childcare facilities are now extending this day care for the elderly.

2.6. Legislation and Programs designed to increase equal opportunity*

One cannot discuss the question of women in management without considering the legal framework surrounding employment legislation. In addition to actions taken by national governments, regional governments increasingly exert an influence. In Europe, for example, the European Union is working to promote equal opportunities for women and men. It has brought attention to the fact that the implementation of legislation is

* <http://www.neal-schuman.com/women.htm>

not enough. The importance of implementing specific actions such as raising awareness, establishing networks, disseminating information, and providing financial support for action projects has been recognized.

Many national governments have implemented programs and established agencies to ensure that the legislation is both appropriate and effective. These agencies have the task of identifying areas where there is a need for new legislation and provide advice on drafting legislation, monitoring its effectiveness after implementation, raising awareness of equality issues, and advising those who encounter problems.

The national agencies, such as those in the U.S. and U.K. encourage employer associations to prepare guidelines for use within their fields of interest and to audit and monitor progress. This action not only increases awareness, but also leads larger organizations to develop in-house programs to prepare women for management roles and encourage them to apply for promotions. By working at the employer association level and then comparing outcomes in each member organization within the sector, there is an incentive for all employers to take action.

2.7. Sexual Harassment

Both men and women can experience sexual harassment in the workplace, and men have brought a number of cases against women supervisors or managers. But sexual harassment is more likely to be experienced by women. It is a form of intimidation that

has been described as being a "...slow, relentless accumulation of slights and insults that add up to... we do not want you here, and [to prove that to you don't belong] we are going to make you uncomfortable" [Faludi quoted by Tobias 1997]. A review of women and sexual harassment in the U.S. provides explanations of sexual harassment, who is harassed and who does the harassing, the consequences for employees and organizations, and individual reactions and coping strategies. [Cleveland, 1994]

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in the U.S. has put forward a general definition of sexual harassment:

- X Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal and physical conduct of sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term of condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1990]

The US Office of Human Resources provided a more concrete definition that indicated sexual harassment can be divided into three categories: verbal (e.g. telling sexual jokes, cat-calls); non verbal (e.g. looking a person up and down, blocking their way, throwing

kisses); and physical (e.g. touching a person, patting or stroking) (Office of Human Resources, 1991).

The effect upon the individual subjected to sexual harassment is serious. Their reaction may be to try and ignore it. Speaking out can result in stress, particularly if the person causing the situation is a manager or supervisor. Taking a legal remedy can result in unwelcome publicity.

2.8. Stereotypes

“That’s no lady; that’s my boss.”

Treating women as mother, daughter, wife, or girlfriend, or categorizing and believing that women are emotional, bitchy, or picky is stereotypical. It also undermines relationship and results. Equally detrimental are women who react to men as if they are fathers, brothers, husbands, or boyfriends, assuming that they are unemotional, even-tempered, and inherently can repair and lift any item.

Social scientists define stereotypes as sets of “beliefs about the personal attributes of a group of people.” In order to make sense of social environment, perceivers group people into categories. Sometimes these attributes of traits are generalized from direct experience, at other times they are based on culturally transmitted information because they refer to groups with which perceivers have little direct experience. Therefore, bias

inevitably enters the process by which people's observations become represented in sex-stereotypic benefits. [Tanton: 1994]

Belief formation regarding groups of people is a continuous process occurring with little, if any monitoring or conscious awareness. It most often occurs when any given characteristics of an individual is particularly obvious or salient-such as sex or race. Given the salience of categorization by gender, it seems almost inevitable that people are perceived in terms of sex-role stereotypes. [Ibid: 1994]

Although the social and biological demands on women are different from those on men (for example in their functions as mothers) we do not assume that women's and men's roles are fixed and not subject to change. "Women", "Men", femininity, and masculinity are socially and culturally produced and vary with the society and the social context. [J.Alder: 1988]

Traditional sex roles, as the term is commonly used, emphasize the differences rather than the similarities between women and men. These differences are typically assumed to be innate. Traditional sex roles also suggest that women should behave in a "feminine" manner, in accordance with their presumed feminine attributes, and that men should behave in a "masculine" manner, in accordance with their presumed masculine attributes.

To deviate from these prescriptions, according to traditional thinking, is to engage in abnormal behavior. These sex roles have had a profound impact on relations between women and men in our society in all spheres of life in the family, the educational system, and the workplace, and in both management and non-management ranks within the workplace. [N.Powell: 1993]

2.9. Leadership Style

Is there evidence of difference between men and women in their styles of management? Vinnicombe [1987] reports differences in Myers Brigg Indicator (MBTI) preferences. In particular, she highlights less emphasis among women managers on a "traditionalist" [Bates and Kiersey 1984] style of management decision making, with its emphasis on sensing (rather than intuition) and judging (rather than perceiving). Recent norms for Cattell's 16PF personality for UK managers assembled by Bartram [1992] reveal significant gender differences. In terms of the second order factors identified by Krug and Johns [1986], women managers have significantly lower scores on independence and significantly higher scores on the anxiety factor.

Rosener [1990] identifies a greater emphasis among women compared with men on a "transformational" approach to leadership, which involves participation, motivation by inclusion and power by charisma, rather than a "transactional" approach, which involves motivation by exchange of rewards and favors and power by position [Burns, 1978]. Furthermore, McLoughlin (20) argues that women managers tend to have wider goals,

wanting to succeed, but also wanting to make the work environment more fulfilling for everybody involved in the business. Studies by Marshall [1984] found that, for women, "challenge and satisfaction in a particular job are more important than recurrent promotion for its own sake".

Powell [1988] on the other hand, reports differences observed in specific behaviors. For example, if staff are performing badly, men are more likely to adapt their response to a perceived cause: if the problem is inability they may use training; if the problem is lack of effort they will punish. In contrast, women are more likely to adopt a consistent approach either using training or punishing in every case. Women are also, he reports, less likely to use secretaries and closed doors as barriers to staff.

In relation to communication, Tannen [1992] describes a greater tendency for women to use communication to connect or establish rapport, whereas men are more likely to communicate with the aim of conveying information, displaying expertise and challenging for status. It is more common for women to use phrases such as "don't you think?", "isn't it?", which Tannen attributes to giving power or opening negotiations. Men frequently perceive such behavior as halting, unconfident and indecisive. They themselves are more likely to make statements in tones of certainty, to expect to be listened to and to challenge, which is a style that women may perceive as competitive and without respect for their views.

CHAPTER THREE

Data Analysis and Interpretation

3.1. Description of Respondents

This survey was undertaken to investigate the problem women in management usually encounter in Ethiopia. For this purpose women managers working in different organizations were solicited to share their experience and the problems they faced in managerial role. Due to time constraint, the sample was eventually limited to 25 women managers of which five were personally interviewed. Of the 30 questionnaires distributed, 20 replies were received, which is more than 65 percent. This response was sufficient for the researcher's purpose taking into account the nature of the study (i.e. descriptive study).

Table I: Percentage distribution of respondents by marital status and age

Marital Status	Age						Total	
	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45	45-50	50-55	Number	Percent
Single	3	2	1	-	-	-	6	24
Married	1	1	2	5	7	2	18	72
Divorced	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	4
Widower	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total	4	3	3	6	7	2	25	
Percent	16	12	12	24	28	8		

The majority of respondents (52 percent) were aged 40 – 50, which seems to agree with the expectation that more number of female executives tend to be concentrated in this age range. This could be explained by the fact that it takes a longer period of time for women to assume managerial positions because of the lower entry-level jobs they are first assigned to. However, this trend seems to be changing nowadays as could be observed from the table. A significant number of women managers under the age of 35 were able to assume managerial post early. This may be due to the better educational qualification the younger managers have as compared with earlier statistics. (Please refer to Table 2)

Table 2: Percentage distribution of respondents by educational level and total number of years in managerial position

Education	Total Number of years in managerial position						Total	
	1-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	Number	Percent
12 th grade and below	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Certificate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Diploma	-	-	1	-	1	-	2	8
Degree and above	7	6	4	4	2	-	23	92
Total	7	6	5	4	3	0	25	
Percent	28	24	20	16	12	0		

As can be observed from this table, which is consistent with Table 1, a significant number of women managers tend to be young and also have higher academic qualification (degree and above). Accordingly, 52 percent of the respondents have an experience of less than ten years and educational qualification of degree and above. This

could be attributed to the governments' affirmative action towards girls' education and equal employment opportunity for women.

The majority of these respondents (64 percent) tend to perceive themselves and other women colleagues as being equally motivated as their male counterparts. (Please refer to question 38). Even though the intention of this paper is not to measure how women tend to perceive themselves, it could be worthwhile to look into it with special emphasis on its overall implication on women managers. Most respondents tend to exhibit defensive attitude when asked about women career motivation. On the other hand, 32 percent of the respondents expressed their belief that women tend to have less career motivation than men and substantiated their response by stating the following points:

- Women do not take up challenging jobs, rather they concentrate on less motivating and routine jobs;
- Due to family responsibility, women tend to focus more on family concerns (especially children). In most instances, women leave the office early and sometimes they are not willing to work over-time even when there is a need to do so;
- Finally, lack of good educational background, self-esteem, confidence and competence were among the major factors identified by these women.

3.2. Personal Factors

Of the 25 respondents 18 or 72 percent were married and with children. Of these only one is divorced but the remaining are still living with their spouses. The rest of the group were not married and did not respond to questions regarding family-work conflict. Those who are married and with children rated their spouses in a scale varying from "very supportive" to "no support at all" as depicted in the following table.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of respondents by support of spouse in career development

Support of spouse in career development	Total	
	Number	Percent
Very supportive	10	56
Moderate support	1	6
Less than supportive	4	22
No support at all	3	17
Total	18	

Contrary to common belief, more than half of the respondents graded their spouse as being supportive, which may be due to reserved culture with respect to revealing personal matters. As could be noted, some 56 percent of women managers reported that they viewed their spouses as providing them with the necessary support. On the other hand, 17 percent reported that they received no support at all from their spouses in their career development.

During the interview sessions and when collecting the questionnaires, respondents were encouraged to explain what type of support their spouses provided them with. Apparently, most respondents described their spouses played a major role in providing them with financial security, managing family finances, to some extent providing them with career advice and providing them with a calming influence when faced with a problem. However, the support is limited and many agreed that their spouses played little or no role in managing the household and organizing family activities.

From this finding we can deduce that this is not surprising, since performing these roles conforms to the traditional, gender based assignment of responsibilities in the family. Because the largest portion (72 percent) of the sample taken into account was comprised of mid-life and older, i.e., 35 and above, the apparent better-balanced allocation of responsibility that may exist among younger and modern working couples could be obscured when analyzing the entire sample. These results may also suggest that women still handle more of the home and family responsibilities, even when their career and their spouse's career are viewed as equal.

Table 4: Percentage distribution of respondents by their opinion on the need to choose between career and family and ability to balance work and family

Choice between career and family	Able to balance work and family				Total	
	Yes	Percent	No	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	1	4	-	0	1	4
No	17	68	7	28	24	96
Total	18		7		25	

The data shown in Table 4 shows an interesting paradox. On one hand, majority of the women, some 68% of the respondents, replied that they were not required to choose between family and career. On the other hand, asked if they were able to balance work and family, the same respondents replied that they didn't feel satisfied with this regard. This could be explained by the fact that women in the 35-50 years age range face the greatest challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities. Hence, the contribution of their husbands and the roles they play would most significantly influence their life satisfaction and work-family balance. However, it seems that the prevailing culture of living with extended family members and being able to employ nannies and maids to take care of their children could have helped them so that they were better able to manage their family as well as advance in their career.

The remaining 28 percent of the respondents said that they were not able to balance work and family even though they did not believe a woman should choose between career and family.

Regarding family matters, the respondents were asked whether they believed the government should design a policy regarding childcare and care for elderly relatives. Here, all of them agreed on the importance of designing family-friendly policies by the government. They also commented that public as well as other institutions should work towards establishing their own childcare centers that may greatly reduce the tension experienced by women workers.

Table 5: Percentage distribution of respondents showing responsibility for care of elderly relatives and effect of family strain on performance

Responsibility for care of elderly relatives	Effect of Family Strain on Performance				Total	
	Yes	Percent	No	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	11	44	7	28	18	72
No	3	12	4	16	7	28
Total	14		11		25	

A considerable number of women executives (44 percent) reported as being strained by family duties and commitments such as care for elderly relatives. This has to do with the cultural expectation that when an individual is employed he/she has the responsibility to lend a helping hand to immediate family members. In some cases, this may even extend to other distant relatives. This help usually consists of people giving their relatives accommodation and also providing them with all other necessities like food and medication. Caretaker responsibility is assumed to be the women's domain as the societal outlook in the country considers women as nurturers of family. This situation seems to create a strain on women in performing their jobs.

In contrast 28 percent reported that even though they had the responsibility for care of elderly relatives, it did not affect their performance. This may be due to the fact that elderly relatives may not be living under the same roof with this group which some how have reduced the burden.

Table 6: Percentage distribution of respondents showing availability of leave for maternity and family emergency

Allowed to maternity leave	Leave for family emergencies				Total	
	Yes	Percent	No	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	9	36	16	64	25	100
No	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	9		16		25	

Table 6 shows the view point of both married and unmarried women to see if their organizations have a policy allowing them to take maternity leave (pre and post-delivery) and whether they are able to take leave whenever they encounter family emergency. As can be observed from the table, 36 percent of the respondents said that they were or would be allowed a pre and post-delivery leave and that they are able to take leave in case of family emergency. The emergency leave is to be deducted from their annual leave. These women, especially those interviewed, said they consider these benefits very important and that they help them to balance their work and family responsibilities as they could attend to any family emergency when it arises. A significant portion (64 percent) said that even though they were allowed to have maternity leave they were not able to take partial leave to attend to family emergency, as they like. For these women, this has created difficulty in maintaining the desired level of balance between career and family. This is also supported by the response received regarding whether they find themselves usually experiencing work-family conflict. Sixty eight percent responded that they do. Of these, though most are married, single managers also are required to attend to other family related responsibilities, even if it is not as strenuous as that of the married ones.

3.3. Organizational Factors

In this section of the paper, the various organizational factors affecting the role of women managers will be explored.

Table 7: Perception about distribution of women at the 3 levels of management

Concentration of women managers	Total	
	Number	Percent
Top level	3	12
Middle level	14	56
Junior level	8	32
Total	25	

Among organization factors, gender mix in organizations was found to be an important factor determining career progress. The hierarchical level at which gender imbalance occurs is also relevant. Ethiopian organizations don't seem to have moved beyond their bias against women workers in general, and female executives in particular. Women managers, for most part, some 88 percent, tend to be concentrated around the middle and lower managerial strata in organizations. This concentration may be attributed to factors previously mentioned including lesser educational qualification. Furthermore, women usually start at junior positions and this coupled with low expectation and career aspiration seems to contribute to this type of concentration. On the contrary, women working in NGOs were all found in the top levels of management due to their organizational policy of equal employment and promotion opportunity regarding women

professionals. This trend seems to be absent in most governmental and private organizations as evidenced by their responses.

In an effort to get comparative data on the attitudes of subordinates towards female and male superior, lady executives were asked if their competence was challenged only because they are female. In addition, they were asked if they received the same respect their male counterparts commanded. The replies of the respondents is shown in the following table.

Table 8: Table showing respondents' perceptions regarding other's perception of them

Questioning about ability	Same respect received				Total	
	Yes	Percent	No	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	3	12	6	24	9	36
No	6	24	10	40	16	64
Total	9		16		25	

It is interesting to note that some 40 percent responded as having met no challenges from subordinates, just because they were women, but that they didn't get the same respect as their male peers. This could be attributed to the stereotypical perception most people have regarding female managers and prevalent organizational values, which favors male supervisors. The most interesting thing to note is that the challenges faced by these managers does not necessarily come from their male subordinates only but rather from female subordinates as well. However, as some managers tried to explain the type of challenge they faced from the male and female colleagues, it varied in that while most men questioned and resisted simply because they were women, whereas the

female subordinates expected to be favored just because they are female too. This, as mentioned by some has gone to the extent of expecting a woman manager to understand what her subordinate is going through in dealing with her daily life and make some compromises concerning issues like coming late to work on some occasions and even not showing up at the office when there is some sort of problem at home.

Women managers who faced questioning attitudes regarding their ability and did not receive the same respect accounted for 24 percent of the figures. The same number did not face questioning about their ability and were able to get the same respect as their male counterparts. With regard to questioning of managerial ability, most women managers commented that such challenges are mostly brought up by their male subordinates and they faced very little or no challenge from the female subordinates.

Table 9: Perceptions about performance evaluation and nature of feedback received

Critical Evaluation of women's performance	Feedback received from superiors compromising women's career development				Total	
	Yes	Percent	No	Percent	Number	Percent
	Yes	10	40	3	12	13
No	7	28	5	20	12	48
Total	17		8		25	

In a country like Ethiopia, where performance focused employee appraisal methods are still at their infant stage, the data collected for this project seems to suggest an anomaly. Of the sampled women executives, 40 percent reported that their supervisors were not only conscientious and meticulous in evaluating their performance but also were actively engaged in giving them feedback that would enhance career development. This,

according to personal experience and observation, seems to be distorted as most women in different organizations complain regarding the negative bias involved in rating employees performance, especially women's, by their supervisors. Therefore, it is worth remarking that there is still a need to look further into this aspect so as to get a clear picture of the situation.

Twenty eight percent of the respondents expressed their belief that most men supervisors believed women to be less likely to possess the required skills, knowledge and abilities needed for management than their male counterparts. This is reflected in their evaluation, which apparently lacks objectivity. This has done its share of hindering women's career development. It is interesting to note that even though 20 percent of the respondents did not think women's performance was not critically evaluated, they do not see it as compromising women's career development. This, however, seems to be a little bit unrealistic since it is a well known fact that let alone climb the corporate ladder with a below average performance evaluation, one needs to obtain at least satisfactory performance evaluation to stay with organizations.

Table 10: Perceptions regarding the importance of mentor and availability of mentor

Importance of mentor	Availability of mentor				Total	
	Yes	Percent	No	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	10	40	13	52	23	92
No	-	0	2	8	2	8
Total	10		15		25	

Many researchers world-over have indicated that mentoring increases the pace at which people assimilate new information and promptly adapt to new environments. It is only fairly obvious that most women managers studied here agree with this finding. However, the prevalent scenario is that women don't get such supporting mentors and are required to struggle through organizational adjustment and hence are limited in their organizational accomplishment and climb. The major reason pointed out by respondents is that since in most organizations, especially in public and private organizations, managers are men. These managers tend to feel more comfortable mentoring their male rather than female subordinates. They do not feel comfortable mentoring female subordinates because they are afraid of the misconceptions of others of their relationship with female subordinates. Moreover, the female subordinates themselves may not feel comfortable being mentored by their male supervisors because they feel they would be expected to return the favors in unprofessional manner. However, even though the difficulty cannot be overstated, most respondents expressed their belief that this trend might gradually change in the near future enabling women managers to get proper mentoring both from male and women managers.

Table 11: Perceptions regarding the availability of provision of equal opportunity in their organization and gender based discrimination

Provision of Equal Opportunity	Discrimination because of gender				Total	
	Yes	Percent	No	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	4	16	12	48	16	64
No	5	20	4	16	9	36
Total	9		16		25	

As discussed earlier most organizations have male dominated upper ranks. The implication of this fact is far reaching. Gender discrimination and unfair access to opportunity as indicated in Table II, could be at least in part attributed to this domination. Despite the rhetoric that job advertisements are usually gender neutral, in practice, there seems to be a strong indication in many organizations to prefer male employees to female ones. The main reason, according to 20 percent of the respondents, is that they did not believe that there is provision for equal opportunity and sensed the existence of gender based discrimination because organizations are obliged to provide quite a number of female specific benefits such as maternity leaves and often frequent sick leaves during pregnancy, which has not only monetary implications, but is also believed to have adverse impact on productivity.

Most subjects, however, boldly reject such opinions. In fact, one problem during the analysis process was the difficulty to determine whether respondents were really open when they talk of their organizations' recruitment and employment policies or principles as being gender sensitive and this goes against the above finding. This could be inferred from the following table.

Table 12: Perceptions regarding the presence of gender sensitive organizational regulation and gender-based preference during the selection process

Presence of Gender Sensitive Organizational Regulations	Less preference of female workers at time of employment					
	Yes	Percent	No	Percent	Total	
					Number	Percent
Yes	3	12	15	60	18	72
No	5	20	2	8	7	28
Total	8		17		25	

As implied in the table, 60 percent of the respondents replied that there is a gender sensitive organizational regulation and that both male and female workers are given equal opportunity at the time of employment. However, it was not clear whether they were referring to what is in the legislation currently popular disclosure of gender equality or the actual practice. Irrespective of the cause, it is worthwhile to mention that in most NGOs this practice is actually exercised. But regarding public and private organizations there is a need to further investigate the matter to identify the root cause of such a response.

Male dominated leadership also influences organizational culture in general. This is exemplified by the barriers women face in climbing the organizational ladder, the weak gender regulations in organizations, uncomfortable informal group dynamics, awkward relationships with male colleagues and even sexual harassment.

For the purpose of this study most of the questions included in the questionnaire as well as in the interview are open-end questions. Accordingly, with respect to the barriers faced, 32 percent said that they faced no barrier while the remaining 68 percent have disclosed some of the major barriers. Among these are:

- Access to the top for women is blocked due to organizational tradition and prejudice, i.e., glass ceiling
- The beliefs and attitudes held by organizational members (women are not viewed as leaders)

- Women themselves are less inclined to see themselves as leaders/managers (this situation is usually the case in male-dominated organizations)
- Lack of strong and visible role models
- Exclusion from informal networks which otherwise may have contributed for their career journey and better knowledge of what goes on their organization.

Moreover, most women managers considered for the study agreed on the importance of a role model for career development except NGO employees, however, most reported that they were not able to effectively associate themselves with a role model both within and outside the organization. The majority of them said that they were disadvantaged by lack of female role models at the top of organizations as in most organizations women are concentrated in the middle and junior levels as pointed out earlier.

With regard to the question of how these respondents viewed their relationship with their male counterparts, all responded that they have a good relationship characterized with harmony, mutual respect and as being not so much different from that of their female colleagues. In fact, two of the respondents said that they prefer associating more with their male colleagues. They reasoned that it helps them better advance in their careers, since discussions revolve more around professional matters than family issues.

One cannot overlook the problem of sexual harassment when trying to identify factors affecting women workers in general and women managers in particular. Women, in addition to the aforementioned factors, are usually the victims of sexual harassment

from their superiors and colleagues, which in most cases is frequent. Surprisingly enough, however, only three (12 percent) of the respondents reported that they have encountered sexual harassment from their male superiors and colleagues. They further indicated that it mostly came from their superiors. But when asked whether they have reported the case, two of them said they did not do so because they were afraid of the repercussions such as getting unpleasant labels by co-workers and that even if they dare expose the matter they won't get the right and prompt response from the responsible bodies. Therefore, they thought since the organizational and societal conditions did not encourage women to disclose such matters, they kept it to themselves which they felt is the case for many women. Further, one of the respondents said that she had to resign because she felt insecure, as attempts to make peace with her harasser did not work out well. The remaining 88 percent of the respondents said that they did not encounter sexual harassment of any type. In fact, culturally, women do not reveal such practices, which otherwise could have made the figure higher. Therefore, it requires further efforts so that women would be more comfortable to talk about and receive the necessary support in dealing with such issues, which might negatively affect their performance and career motivation.

The benefits of informal networking are well acknowledged in aiding upward mobility, including information exchange, career planning and increased visibility. However, as reported by the majority of the women (80 percent) most of the informal networking takes place outside working hours in bars and coffee shops. This in most cases does not welcome female peers. This, exclusion forces them to lag behind especially in obtaining

new information on developing issues. In addition, as mentioned by some respondents, the ostracism extends to the extent that those who are members of the informal group reach upon a decision regarding an issue and gang up when showing up at the meetings making it difficult for women managers to effectively handle their duty.

3.4. Societal/Cultural Factors

A country's attitude towards women in general, and those in managerial posts in particular, is shaped by the culture of the country. Accordingly, most people in Ethiopia view a woman manager as a person who does not belong where she is – she ought to stay at home– taking care of children and family. This belief is even shared by those members of the society which are thought to be better educated.

At the same time, the respondents were asked to express their view on how the attitudes concerning the role of women can be influenced by cultural factors. In response, the following are some of the factors identified;

- Girls education not being a priority;
- Early marriage especially in rural communities;
- The expectation that women should be dependent on men;
- Poor access to finance or household resources such as land;
- Negative stereotype against women; and
- Considering women incapable of managerial duties.

Furthermore, they were asked what their opinion of a good manager is and replied by citing, the following points:

- One who has vision and who believes in contributing to development with the resource at hand;
- A role model in every aspect, transparent, conscientious; and
- Having self-confidence, being decisive, influential, disciplined and hardworking.

Moreover, they were asked what characteristics most people associate with women managers and most seem to agree with: bossy, snobbish, rigid, heartless, rude, weak, less assertive and the like. If we try to explore the sources of these views most of them relate to cultural factors that conceive women as inferior in society and that women should accept it as their fate.

In addition, they were asked whether they think that the main career barrier for women is due to low self-esteem, lack of self-confidence, lack of assertiveness and not considering themselves as managers. With this regard, 64 percent of the respondents agreed that women fared low in these areas due to upbringing which negatively affected their perception of themselves. This, they explained, has to do with the family, school and society at large being male-dominant which gave them no other choice but to fit into the framework which in most instances was directly reflected in women rating low in the aforementioned factors.

And as a remedy, they pointed out that the currently much talked about "family law", which incorporates positive articles concerning women rights, might to a great extent

improve the situation. Also, they pointed out that even though this is a good beginning much remains to be done and that awareness creation needs to be emphasized so as to bring about cultural change.

At last, the respondents expressed what they hoped the near future holds by stating that they would like to see more women in leadership and executives. To this end some have emphasized that women themselves should be responsible in bringing the desired results rather than leaving it to policy makers and other parties.

The project has tried to look into the problems women in management in Ethiopia encounter at the workplace. However, it has its shortcomings, as the survey was time constrained thus resulting in a small sample size as well as limiting personal interviews to only five. Moreover, I feel some cultural factors have masked gender related problems such as sexual harassment and its impacts on employment and promotion. Yet the comments received from some of the respondents were frank and did depict the reality in a society like Ethiopia where women are generally considered to work under male supervisors.

It is also very encouraging to note that there is a political backing to do away with male domination and women's attitude is also changing, that is, better self-esteem and self-confidence, are being observed. Above all, however, better education for women would be a lasting solution.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1. Conclusions

This study has been able to demonstrate the importance of decision making to the role of management from the outset and the fact that decision-making has over the years become stereotyped as a masculine role. Such a notion now emerges as the source from which most, if not all, organizational barriers women face in Ethiopia in becoming effective managers. A good example will be Schein's [1976] and Schein et al's [1989] notion of "think manager, think male". Some of the barriers identified in this paper include: work-family conflict faced by women managers, reluctance of male subordinates towards female managers, isolation by male colleagues, exclusion from male-dominated informal networks, the lack of mentorship, and societal/cultural bias against the role of women, and so on.

And inevitably, these "masculine" organizational and societal barriers severely hinder women's ability to be effective in their role as managers.

Positive steps need to be taken to eliminate all these barriers. Women in managerial positions should be encouraged to become visible and ensure that their responsibilities are understood and recognized by everyone. In effect, whenever possible, women

should challenge the male dominance paradigm and explain women's frame of reference, since men will not understand the female manager's position unless it is properly communicated to them. This could reduce enmity felt towards one another.

Since the present system of "male supremacy" in the country neglects a large proportion of the workplace, leaving skills and talents unrecognized, perpetuating the image of management as a male preserve and failing to provide adequate female role models for the management of the future limits, the positive contribution women could provide in the organization and society at large.

4.2. Recommendations

It is believed that the problem of women is culturally deep-rooted. Women begin to learn their "inferior" gender roles as soon as they are born and as adults they tend to fit into the roles subscribed by the society which has many scripts and different costumes. The core values of culture, which include gender roles however disempowering they may be, are passed on from generation to generation.

The country's outlook that sees and treats men and women differently thus originates from the prevalent cultural situations. Tackling the problem of women managers, in general, should thus begin from the root cause. Concentrated effort should be exerted to bring fundamental change in the public perception that looks down on women and that constrains their opportunities in education, employment and working conditions,

which eventually negatively impacts their self esteem, knowledge about of their legal and human rights, and claims thereof and overall relationship with the male gender in all areas (family, organization and society).

Notwithstanding the significance and determining effect of this cultural basic issue which requires a long-term and all embracing effort, there is a major role to be played by government.

Finally, recommendations that would assist those who take up related studies are set forth based on the findings of the study:

- The system of male as the “norm” causes feelings of isolation, frustration and anger among women as they work within organizations. In an attempt to overcome such feelings, women perhaps need to do what their male colleagues have been doing for quite some time, like build up networks with other women in an attempt to provide information, support and encouragement to one another. Such moves will enable them to gain and transmit information which is unobtainable through the formal networks.
- Another way to encourage more women into management positions is to ensure that organizational development programmes recognize women as resources and make the most of their potential. One such suggestion is organizing women-only training programs and workshops that will be able to ensure greater competence and also motivate women.

- Women themselves should ensure they have the right business skills and leadership know-how; attempt to enter line management in mainstream areas; endeavor to gain experience through apprenticeship and acting position; endeavor to gain experience through apprenticeship and acting position; endeavor to obtain as much career counseling as possible; volunteer for leadership and executive positions to gain experience and a higher profile hence developing confidence in themselves and; learn how to measure their operating effectiveness in the workplace.
- Government should be able to encourage and facilitate organizations and facilitate the establishment of childcare facilities which would for the most part help women workers and managers cope with their work-family balance challenge
- Seeing to it that organizations' recruitment, promotion and training policies are congruent with the labor law, women's policy and other relevant legislations and that they are practically implemented.
- Conducting more focused research on the discrepancy between rhetoric and practice with regards to laws and policies that deal with providing equal entitlement of women with men to all opportunities at workplace.
- Creating a system by which all workers and particularly female workers freely and undauntedly appeal their grievances and complaints at the organizational and national level and ensuring that timely and appropriate and prompt response to complaints are given by the concerned bodies. Special emphasis should be given to sexual harassment in the work place

In conclusion, it is not enough for women themselves, organizations, and government to merely recognize that there are organizational and societal barriers affecting women managers, but actually to do something constructive, to reduce or ideally totally eradicate these barriers. Enough of the talking, and more into action.

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Appendix

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS**

My name is Jalalie Djereгна. I am pursuing my postgraduate studies in Master of Business Administration in AAU. I am currently working on my graduation project entitled "Women in Management".

This questionnaire is intended to collect relevant information from women in management posts, such as yourself.

I humbly implore you to take a few minutes of your invaluable time to fill out this questionnaire, as your input is crucial to the success of my paper. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, in advance, for your kind cooperation.

Instructions

You can respond the following questions in the following ways:

- By putting a tick mark in the boxes or free space provided
- By writing the desired answer for open-ended questions (please feel free to attach additional paper if required).

Age _____

Marital Status _____ Single/Married/Divorced/Widowed

Education _____

12th grade and below

Certificate

Diploma

Degree and above

Please specify _____

Occupation _____

Total number of years in _____

managerial position:

1. Do you have children?

Yes No

2. How do you rate your spouse in providing you with the necessary support to develop your career?

- Very supportive - Less than supportive
- Moderate support - No support at all

3. Were you able to successfully combine childbearing with your career development?

Yes No

4. Do you have maternity leave? Does it include pre-delivery? What other benefits does your organization provide you with?

5. Do you have the responsibility for the care of elderly relatives?

Yes No

6. Does your organization have a policy which enables you to take leave at times of sickness in the family, or when there is a need to take care of children or the elderly?

Yes No

7. Do you believe that a policy should be designed by government regarding childcare and care for the elderly in family?

8. Do you find it difficult to balance work life with family responsibilities and parenting?

Yes No

9. Is it a must that women choose between career and family?

Yes No

If yes, why do you think are the reasons?

10, Do you usually experience work-family conflict?

Yes No

11, Has family strain at any time decreased your performance at work and thereby negatively affected your career success?

Yes No

12, Do you think you are a role model for (your daughter or) younger women in the family or community?

Yes No

How? _____

13, What is your opinion of a good manager?

14, What characteristics do you think most people associate with a women manager?

15, Are you satisfied with your work?

Yes No

If no, what is the cause of your dissatisfaction?

16, Do you think that your supervisors or employers appreciate your work?

Yes No

If no, do you think it has something to do with you being a woman?

Yes No

17, Did you have a mentor who helped you understand the culture of your organization?

Yes No

If yes, how did they help you?

18, Do you agree on the importance of having a mentor?

Yes No

19, What do you think are the required qualities for women to be successful in managerial positions?

20, Do you think it takes women a longer period of time to reach a managerial position?

Yes No

If yes, what do you think is the reason?

21. Were you given any type of training that prepared you to assume managerial post?

Yes No

22, Do you believe competence is the only requirement needed to get ahead in an organization?

Yes No

23, Do you think that the main career barrier for women is due to low self- esteem, lack of self-confidence, assertiveness, and not seeing themselves as managers?

Yes No

If yes, what do you think is the reason? _____

What remedies do you suggest to remove this barrier? _____

24. What do you think are some of the barriers that exist and may deter career advancement of women?

25, What organizational barriers did you face while moving up the corporate ladder?

26, Do you believe there is equal opportunity provided to women in managerial roles to further career development as compared with their male counterparts?

Yes No

If no, what do you think are the reasons? _____

27, Do you think women in general, and those in your organization in particular, are discriminated against because of their gender?

Yes No

If yes, what is the nature of such discrimination? (Example: Denial of training, promotion, or transfer opportunities) _____

28, What strategies do you think can be used to increase opportunities for women to move into management roles?

29. Do you think the policies and directives of the federal or regional governments related to women's rights are made practical in your organization?

Yes No

30, In your organization:

(a) How many women managers are there? _____

(b) Where are women managers concentrated?

Top level Middle level Junior level

What do you think is the reason for such concentration?

31, Why do you think that the number of women at managerial or supervisory positions is much less than that of men?

32. Do you think that attitudes concerning the role of women can be influenced by cultural factors?

Yes No

If so please identify at least six local factors.

33. Do you think your organization's regulations are gender sensitive?

Yes No

34. Are women workers less preferred to male ones at time of employment in fear of the organization's obligation to provide pre-delivery and maternity leaves and the effect of that on the work?

Yes No

35. What do you think should be done by the government or individual establishments to curb the problems of work place gender discrimination and differential treatment of male and female workers?

36. What negative impact does your organizational culture have on women in management position?

37. How do you characterize your organizational culture with respect to the management style?

Male dominated Female dominated Balanced

38. Do you think women have less work or career motivation than men?

Yes No

If yes, what are your reasons?

39. Do you think that men and women have different leadership styles?

Yes No

If yes, please state why you think they are different. _____

40. How do you evaluate the performance of women at leadership positions?

Very Good Good Fair Poor

41. Do you usually encounter a questioning or suspicion about your ability?

Yes No

If so who seems to be usually questioning your ability?

42. Do you think many workers (probably) women workers included, would find it difficult to work under women managers or superiors and so to give the same respect that they would have given to a male superior?

Yes No

If yes, why do you think is the reason?

43. Are you excluded from the informal discussions and interactions that could help you understand the true nature of the organization in which you work just because you are a female?

Yes No

If yes, what do you think are the reasons? _____

44. Do you feel comfortable working with men?

Yes No

Please state the reason for your answer. _____

45. How would you describe the relationship you have with your male colleagues?

46. Have you ever encountered sexual harassment from your superior or male co-workers?

Yes No

If yes, what measures did you take?

If no, why do you think a person finds it difficult to report a case of sexual harassment?

How common/frequent are such cases?

47. Does the organization in which you are working have a clear policy regarding sexual harassment, which is made known to everyone within the organization?

Yes No

48. Do you think the type of feedback received from their immediate supervisors also may compromise women's development?

Yes No

49. Are female employees evaluated on a critical evaluation of their performance?

Yes - No

50. Do women workers get the same pay with male employees of similar qualification and similar work assignment? (Not necessarily in your organization)

Yes No

If no, what do you think are the reasons?

51. Do you agree that networking/meeting other women managers in the same or other fields of employment plays an important part in managerial skill development, especially for women?

Yes No

52. Do you think that the networking must extend to men working within the organization, in different managerial roles?

Yes No

If no, what are your reasons?

53. What changes do you expect to see in the near future?
