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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

**THE QUESTIONS OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN: FROM SOCIAL AND
RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES**

By:
GEBREAL GEBREWAHID

NOVEMBER, 2024
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**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES OF
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
PHILOSOPHY**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the status of women in religious interpretation and socio-cultural attitude and their continuous support the inequality and disparities of gender. The study tried to show how they constraint the attempts to success gender equality. To put a philosophical reflection to this problem by investigating the logical and empirical foundations of the religions' claims that women are naturally inferior to men, this thesis suggests that such demands are logically and empirically unjustified. Importantly hinder the achievement of deferent effort to put an end gender disparity. This strict philosophical inquiring acknowledges religious interpretation the inferiority of women to men. It was also established that such religious interpretation are patriarchal oriented and subjugating women. As a result, the study proved that despite logical and empirical indefensibility of the religious assertion about the nature of women, they continue to influence peoples thought and action therefore remain as obstacle on the progress of equal treatment of gender . The study argues that since the foundation of such religious interpretation are themselves ontologically and epistemologically problematic. Critical discussion of the views of certain philosophers held concerning gender I argue that these scholars supported subjugation of women in a patriarchal setting. It argues that the two religions (Christian and Islamic) are being patriarchal. Finally, when we look the status of women in Ethiopia still women are in low status. Despite the government amends constitution to guarantee the liberty of women but in the ground remains lip services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My heartfelt thanks go to my thesis advisor, Dr. Tenna Dewo for his invaluable and relentless scholarly guidance, constructive advices, and comments. My thank goes to Aksum University for sponsoring me to pursue the MA degree program. My special thanks go also to all my staff members of philosophy department in Aksum University for their valuable encouragement during my study. I would like also to thank to the department head of Philosophy of Addis Ababa University Dr. Fassil Merawi who motivated me to finish my thesis on time. I would like to thank my sisters Nebyat Teka and Rishan G/ wahid for their advice and encourage me to continue my study.

I also give my deepest gratitude to my friends Hayelom Areaya, Tagaynesh Alemayoh, Abrehet Negash, Adis Alemahehu, Teklay Kassahu and Gudetu Amanueal who offered me moral supports and encouragements during the study. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Kahsu Abraha, Samuel Getahun, and Meron Chanyalew for their constructive comments and for their motivation. I am also extremely thankful to the Addis Ababa University staff members of Habiba Nuredein who encourages me to finish on time, and Feven who help me in providing a vital information to register and continue my study. And finally, I thank all who helped me to the completion of this thesis one way or another.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

Inequality based on gender is one of the most prevalent forms of cultural and social domination of men over women. Followed by various negative consequences it existed almost throughout the world. The aim of this paper is to look into how the roles and the places of the vast majority of women are understood in religions and cultural practices of the Ethiopian society. The controversies that persistently existed in the dominant Ethiopian religious, ritual and cultural activities are believed to have caused subjugation and inequality in gender. These variations are mainly the consequences of social and cultural legacies, historical evolution, geographic location, and cultural and religious beliefs.

Religion has a significant impact in the social and cultural fabric of different locations. It is deeply established in the lives of individual's and had an effect on the financial and political course of societies (Kingorova and Havlicek, 2015). Acquired and given elements associated with human are commonly referred as culture.

Religion is a word employed to refer to individual's faith, opinions, and manner in how they impact their connection with the Supreme Being - the Creator, and also with each other. The word "gender" in this paper carries the roles and responsibilities that are given to men and women. These roles and responsibilities could sometimes be defined in such a way that they are unquestionable, unchangeable, and fixed. Gender, culture, and religion are concepts that have been used to rationalize and justify the poor treatment of women in relation to the manner in how particular African communities apply these.

The paper will concentrate on the way religious and cultural assumptions are used to explain the ill-treatments that are today ascribed to women. Thus the study attempts to primarily argue that wrong religious interpretations, cultural and societal constraints should be reasonably examined and reexamined in order to correct the way that the gender roles of men and women be decided. It question and critically examines the stereotypes running about gender in the society, and that which have been promoted through religion and culture so as to prevent women from actively participating in the progress of the current.

Gender is an essential point of inspiration for individuals. It has significant influence in the style of life of every one particularly in the patriarchal societies. Men are, in a patriarchal culture, given priority over women. An individual's emotions, personality, preferred job types

and desired social roles are all part of the society. The gendered attributes that are created by society have a significant influence on an individual's life possibilities.

The world's history has been shaped for ages by men controlling women under their brutal system of rule. According to Lynne (1976) cited in Thomas (2009), the basic concept of the patriarchal rule which holds that men are superior to women is to blame the existing system. Carol and Mark (1976) suggested that men and women had different 'spheres' in labor categorization. "[P]atriarchal activity" appeared as a result of this popular view. Similarly, Lynne (1976) further notes that gender disparities were wide spread through ought the world. The concept of a woman within the system, including all of her duties, was highly restricted.

Every faith has its distinct frameworks, develops relatively distinct norms, and relies on its unique cultural and historical foundations. Due to this the major religions of the globe possess an entirely distinct effect on the status of women. Let us think about the following questions: To what extent do religions impact the status of women as well as the degree of gender disparity, both in religious communities and at the highers level of state?

1.1 The Concept of Gender

To obtain a broader view regarding the problem of gender bias, it is imperative to generate knowledge about the beginnings of the construction of gender and the organizations that encourage it. On many occasions the vast majority of theologians and philosophers argued for and against gender inequality. The result sounds as usual to them. Some described women as sentimental, unreasonable and incidental persons who do not have anything grounded in their inherited traits and psychological roots.

In view of genetic principle, a woman was created from contaminated eggs supposed to become a man. That means women are considered as "misbegotten" men or as the result of biological error at birth. Based on this view Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas reached at conclusion that women are "misbegotten" (Fortenbough, 1975).

As a result of wrong interpretation has become the underlying concept adopted by many of the main faiths in the scriptural texts. In these faiths, God is viewed as a great patriarch who formed the universe out of nothing. This has provided a ground for people to rationally and conceptually frame the inferiority of women.

Besides of having adverse effects on women's style of life, religion and culture have imposed restriction on the positive roles that women could have performed. Their development has been limited by traditional practices such as female genital mutilation and tattooing on the body for sexual purposes, which forced women to get married early (Bosena, 2004).

The following faiths which I mention in chapter three, taught that women are innately inferior in comparison to men. In my view, this cannot be accepted. This is the reason why I said gender disparity has a religious foundation. Religion encourages discrimination between genders, and this contradicts the Resolution that UN has passed regarding inequalities between genders. Here I did not simply compare and contrast UN and religion, but I try to show religion have its own impact on the discrimination of women.

The scriptures and conventional cultures seem to dictate that men and boys should be administrators, figures of authority; autonomous, forceful and strong personalities; whereas women and girls should remain to be supporters, loyal, dependent. (Berman, 2015). The Biblical interpretation has been the basis for all anti-woman beliefs. The idea of female subordination goes across the Holy Bible as well as Quran. Such scriptures violets the demands people have for the maintenance of equality between men and women as proclaimed in the United Nations conventions that include the UN Universal Declaration of fundamental rights. Here what I want to explain is the wrong religious interpretation remains obstacle to attain equality between genders.

1.2 Statements of Problems

I consider here the research gap there are yet no further studies through religious interpretation in discrimination of women. So, to fulfill this gap I conducted the research.

1.3 Research Objectives

The research attempts to challenge the imaginary and insufficient claim made by the large number of dominant religious personalities and their wrong interpretation that women are naturally inferior to men. The sociocultural terms, political, and financial gaps among men and women are created by humans. Therefore, caused by a number of elements, including carefully chosen ideas of differentiation in religions, bias and prejudices caused major negative effects on the views and habits of individuals and society.

Hence, the research's primary objectives are to: (1) examine the major religions to find chapters that shows prejudice; (2) investigate the thoughts of famous thinkers and indicate that they endorse gender bias; and (3) demonstrate the obstacles faced by various attempts to eliminate prejudice against women, and (4) analyzing the Ethiopians view on gender. Here also I will try to show why Ubuntu does not bring desirable changes in minimizing gender discrimination and how cultural values and proverbs influence status on images of women; (5) try to analyze the contribution of Zera Yacob to gender issues. This thesis will investigate religious, social and cultural discrimination utilizing the concept of discontinuing as its basis for theory.

1.4 Significance of the Research

In the struggle towards gaps between genders, this paper provides a contribution. It rejects religious and social beliefs that men are by nature superior to women as hypothetical. The importance of this work in promoting movements is to motivate for those who opposing gender bias and the essential role of gender concerns.

The researcher believes that this research could be significance in informing different social groups regarding the present image of women in African and Ethiopian society. So in return, the responsible bodies are likely to benefit from this feedback as undertaken on the constructive programs aiming at the attainment of the legally planed women empowering.

This research is useful since it gives the image of women in the Ethiopian society, likely during the previous years and currently, for many of the social and political institutions that have an interest issues affecting women.

1.5 Limitation of the Research

The main restrictions related in doing this study was time limitation and lack of inaccessibility of resources. Furthermore, the researcher's time constraint was the most limitation for conducting further research on the issue and acquiring information.

1.6 Methodology of the Research

For the success of this research, the researcher employed library based methodology of theoretical research. In case, the researcher emphasized on theoretical insights of women's social status through the critical examination of religious interpretations and cultural views of a society. This critical examination is accomplished through primary and secondary sources

Primary sources are the idea of thinkers and philosophers. Relevant and appropriate secondary sources are collected from books, reports, published and unpublished materials, including MA thesis.

1.7 Organization of the Research

This paper is organized into five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction of the research, objective of the research, significance of the research, research problems, research methodology, and limitation of the research. The second chapter deals with the discourses of philosophers which have delivered on the positions of women in a given society. The third chapter is all about the status and the roles of women as viewed from religious and cultural perspectives. This chapter has collected and organized the biased and prejudiced scriptures against women to bring to light how they are used and interpreted by religious teachers.

This chapter examines the scriptures of the two selected religions (Christianity and Islam). There are many aspects of these religions which could be considered as discriminatory but it is not possible to analyze all of them in this study. It is also important to note that there is limited literature regarding the issues in questions. Chapter four examines about the exploring of gender dynamics. It also discusses the limitation of the Ubuntu philosophy to bring the subject to a desired level in solving the gender gaps, and the contributions of Zera yacob made to the issues of gender, proverbs and their subordination, The fifth chapter is about conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter Two

2. The Discourses of Philosophers on the Issues of Gender

Injustice is a man-made chronic problem of man in the world. “The world is full of all kind of injustice. Some injustices involve one individual unjustifiably harming another individual; in this case, when the culprit is caught, he or she is punished and may be required to provide some form of compensation to the victim. What do we do when a society as a whole through its laws and institutions is systemically unjust to an entire group within its own borders?” (Grcic, 1989). One kind of injustice that mankind has been suffering from is gender discrimination or gender inequality. It is tricky pain to both to the culprit and victim since the caused pain is open to the women and secretive to the man.

The key concept of this study is the issue of gender discrimination. Gender refers to a male or a female sex when considered with reference to the difference they have in social and cultural setting. In actual fact gender is not what human beings are born with rather it is a socially constructed concept designating the characteristics of women or men, girls or boys. It influences how people perceive themselves, one another, and how they act, react and interact.

What about gender discrimination? What does it mean? Gender discrimination refers to relations of people in which someone is unequally treated because of her or his sexual identity. It takes place when a person is ill-treated or unequally or negatively treated just on the basis of gender difference. It is also known as gender inequality, which means the unfair or unequal treatment of individuals based on their sexual identity. Although today gender discrimination is illegal it still keeps on critically ruining humanity in general and women in particular. When it is severe or pervasive gender discrimination creates a hostile environment.

It is confusing that so many philosophers including St. Augustine, Aristotle, Locke, Hobbes, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Aquinas and Plato worked hard but remained unsuccessful to show that women are truly inferior. These philosophers are currently under heavy criticisms from feminists. They wrote to reject the undesirable qualities that men attributed to women and the criticisms endorsed by some philosophers, and along with these they demanded gender equality in the political, economic and legal procedures. Marx and Engles contrastingly to the above-mentioned philosophers who strongly stood on the sides of women to show that they are equal in their status with men.

A review of each of these philosophers is beyond the scope of this study. Despite this, an extensive review and selection shall be followed, so that the vital issues and works are not missed. First of all, Plato made a balance case for wardenship and leadership in *The Republic*— but only in his utopian city. However, this is absurd as the rest of the text treated women unjustly, grouping them with slaves and kids.

2.1 Philosophers – Adhering to Male Supremacy

The idea of women and men being equal according to Plato is unfounded. Given that his writings supported the Greek stereotypes about women, is clear that he is against women. Greek men generally view women as physically weak, morally incapable of exercising selfcontrol, and irrational. The case being this, it is difficult to find honesty in Plato's hesitant call for equal chances in schooling, wardenship and authority since women are simply slaves of their emotions. And so according to the Greek men emotions are contrary to reason, which is reason is only dominated by men.

This is particularly evident when it comes to his methodical claim to the "city state" and a philosopher king (not Queen) who governs it. It is clear that women seem to remain outside the place in the Platonic state. Thus, women tend to be considered by Plato as unreasonable individuals, and as the "misbegotten male" in the Thomistic stand point. Plato takes care to refer to wardens or guardians as "he" and not "she" throughout the text.

Plato's more basic argument that women were formed from the souls of the most evil and absurd men, stands in contrary to the comparatively contemporary belief that men and women should have equal chances for schooling and leadership. The argument, indicates that women are naturally irrational and unacceptable. For me this is an unfounded in and of itself sine no convincing proof is provided to support it. Thus, even as he supported equality among genders, he still had the deep and persistent attitude that women are innately inferior to men. Having these points of views is incompatible with one another.

Yet, it is not difficult to recognize why precisely Plato accepted these two opposing viewpoints of women. In *The Republic*, he substituted the family unit with a collaborative. Women and children got common property! Women, from this stand point, are essentially and subtly presented as things for bearing children. The way they shift from this 'object-like' social standing to equally be treated with men, is not clear. Plato faced the challenge of giving women an obligation to play demolished. Consequently, he thinly mentioned that

women and men are equal. On the other hand, in Book V, Plato's insensitivity to inequality committed by women is visible (Phillips, 1987).

The first philosopher to give a thorough analysis of gender distinctions was Aristotle, whose intellectual and philosophical principles will be addressed in this section. It is reasonable to apply Aristotle's criticism of Plato's intellectual duality of matter and form as the nature of separate entities to his criticism of Plato's ideas concerning gender distinctions (Cvetković, 2021). The Aristotelian view point was uninformed by science. The reality is that woman provides the remaining half of the 46 chromosomes that make up the embryo; the sperm only contributes 23 (or half). Aristotle's claim that women merely provided "blood" to the embryo is therefore unjustified by science.

He also believed that women are not able in education or endeavors. They are considered to be highly emotional and unreasonable, which hinders them from being capable to rationalize their way to the essence of things. In this instance, Aristotle asserts—though without proof—that women's intellect are not suitable for deep philosophical research. Instead, Greek women's patterns of thought were influenced by the socialization they experienced.

Actually, even aristocratic ladies were restricted from entering public spaces in Greek society. Their marriage to nobility for giving birth to males gave them the opportunity to gain the status of nobility. Concerning the situation of women status in ancient Athens, (Ozkay 1981) states as follows: in Athens, ladies of distinction seldom appear in public. Nobility ladies spend their leisure time entertaining guests and taking care of their homes. Their main obligations included raising the family, taking care of the home, and attending to their spiritual obligations. The concept is that women were considered by the Greeks as nothing else than instruments of reproduction and pleasure. The male-dominated system kept women out of the Agoras and educational institutions due to their low rank. Women are noticeably under-represented in the Socratic conversations, which speaks much about the Greek male supremacist view—particularly their intellectual ability.

He considers that women are the only holders of rightful descendants, ignoring that they should also serve as guardians. Plato is still caught in the tangle of his Greek childhood and socialization, which valued "quite, house hold thrift, marital faithfulness" beyond everything else in a woman (Ntabo 1991). The total absence of women in Plato's Socratic dialogues serves as evidence for this argument. It is possible to understand that this is a reflection of

Plato's view that women are unable to participate in the sort of philosophical discourse that is logical, sound, and deliberate.

Ntabo (1991) states, that Plato did not oppose the subordination of women; instead, he sought equalities between men and women primarily to improve governmental efficiency. In *The Republic*, he discusses justice with Glaucon, however he fails to recognize and oppose prejudice against women as unfairness. Even though, Plato's support for women's being equal with male is progressive and sharply, it remains at odds with Greek patriarchal structure and hence it is not a reliable argument.

Yet, Plato deserves respect for stating it; women should be treated like human beings and have access to opportunities of leadership and schooling. This gives him the upper hand over Aristotle who was convinced that women are incidental beings who are in no way suitable to be compared to logical men. According to Aristotle, women are the outcome of physiological failures at the time of birth (Fortenbough, 1975). This describes his fundamental theory regarding women. This argument is expressed more briefly in his remark about women's status.

The distinction of the psychological characters of men and women is most clear, when it concerns humankind. Women are more emotional than men, more easily shifted to tears, more dissatisfied, more sociable, more inclined to give up and less confidence than men, more deficient in respect for one self or shame, more dishonest in speech, more deceitful, more shrinking, more difficult to encourage to act, and require less food (p.608a-b). Considering men Aristotle be lauded the good qualities of men, saying that men are more brave and empathetic in that they are always ready to give assistance (p. 608b).

In contrast to what is stated above, not all men are brave and not all women are fearful. Aristotle had no justification to support such ideas that promote male chauvinism since there are just as many courageous women as there are timid men. As stated by Aristotle, only men have skill, knowledge, and wisdom. However certain scholars interchangeably use the word man to refer to human being, Aristotle clearly differentiate between man and woman in Book IX, so this is not the case. He can only be recognized, therefore, as restricting women of such qualities. Aristotle rejects the previously mentioned qualities in women in the *Nichomechian Ethics*. This is indefensible and unfair.

The unfortunate reality is the Aristotelian tradition demeaning female continued exists, both inside and outside Greece. This is emphasized by Haris Livas in her study, "Women in Greece:

Feminist gains in the struggle for social equality": Women were seen as second-class, weaker citizens who should submit themselves to men in every aspect.

In every case, Aristotle was hardly the only casualty of the prevalent typical masculine socialization that took place in Greece. The Greek judge Demosthenes also wrote the following regarding marriage: An espouse is a woman we use, not only to have legitimate kids, for us, but also to be loyal guardian of all our assets at house (Ozkay, 1981). Instance, the word "us" refers to men who possesses wealth. It's obvious that the woman is seen as inferior spouse. They are simply the community of men's property. They are just instruments for reproduction.

As stated by Ozkay (1981), the permission of the girls did not have to be taken prior marriage. He says that boys were permitted to decide their own choices whereas girls had to gain permissions from their parents before wedding. This clearly contradicts the false beliefs held by the Greeks that girls (or women) lacked the mental and intellectual capacity and ability to make their decisions on their own. This additional point emphasizes that girl's lack value as persons. In precise words, it is to mean that a girl is seen as a bride-wealthy child who would inherit from her parents in marriage.

In the words of Thomas Aquinas, naturally women are highly emotional, sensuous, immoral, and illogical. He views them as "misbegotten male" which is unjustified, since genetic theory has demonstrated that conception occurs when a male and female reproductive cell mix. Man is linked with the intellect, spirit, and logic, whereas woman is linked with the flesh, body, and emotion, as stated by Philo of Alexandria in Berman, 2015. Man and woman are the same as the divine-material, holy-unholy, superior-inferior, disciplined-sensual, and others. Therefore, it is suggested that people adopt manly reasoning based on courage and leave the feeble feminine with the desire of perception of things.

Aquinas, the other religious father, accepted the Greek idea proposed by Aristotle that the male seed is superior and possesses all life power. To him, the female is something faulty and misbegotten as a consequence either of the change in external factors or the disability of the active from her own. He arrives to the conclusion that since the short coming of her physical

state's, her soul is also inadequate, making her mind unfit to make sound decisions and her will liable to break easily. How is it expected that the patriarchal man will relate to such inferior being on an equal foundation? (Berman, 2015). For the sake of this argument, Aquinas' theory of human procreation can be rejected as illogical based on this brief description of conception.

Even St. Augustine did not exempt women from wrath of nature. Also, he argued that women were created to be loyal to men by nature.

The work of Ntabo (1991), citing Plamanantz (1963), Thomas Hobbes strongly claimed in his *The Leviathan* that human are equal after the process of holding power and kill one another in the state of being due to their inherent near equivalence, wisdom and power. Women are disregarded in the "Leviathan Scheme," Unexpectedly, Hobbes's description of equality is limited to male equality. To him, women are innately less valuable than men.

Similarly to those previously mentioned, he tried to defend and uphold women's subjugation in his lifetime and beyond. It seems that Augustine was more concerned to show the inferiority of women to men. This shouldn't come as a surprise as Hobbes advocates for patriarchy. Although being a work of fiction, *The Leviathan* subtly encourages man as the only one who is shown in this manner. The objective of research is really the male aspect of society, while the focus of investigation is seems to be all over views of human nature. Perhaps women are ignored or assumed to be naturally less violent than men. Women are permanently excluded from this Hobbesian system. Notably, the idea that men are the sole human beings is unjustifiable.

The theory proposed by Immanuel Kant, which rested on the acquisition of knowledge based on a priori ideas, is known as the primary notions (classes) of understanding—concepts like quality, connection, quantity and classification was misled. He included plurality, unity, and wholeness under quantity. He attributes restriction, limitation, and affirmation to quality. In regards to relationship, he classified the following categories: possibility, actuality, and necessity under modality; accidents, cause-and-effect, and causal reciprocity.

For Kant, these features allowed human minds to actively interpret the outside world rather than simply taking in and storing in memory what is experienced by the senses. As noted by Lavine (1984), Kant argued that they are logically prior to experience, or independent of it. Additionally, Kant claimed that since pure concepts are precondition for experience, they are

eternal and essential; imply that they constitute the foundation for any mind or awareness. It is difficult to understand Kant's argument that women are irrational from this view point unless he agreed to Aquinas' view that women are accidental human beings, "misbegotten male."

Rejecting women's rationality, for Kantian philosophy, is similar to refusing them the mind or its apriori structuring rules. However, if one were to use the Kantian claim, to argue that women are missing the fundamental concepts (categories).. Kant rose in a dominantly masculine focused German society, so that is the reason why he is so unreliable.

As Ntabo (1991) clearly states, the word of Kant ethical theory was based on the equal liberty of people who are logical and strongly associated to this was his opinion that individuals should be viewed as ends in themselves instead of being as a means. Noted differently, individuals should not be regarded like objects. Given this, it is confusing that women were not viewed as beings or as ends in and of themselves. It is unknown why women in Kant's philosophy become means to ends, as this goes clearly against or violates his claim of ethical views. It is challenging to figure out Kant's argument for saying that a woman should be her husband's humble servant after he had argued for marital equality.

Kant was interested in adhering to his cultural norms on family and marriage, regardless of whether it was going beyond his principles, due to the manner in which families has been set up in his age. This is not because he thought that women are innately inferior to men, but instead since he intentionally dismissed women in order to support patriarchy.

One thing is sure: Kant deliberately left women in his understanding, women's character is feeling, while men's quality is reasoning. It is clear that Kant linked them as passionate, sentimental, and immoral. He neglected to perfect them reasoning, intelligence, or the capacity to recognize ideas that are rarefied, philosophical, and intellectual. These features are posed by all individuals, with the exception of severe mental disorder. It is appropriate that discussion topics were regular ladies rather than mentally disturbed women.

Immanuel Kant mainly agreed to the concept, stating that women are not able to giving much in the public domain since they do not have a civic character. As stated by to Jean Jacques Rousseau, men are inherently leaders while women are best suited for maintaining care of their family because men and women possess distinct qualities (Nicolaidis, 2015). We immediately make it obvious that any dismissal of women's ability for reasoning is entirely

speculative and cannot be supported by evidence or justification. They ought to be valued, in the words of logical positivists, as pointless words that belong to the flame.

Since David Hume recognized that socialization serves a crucial part in determining an individual's opinions, thoughts, both beneficial and detrimental desires, stereotypes, and prejudices he saw nothing wrong with the low position that women were given in his society. Hume presents appropriate claim in his work; some thinkers criticize female traits with great anger, assuming they have revealed common misunderstanding by suggesting that there is no natural basis for the external modesty we gain from the actions, expressions, and attire of the virtuous.

Hume expresses the following argument elsewhere: Men are naturally predisposed by society to think that their kids belong to them. Currently, if we investigate at the anatomy of the human body, we will discover that the concept of generation passes from the men to the women during sexual intercourse. The substantial gap among the two genders responsibilities and levels of schooling comes from this physical and irrelevant finding (Ibid). Obviously informing of this social errors, he defended society by claiming that women should be punished for disloyalty but men should not. Here comes the injustice: rather than criticizing society for unfairly mistreating women Hume made the innocent women the culprit. In spite of this, he is in favor of the male dominated system of governance, which views women as the customary, legal, and spiritual property of men. This is a quick-fix betrayal of intellectualism. Hume accepted the societal view held by his contemporaries that women are sensual and boring, making them susceptible to seduction and promiscuity.

Furthermore, Hume argued that a woman's mind is "ductile," or subject to influence, suggesting that the minds of men and women differed innately. Thus, Hume possessed the illogical belief that women are innately inferior and that there is innate inequality among the genders. To illustrate his belief by showing the basic distinctions that exist among men and women that go beyond biological sex destinations, Hume used the following traits related to femininity: virginity, humility, apathy, shyness, sensuality, jealousy, and timidity. It is clear from these characteristics that Hume came to believe that women are the inferior species. A number of religions, especially Confucianism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Christianity emphasis these traits as the legitimate qualities of God-approved femininity.

Hume was correct when he claimed that socialization determined how women noticed themselves and how each class of sex considered the other. In another context, the point is that masculinity is immediately accounted for the stereotype, prejudice, genetic traits, and other things that each sex has against the other, in addition to the superiority and inferiority feelings that are seen in both sexes. But, we can criticize Hume for his failure to criticize the religious, cultural and societal views that blame women for being the subjects of virginity, for blind fidelity and submission, instead of cultivating a sense of confidence in them, in encouraging them become independent, in empowering them know and rationalize things.

The standards of philosophy or its principles strongly demand that views, idea, and habits should not be just accepted by many people, but also critically investigated for evaluating their reliability, soundness, and rational clarification. If these standards are not fulfilled, the principles, views, or customs should be neglected because they are absurd.

Hume rejected these fundamental requirements in the pursuit of philosophy or philosophical endeavors, for accepting the unequal value systems put on women without questions or reflection. Concerning the subordination of women, he confused himself once more by putting it on their inherent traits and again on the experience able patriarchal socialization. In reality there are no verified innate mental distinctions between men and women due to the difference in sexual class, as history and science have indicated. Intellectual differences that are exclusive and in conflict cannot exist in general; only individual differences can. Men and women equally deserve intellectual activities; nothing is beyond their abilities.

When it comes to Friedrich Nietzsche and Jeremy Bentham, we see that these philosophers made the argument that women were not supposed to have the capacity to serve by holding positions of power (authority) and should not be seen in public. Nietzsche held the view that women are naturally inferior to men, even though there is no sufficient evidence to confirm this untrue belief, hence he thought it was absurd to emancipate women. Furthermore, for women to be simply emotional, he gave no actual and rationally verified proof to support what he said.

One cannot disagree with Ntobo (1991) that Nietzsche was trapped in a complex of patriarchal authoritarianism and male chauvinism. This made him to largely adopt an anti-women position for his failure to develop an independent and objective view point on the understanding of gender gap; because he imprisoned in a system intentionally established to

subjugate women. Thus, the only thing to be gained from Nietzsche's disparaging remarks on women is a tonnage of meaninglessness.

As stated O'Faolain (1979), Hegel thought that women acquire knowledge more by experiencing than really through their potential capacity. This was the way he defined and explained the caliber of women. In my suggestion, Hegel asserted that, boyhood is only acquired by series thinking and technical effort. This is to suggest that: women can only acquire knowledge by inference or by some other form of osmosis—that is, by experiencing it. Like

Kant, Hegel rejected women the capacity for rarefied, mediation, analytic and intellectual thought—a talent that all men appear to have, regardless of their mental state. This is simply a masculine arrogance and a sense of supremacy.

Hegel had perversely numerous philosophical perspectives from which to select his approach. These included German Romanticism, French Rationalism, British Empiricism, and the philosophy of enlightenment. When studying German Romanticism, Lavine (1984) highlighted: according Romantics, the freedom of human individuality rather than logic—is what constitutes final truth and worth in human beings. The will demands achieving ones, which it can only discover in the search of endless. It aspires to hold everything—nature, the past, and culture together.

Thus, it was simple to reject the German ego in the Romanticist meaning women who were limited by gender norms to household duties. Hegel truly rejected the ability to choose, oneself, and rational thought to all women by supporting Romanticism, which rejected enlightenment—a philosophy restricted to and governed by rationality, mathematical concepts, and reason—even though he supported the same for men. In general, he ignored the uniqueness, intellect, and personality of women.

Yet by admitting such ambiguous generalization, Hegel violated norms of evidence and reason in preference of hypothesis that are totally un-philosophical, all the while simultaneous drawing judgments on the distinctions between women and men. Relying on a random for a decision is just to reject the deductive standards of logic. One requires being able to give adequate proof to support the argument that women are less intellectual than men. Hegel's charge against women miss this in particular, consequently such assertions cannot be accepted.

Thus, it is ludicrous, irrational, cruel, and racist to say that all women make decisions based more on emotion and pity than on logic. This is putting them unsuitable even for social interactions, let alone for being observed at political places because of the tempting and dangerous character some philosophers believed them to have. Contradictory too many philosophers who wrongly portrayed women, the Feminist Movements have shown throughout those women are able to attain all previously recognized male-only duties.

Jean Jacques Rousseau also played a role in his belief that women are innately less intelligent than men. His reason for this is that women are always at home and have restricted capacity for logical thought. Rousseau rejected rules of reason and fact in favor of the role of prejudices and mythological beliefs.

2.2 Philosophers battling for Gender Equality

John Locke clearly claimed that people as human beings cannot be arbitrarily subjected to the will of any power. In support to this position, he is in favor of women being seen subservient to their husbands' authority due to the latter's superior physical and mental power. Locke provided empirical evidence for the stated intellectual advantage of men versus women. Thus, it is sufficient for him to defend the arbitrary subordination of women to men's authority while simultaneously criticizing or denouncing unjust authority in every aspect of it. Locke's opinions are investigated; it is only his rationality that can be deduced from this scenario.

In a work titled "The subjection of women" (1869), stated at the peak of Victorian repression of women, John Stuart Mill came up with a new idea to break the generally accepted belief that women are innately inferior to men. He argued against all the ideas used to damage the characters of women. He rejected them all by claiming that they were clearly fabricated things in certain orders, inappropriate encouragement in the individuals. Here according to Mill why the inferiority of women accepted by many thinkers is simply accepting inferiority by tradition and takes it as appropriate while it is not rational.

Referring to the above quotation, John Stuart Mill strongly argued equality of genders, refuting the unfounded assumptions of many thinkers that women are innately inferior to men. It was in accordance to his utilitarian theory and devotion to unlimited human liberty that he strongly advanced his conviction. He advanced the argument that the liberation of women would immensely benefit mankind beyond the socially constructed gender inequality, that which tends only to makes a large number of individuals unhappy, mainly women.

Enhancing social and private relations to a higher level crucially demands the independence of women. He certainly was convinced that liberating women would tip the ratio towards the direction of positive change over negative, which is what patriarchal social divisions seek to maintain.

In his justifications, Mill advocates morality and justice that the world has yet to recognize as suitable. He made a convincing and a positive case that the founding of society with a vital force to foster a global stability and constructive progress. Although if it might have not been felt or widely recognized for some generations a society based on equality is the only institution that really represents ethical principles.

Mill battled for women's legal rights. His point of view is clearly undoubtedly founded on a belief that every individual has innate value that deserves to be recognized. His core belief was that every individual has the opportunity to fulfill their true potentiality. From a moral understanding as stated by Mill, fairness and kindness should be found on each individual's dignity and worth rather than on their gender. No matter what ever gender might be the case, the objective of an enlightened morality aims to attain personal equality. In order to attain this, Mill correctly pointed out that society must treat men and women similarly, foster and encourage views that are good about women.

Mill understood that gender-based differences have been socially and legally binding. He demanded the removal of such restrictions in order to liberate the minds of individuals from the stereotypes and biases running in the minds of people against women. He noted in his paper "*The Subjection of Women*" (1869). Mill advanced well framed argument for the equality of people before the law. To ensure that women and men are receiving equal treatment, the patriarchal system in which men harm the rights of women ought to be changed.

Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx were both in favor of the equality of women. They employed a historical-materialist approach to investigate the political, social and economic differences existing between men and women. As a consequence, they are marked the starting point of female subjugation in the generation of extra revenue as a consequence of the improvement of productive techniques. As a result, the core of economic output shifted from inside the family structure to outside of it. This took place as the bourgeoisie's ascent to power during the 19th century that resulted the collapse of feudalism.

The Marxian account of the beginnings of the subordination of women is clearly restricted since it is limited to the European context of political, socioeconomic, and evolutionary experiences as well as revolutionary events. It undermines the reality that women face similar challenges not just in Europe alone but also in other continents and regions. Ethnicities or human races might have not gone through equal economic, political and social transformations in the earlier times.

Marxist and social feminism attribute the oppression of women to capitalism, not to gender inequality as natural phenomenon. Capitalists act as the primary beneficiaries of this exploitative system. While radical feminism puts greater emphasis on the raising of children, Marxist and socialist feminism connect the oppression of women to the accumulation of material wealth. It is the mistreatment of female employees for financial advantage (Sibani, 2017).

The Marxists contend that the system of social hierarchy precedes private ownership. Thus, feminists require that gender classification be recognized as an important social difference. The fundamental values of patriarchy which dictate the systems of male supremacy and inferiority of female in any culture sustain this category. Socialization serves as important part in the implementation of this view point, which is then reinforced by formal channels such as literature, family, education, and church. Thus, the central issue of the quest for freedom of women is the patriarchal mind set.

Although the wealthiest women still work outside home, as stated by Ntabo (1991) it is still a field dominated by men. Actually, Ntabo argues that since extra-domestic duties have put women in a triangular role as mothers and domestic workers, it has only served to increase the misery of the working women.

The claim made towards Marxian examination of gender inequality is that communism, despite allowing women the workforce, unable to force women to gain their autonomy so long as the idea of patriarchal order is still prevailing and difficult and the family system remains as a means of the continued existence. Nevertheless, employment for women is essential to their quest for equality since it strengthens women financially and contributes to independence.

2.3 Feminists

The vast and varied movement known as feminism promotes women's equality and rights.

People that strive to solve issues of social justice, women's rights, and gender injustice can be classified as feminists.

2.3.1 Essential Ideas in Feminism

1. **Equality and Equity:** Feminism promotes equal rights and opportunities for both genders, stressing that all people, regardless of gender, should have equal access to resources, rights, and opportunities.
2. **Intersectionality:** Developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw, this idea emphasises how other social identities (including ability, sexual orientation, class, and racism) interact with gender to produce distinct experiences of advantage or discrimination.
3. **Patriarchy:** Feminism challenges patriarchal systems, which are social institutions that uphold gender inequity and give preference to male domination. The goal of feminists is to undermine these structures.
4. **Gender Roles:** Traditional gender roles that specify how people should act according to their gender are contested by feminism. Beyond what society expects, it promotes the freedom to express oneself.
5. **Sexuality and Reproductive Rights:** Because they understand that having control over one's body is essential to gender equality, feminists strive for sexual autonomy, reproductive rights, and universal healthcare.
6. **Violence against Women:** Feminism promotes laws and social reforms to shield people from gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, assault, and domestic abuse.

Here are some key figures who have significantly contributed to feminist philosophy and the discourse surrounding gender equality.

Mary Wollstonecraft: Often regarded as one of the first feminist philosophers, Wollstonecraft's work "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792) argued for women's education and rationality, asserting that women are entitled to the same rights as men.

Simone de Beauvoir: In "The Second Sex" (1949), de Beauvoir explored the construction of womanhood and argued that women have historically been defined in relation to men. She emphasized the need for women to assert their identity and freedom.

Simone de Beauvoir: Possibly the most important existentialist thinker about women, de Beauvoir's groundbreaking book, "The Second Sex," explores how women have historically been subjugated by society and how their identities are constructed. "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman," she famously said, highlighting the fact that gender is a social construct rather than a biological fact.

Betty Friedan: Although more known for her activism, Friedan's book "The Feminine Mystique" (1963) challenged the traditional roles of women in society and sparked the second wave of feminism in the United States, advocating for women's rights and equal opportunities.

These philosophers and thinkers have laid the groundwork for contemporary discussions on gender equality, each contributing unique perspectives that have influenced feminist theory and activism across generations. Their works continue to inspire ongoing debates about gender roles, rights, and social justice today.

Chapter Three

3. Religions and the Status of Women

3.1 The Genesis of Religions and the Rise of Female Description

The first myth of creation in Genesis suggests that God created Adam from mud and Eve from his bones (Gen:1: 21). This caused a gap between genders since the interpretation of the religious teachers supported that a male Christian believed that women are inferior. Christian feminists have suggested that this story reflected Adam's and Eve's destiny - that God created both Equal but the interpretation by the religious teachers is not like the Christian feminists rather in reverse.

Most of the researchers of gender gap, starting from the ancient time up until today have witnessed that they believed that women are innately inferior to men. Without good reason and evidence immoral behavior, weakness, unreasonableness, emotionality, sensuality, and mental illness are attributed to women. As a consequence, several thinkers pushed women to appreciate men's dominance and authority over the latter by submitting themselves before them, as slaves to their superiors.

All religions such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Confucianism, and others were dominated by men. These religions have stamped historical marks on things such as geographical expansions, explorations, trans world slave trades, as well as the colonial system of rule all of which made women to feel inferior. In other words, they fully supported the subordination of women.

A strict search and study of the justifications, however, stated to support the claims of the innate and consecrated women's devalued character, discovered that all the claims lacked reliability, reason, and logical clarification. They are, therefore, pointless discourses, because they are just intended and designed to serve the male dominated ideas and at the same time to sustain the subordination of women.

Without a doubt, the opinions of popular thinkers and spiritual leaders are totally against the United Nations legislation, rules, and imaginative thinking that advocates for the equality of women. Here I did not want to compare religious leaders and thinks with UN legislation, but to show the result of the wrong attitude and wrong interpretation remains still obstacles to attain gender equality. These thoughts boosted prejudiced views and attitudes, while

numerous attempts were made to eliminate such misconceptions and traits as initial step into reaching equality for all, irrespective of gender.

This justification is clearly opposed and contradicted by Gen: 1:27, which stated; “so God created man in his own image “if he created man in the image of him so he created man and woman equal. But the interpretation is not like this rather it is stated that as Eve was Creator later and this miss interpretation influences the believer’s attitude towards women.

Feminists claim that these prejudicial views of women are unreasonable claim offer men unjust advantages and rights over women. The effect of this continuing prejudice against women deepened and consolidated the degradation of women.

3.2 Christianity and Islam

In this chapter I will try to show to what extent the religious wrong interpretations affect the status of women. My focal point here is not a direct criticism of the dogma of the two religions but the wrong interpretations in the religions. I selected only two religions (Christian and Islamic) which are widely practiced. I think these two religions more discriminate women in their interpretations and practices than the other religions. These two religions are the ones that I relatively claim to know more than the others.

As I said earlier my aim here is not to criticize the dogma but to criticize the wrong interpretation of the religious teachers. Religious leaders consider that dogma (Quran/Bible) as unedited – because of which they interpret as they want or as they like. Most of the chapters in the scriptures are interpreted wrongly with regard to women. In the texts of the religions there are some sorts of reflections on women as naturally inferior.

Here I use statements given in the two religions as examples. My aim is to criticize how the religious leaders, teachers and preachers misinterpret and mistranslate the messages of the religious texts to the followers; and what kind of attitudes these creates and what kind of messages they convey to women. As a result women generally consider themselves as inferior and men as superior. The wrong interpretations given by the religious teachers are more challenging to women for accepting or denying their inferiority than what is written in the Bible or Quran.

The issue of accepting or rejecting their inferiority creates ambivalence in women. In every chapter there are statements that seem to make gender dipartites but my reflection focuses on

the interpretation that creates more illusions among genders. In these two religions I saw that there is wrong interpretation in the Bible and Quran by the religious teachers of both religions. So everybody understands that Quran and Bible are dogma and unedited; and hence no one can reflect on and defend the religious teachers. The believers and attendants are expected to simply listen and forward the idea as it is presented to them. This is the sticky point to avoid the issues of inferiority and superiority complex among genders.

3.3 Christian Religion and the Status of Women

Honestly women practically face discrimination almost in every religion practiced in the world. Indeed the nature of this discrimination varies solely from one religion to the other. According to the teachings of each African church, women endure discrimination in various ways. In mosques and Churches, for example, women have no right to take on positions of authority which demand them to give speech in front of the crowd. In Rwafa (2016) scriptures like 1 Corinthians 14:34, which allocate women to supportive duties rather than leadership roles, support this contention. Religion; moreover, this undermines women's ability to hold leadership roles or religious authority

Today, within the frame work of the society, all world religions support the social superiority of men. Yet, women are more likely than men to engage in religious activities. Investigations have analyzed that the growth of individual faiths, mainly Islam, show that the rise of the so called mature religions has had a negative impact on women's place in the society. Moreover, according Nešpor (2008) as cited in Kingovora and Havlicek(2015), religious customs and bias may represent masculine traits that pervade all the religions of the world communities. Men are always generally believed as founders of religions, whereas women mainly are recognized for their roles as mothers, particularly when raising sons. The presence of woman is more important at home than it is in public places or religious ceremonies.

Yet, the Hebrew term for "Adam" is simply human beings, not the name of a man. Adam didn't possess an attribute of gender at first. Consequently, gender disparities rather than the creation of Eve was what brought womanhood into the world. Man and woman emerged from neutral entities regarding gender human being known as "Adam" (Patu and Schru, 2017).

Religious teachers taught boys and girls right from the first day of their birth that they have different traits regarding their gender. As Berman (2015) stated, boys and men are supposed

to be leaders, authority figures, independent, strong and aggressive; while girls and women are to be followers, obedient, dependent.

Each religion has its own frameworks, promotes relatively distinctive values, and draws on its own historical and cultural foundations. Since each of the major world religions has a different impact on women's status, we should consider the following questions: to what degree do religions influence women's status? I do not undermine the positive interpretations found in some religions such as protestant and catholic that encourages women in permitting to some extent exercise leadership and authority, although it is not enough for them to actualize their potential capacity.

When we ask to what extent religion discriminates women? We guess that it has highly affected the attitude of women and that of the society in all religions. This can easily be understood the actual roles they play and from the social positions they have in the reality of the society they live in. It is obvious that religion, culture, growth or development and lifestyle have major impacts in the establishment of gender roles. As Sibani (2017) noted; all world religions today maintain male social dominance within a social structure. However, women are more likely to engage in religious activities.

The male gender is always seen as the founder of a religion, while women are primarily appreciated for their roles as mothers, particularly when raising sons. She has more of her presence in the home and less of it in public places or religious ceremonies. Although the actual state of women in religion is more complex the practical participation and leadership in the vital exercise of religion is very less. Due to the male dominated culture of the society in which these beliefs arose and the culture which ultimately hindered some of the advances in women's status sparked by new religions, women's voices have seldom been heard throughout the history of religions.

All major world religions upheld women's dignity and their major role in raising families, with particular focus on their roles as mothers and wives. This is the reason why this portion examines the poor treatment of women in spiritual organizations, showing the troubling facts that women frequently come across and inside the houses of religions. As Kihuha (2024) stated that, the fact that women are treated within these churches contrast sharply, the ideals of spiritual equality, as an example, women's role and power are limited and depended upon the patriarchal interpretations of religions.

In another context, the spiritual places devalue women's humanity, and this is caused by the way Bible/Quran is traditionally translated. As an instance, certain African churches have mistreated women within their ranks by interpreting their holy scriptures in a patriarchal way. It consists of the selective use of scriptural verses that promote the role of gender and keep women out of positions of authority within the church, such as 1 Timothy 2:11–15 and 1 Corinthians 14:33–35.

Another method used for undermining women's humanity in the context of religion is through disparities in gender for the positions of authority. The fact that women are tending to be excluded from the positions of authority in the African churches serves as evidence of this. Several religions sustain the overwhelming male-dominated spiritual management and the decision-making system that limits women to assisting position. In the context of the church, prejudice towards women in spiritual matters is another manner in which women's dignity is degraded. Women are usually prohibited from taking part in religious functions or ceremonies in the large number of African religious organizations, which perpetuates the idea that their spirituality is less valuable to women.

The word “humanity” in the Holy Quran belongs to both male and female individuals who have divine roots. People can only be completely recognized as men or women if they stay loyal to the human destiny of doing out the commands of the divine. Before God, each gender is as equal as the other, and if once one of them bodily passes away, each is judged independently by Almighty (Nicolaidis, 2015).

The faith community usually mutes the protests of women who are willing to question the standards, which encourage male supremacy in the leadership roles and prevent women from actively engaging in the same religious practices or ceremonies.

Simply stated, women who seek to advance equality between men and women in the spiritual environment often face criticism and exclusion. The voices of women that are being muffled do not only serve to keep up the subjugation of women in the religious institutions, but also to convey a dangerous messages to other women in the society – the message is that it is inappropriate for women to stand against bias and prejudice in gender.

Furthermore, prejudice based on gender inside the faithful society can perpetuate negative assumption and biases that may influence how women are viewed and handled. The Circle of the worried African Women theological scholars was the cutting edge of emphasizing gender

biases that devalue women inside the church. This implies that women who encounter discrimination in the church will also face extensive wrong interpretations of religious consequences (Kihuha, 2024). This shows that when an attempt is made by the concerned to protest these discriminatory attitudes; it failed due to the existence of acceptance as it is, for a long time.

In spite of the patriarchal mind set of the communities in which these faiths arose—attitudes that eventually crashed some of the improvements in the place of women suggested by these new religions—women's voices are seldom included in the history of religions. The majorities of the world religions encourages the value of women and acknowledge their essential function in their families, with specific focus on their duties as mothers and wives. But, they do not support complete equality with men as an act of liberty.

The most rigorous limitations are placed on women during their menstrual and pregnancy phases, when they are restricted from handling the Quran/bible or entering mosques and churches. Religious teachers and prayers acknowledge the value of women inside the home but not outside of it. Due to this they did not support equality of gender.

As a consequence, the gender roles in the world religions are extremely diverse or different from one another. Despite, the presence of women in certain religions, who were effective in having their normal perspectives endorsed or men who promoted equal inclusiveness of women into religious events, women's impact on the development of spiritual standards and customs is quietly limited. It has to be recognized that there is a distinction between generally accepted restrictions, that address the equal status of men and women before God stated by the particular religion, and practical conditions, which concerned daily duties of women in the status of societies and circle of faith (Kngorova and Havilcek, 2015).

Moreover, it is essential to point out the wide range of worldwide religions so as to balance the overall findings by recognizing this difference in belief system. If we didn't, we would tend to prejudicial belief system.

Religion undermines the contribution that women make in every aspects of life to enhance the wellbeing of society. Sibani (2017) asserts in support of this; in particular, religion when it pertains to particular responsibilities, women are prejudiced against in the Christian religion. The apostle Paul makes it very clear that women were to remain calm in the church.

Especially in situations in which they have significant contributions to make to the betterment of mankind, this criticism hinders women.

The primary doctrine of Christian believers considers that gender is that a woman always occupies the lowest position in the ladder of power: "The head of every woman is a man; the head of every man is Jesus and the head of Jesus is God"(Bishkek,2018).

Men and women are equally considered in God's eyes, but due to their varied physiological appearance, they are believed to have distinct functions in the physical world. Men's main responsibilities are to care for and guard the family because they are seen as being physically more powerful, more threatening, and more publicly engaged. Women are often given home tasks, including raising kids and managing home, because of the nice personal traits they are assumed to possess.

A woman is obligated to obey her spouse while he must appreciate and admire her as a mother and wife and contact her before making judgments of his own. The appreciation here is only to manage the home properly and not constantly in every aspects of life. The main obstacle for challenging the attitude of the religious authorities is that most of the religious institutions did not recognize their limitations. In European Journal of Women's Studies (2001 and 2011), for many years, the discussion within religions was all about the objection to the achievement of female equality has grown more intense because of the politicization of Islam in many ways and the disagreements among the authorities of Christian leadership. Actually, certain spiritual organizations have seen the absence of women from leadership authorities as a sign that their beliefs promote disparities in gender.

The basic idea of my argument is that there is no correct interpretation of religious texts; and this remains as root cause of discrimination against women in addition to cultural practices and societal attitudes. As claimed by Elledge (2021), scriptures of religions are continued to be (re) interpreted wrongly. Men generally control the formation of spiritual understanding in masculine attitude and determine which interpretations are find suitable.

Spiritual concepts on equal treatment of women and gender advancement may not always appear reflected in interpretations. Each major faith aspect has a feminist component and/or promotes the campaign equality for women. Development programs ought to emphasize in changing culture of spiritual knowledge and encourage the democratic suppressed feminist voices and interpretations.

My contention is that Christian teachers and leaders accept and share the discriminatory attitudes of the religions towards women. To strength my idea I take the assertion of Freitag (2012) stated that the framework of the Christian faith can be discriminatory to women. Religious groups may deliver incorrect messages to women, which might influence how they would see their own selves, trustworthiness, confidence, and abilities. When one looks about the responsibilities that women perform in religious societies, adverse messages become apparent. Women may not be able to act as church leaders or cannot take part in some particular religious ceremonies. Additionally, within some religions, traditional stereotypes regarding gender are actively reinforced by spiritual teachings and spiritual leaders.

In the Christian religion women get prejudiced in some other specific religions when it pertains to particular duties. The apostle Paul makes it very evident that women were remaining calm in the church. Specifically in a situation where women have important contributions to make towards the betterment of mankind (Sibani, 2017). Nevertheless, in the Christian tradition, men and women are shown in odd manner - women are seen as powerless when represented with feminine symbols, while men are in reality considered to be logical, powerful, and duty-bound.

The fight for equality in gender both inside and outside of the Christian faith has remained at the center of the spiritual agenda. The concept that everyone is equal before God is merely a lip service (ibid). The main reason why theologians restrict the involvement of women in spiritual education is fear - the fear is that women will be able to exercise a greater impact on how scriptures are interpreted if they get the chance to receive theological education.

Some religious leaders try to change the discriminatory attitude of religious interpretation but failed to bring the desirable result due to the cultural context they live in. One example of this religious movement is Martin Luther. As Berman (2015) noted, that a former, almost liberated women from the image of God, only to rethink himself and reject his own views on the issue. He disagreed with the early church fathers' acceptance of Aristotle's theory that women are only imperfectly made men and maintained that women 'share the image and likeness of God, as well as the rule over all things' Luther keeps going, yet, noting that women cannot compete with the parse and dignity of the men, though the woman is a most beautiful creating of God.

Obviously, Luther's interpretation of the text contains no mention of that difference. Only the creation in the image of God men and women demonstrate in Genesis 1:26-28. Luther must therefore have been aware of the conflict among that passage and other religious passages that suppress women, as well as the cultural context in which he was living. This conflict presents as an example of how far writers, readers, and culture will go to degrade women's status.

The Biblical interpretation reflects the male dominated point of view. Christianity asserts that the contents of the Bible were given to us by God. It is dogmatically accepted which is questionable in many ways. Here the problem is not the dogma itself but the way the religious teachers convey the message. The assertion that a Christian interpretation is basically a patriarchal religion is mostly supported by this reality. This male dominance over females is explained by the genesis account given in the Genesis.

Christians in reality accept that God created everything out of nothing. My goal is not to go into the complex philosophical debates regarding the existence of God. Instead, I seek to present the point that it is irrational to ground unfairness in an entity as intangible and unknown as god. Despite this, biblical images that support male superiority as the criteria to recognize both divine and social relationships cover Christian interpretation.

In to the first genesis account in the Genesis, God created Adam was then created from soil, and Eve was created from his ribs (Gen.1 :21). Since Christian teachers interpreted this to mean that women are inferior, it serves the foundation for gender disparities in society. Christian feminists have argued that this story simply shows Adam and Eve's one destiny and that God actually created them equal. In my understanding still the wrong message is in the interpretation even the genesis states both created equal except the time succession means Adam came to the world first then Eve next.

If those who wrote were men, then the patriarchal, anti-women society of the Hebrew people certainly imposed substantial limitations on them. Genesis 1:27 is obviously the prelude of Genesis 2 and 3, where the main goal is the systematic disdain of women's character and status. The two creation stories conflict when these passages are investigated carefully. Due to the Genesis, Eve serves simply an extension of Adam. To make it possible for man to rule the planet, (Gen. 2:4-24). As a consequence, man is the rightful defender of God's creations, and Eve is a part of him.

Genesis 2:18 that it was not suitable for the man to be alone, "I will make him a helper fit for him," Adam responded, saying in Genesis 2:23, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman." Yet, the interpretation impedes worldwide attempts to eliminate discrimination based on gender as long as Christianity and other religions employ them to uphold mistreatment of women in society.

A woman can never go from serving as assistant to being on an equal level with men. Article One of the Declaration of Human Rights, which declares that all people are created equal in respect of their worth and freedoms, is negated by this. Genesis 3 is essential to Christians' view of the nature of women. It claims that women are less powerful, emotional, and instable than men; they are also by nature immoral, wicked, and intellectually inferior.

This perspective is further supported by the account of the first sin, which states that; Eve was tricked by the snake into eating the "central fruit" and then convinced Adam to do the same. Christianity came to the conclusion that women are the beginners of evil since Eve was the one who violated God's word in the first time.

The social standing and attitude of women in the church are adversely affected by this. The section declares women's obedience to men. "Yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" (Gen. 3:16) describes the curse of men ruling over women. It suggests that women need to be under constant supervision and control of men because they are said to be the entrance through which sin entered the world, leading man to fall from God's mercy and be driven out of the Garden of Eden.

Christianity represents the contradiction that exists between Christianity and the United Nations' aim to achieve empowering and equal treatment between men and women in marriage, education, employment opportunities, and many other areas. Christianity regards women merely as agents of reproduction and unequal partners in marriage who must be loyal and submissive to their husbands.

3.4 Islamic Religion and the Status of Women

Like Christianity, Islam has a patriarchal origin. Therefore, both religions share a great deal of similarities with regard to women. In particular, the Quran contains that there is a God who created man and later created a woman out of his ribs to support him. It maintained to be loyal to the social and cultural standards that supported the mistreatment of women. Based on Ozkay's interpretation of Mohammed's teachings, the faith also requests that women submit

to their spouses, stating that men are sovereign over women. Allah created the former (man) as a superior to the later (woman) for this reason.

`If I had issued the command to humble myself before a person other than God, I would have made women bow before their spouses. The privileges God has given men over women are the cause of this`. A woman who lives in her husband's home is in control of her children and act as their guardian (p. 152). This shows Islam's discriminatory attitude on women. In reality, the teaching of Mohammed encourages women to have subservient characteristics. According to him, a lady gets married for four reasons: her beloved ones, her property, her beauty, and her faith. This stated by Ozkay (1981); You can be provided of pleasure when you seek simply for the committed among these.

Yet, when looked from a modern perspective, the religions seem prejudiced towards women and the fair gender; especially they all place a high value on the social roles that women play as mothers and wives. According to Nicolaides (2015), although, the entire ancestor regarding to equality and prevalent dogma, Christianity and Islam have not been effective in helping the status of women. Both Christianity and Islam are patriarchal in essence.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Exploring Gender Dynamics

4.1 Gender and Culture

The social and psychological masculinity and femininity relates to gender (Jobo, 2015). Sex is unchanged and biological. Biological features decide whether an individual or group of individuals is male or female depending on the categories and nature of their physical traits. Therefore, sex is naturally given. In addition, sex is the same anywhere; unlike gender, this is identical in society at large. Contrary to gender constructions of relationships, which may be judge unjust, sex is a natural gift. It is not detrimental; it only becomes bad when applied to gender and the socially assigned roles that are determined by a person's sex and related features. Contrary to gender, sex cannot be chosen (Akanle).

According to the author gender is socially constructed and sex is naturally given, which means it falls beyond our choice. I share this idea, and in addition to this gender and culture are inter related. Cultural attitude is the root cause of gender since the role that is given to men and women is based on the cultural practices and social attitudes this laid foundation for the gender disparities between men and women.

Gender is the social and cultural classification of duties. Gender is exactly the expectation of the society in demanding of performing the duties that are provided by them. Bosena (2004) noted that; the duties, obligations, and tasks that are given to men and women in a particular society, culture, and community can be described as gender. Additionally, gender relates to what people demand from others due to their gender identity. Socially assigned responsibilities and characters are demanded of men and women, and women are required to take lower status in these roles. Men and women are expected to fulfill the specific roles assigned to them by society. It is a producer that can be modified and required.

In other words, gender implies the responsibilities and connection that are socially and culturally set between men and women. This has come to be patriarchy, a system where all social events are evaluated and investigated in masculinity. Akanle stated that it is held that demands and responsibilities towards the desire and the acceptance are given to men. This depends on socio cultural gender descriptions rather than the skills and values of the individuals represented. All developing societies share this, especially sub-Saharan Africa and

Asia. Yet, it is essential to remember that gender is constructed, unfair and that varies based on the adaptation of the communities. Gender is also given behavior.

One of the most pervasive kinds of social inequality is gender inequality, which is worldwide and has various impacts on different parts of the world. Cultural legacies, past events, geographic location, and the wide spread religious beliefs in society are the primary causes of these disparities. Religion is essential to the cultural life of many places. It is solidly rooted in the lives of individuals and affects the political and social landscape of societies (Kingorova *et al.*, 2015; Sibani, 2017).

Gender inequality, leads to violence. There is violence everywhere, however, the extent of the violence differs throughout cultural background and nations (Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs, 2013). Violence is deeply rooted in patriarchal society in many African nations as a consequence of religion, poverty, lack of awareness, and cultural norms. Some patriarchal cultures coexist with more liberal and expansive cultural structures, allowing greater freedom and equality for certain women, while using violence against women to preserve men's authority. Women have significantly more institutional mechanisms in these cultures, but in Ethiopia, women are not able to use local institutional services for a variety of reasons, including poverty, stigma, fear, and police bias. It is observed that Ethiopian societies' poor regard for women results in a presumption that abuse or violence aimed at them is appropriate (*ibid*).

The key elements of the African women's problems are made worse by the continent's socioeconomic difficulties. The social order is the primary cause of both the institutionalization of masculinity and women's subordinate status (Hussein, 2024). Changes to this structure are the only way to solve the problem that makes life difficult for both men and women.

It's also essential to acknowledge that women in Sub-Saharan Africa frequently have less power over decision-making and are systematically marginalized in local and national institutions. Challenges based on gender hinder women's involvement and support imbalances in power. Women's organizations are essential resource for reinforcing the social associations that promote the market economy in Sub-Saharan Africa as civil society takes place (Ahmed *et al.*, 2001).

Ancient African societies educate women to comply with men's demands. Since it encourages domestic violence against women, African culture encourages inequality worse. Beating a wife is serving as a symbol of affection in several African societies. Yet, one way that men show their supremacy over women is through domestic abuse. The vast majority of traditional African societies are involved in the establishment of stereotypes that reinforce inequality between genders (Rwafa, 2016).

Gender equality does not entail giving women what they do not deserve or showing favoritism or sentimentality towards them. It is about establishing and providing opportunity for both genders to desire to be the greatest in an objective way, without any systematic sociocultural barriers that would discriminate against one another. As noted in Akanle by freeing both genders from the constraints of outdated practices and traditions, gender equality will enable them to actively cope with the responses and overloads of the traditional society while accepting the possibilities presented by the information and knowledge of the time.

Due to the African stand point, gender and sex are identical and cannot be differentiated from one another (Chauraya, 2012). A woman is a woman at birth, and a man is a man at birth. In the European view, gender and sex are separate and while nothing can be done about sex, something and considerably something can be done to and in gender. This is why Simone de Beauvoir argued that a person does not become a woman at birth but rather becomes one in Singh (1997) as cited in Chauraya (2012).

4.2 Ubuntu

Ubuntu is a particular African ideology that is deeply rooted in African societies' ethical values (Chisale, 2018). Interconnectedness is highly valued in the Ubuntu Philosophy as a belief system. It invites people to recognize and value the complex connections that bind them all together. According to this ideology, no one exists in a vacuum; we are all essential members of our communities (Kihuha, 2024). However, in contradict to its definition Ubuntu does not bring the desirable change in eliminating the gender disparities and in improvement of the status of women. As Abraham and Prabha (2022) argued; even though Ubuntu is a communitarian philosophy popular in African communities, it is depressing to learn that women still face discrimination in the same culture simply for being female. Given that the principles of Ubuntu cannot be upheld by disregarding the pain of women, one starts to doubt the entire concept of the operating system.

Ubuntu is an African cultural tendency to promote humanism, equality, empathy, honesty, and peaceful cooperation with the aim to create and uphold a just and caring society (Eljiah and Siwilla, 2022). This an African philosophy, which is really a way of life that places a strong emphasis on the idea that all people should be treated with justice, equity, and respect and should follow their tribe's customs and traditions. Ubuntu is defined by a strong sense of communal life that expresses itself in a complex web of social and familial ties, governing standards of behavior and achievement standards (Nicoladies, 2015).

4.3 Images of Women in Ethiopia

In the Ethiopia society there are two opposite forms of preferred social structure – hierarchal and horizontal (egalitarian). Both do not exist and operate in their pure forms. Owing to the mobility, integration and interactions of people some features of hierarchical and egalitarian approaches are mixed up in different parts of the country. Hierarchical is based on the topdown relations or it is the relations of inequality. A society in which egalitarian culture dominates human relations believe that all people, irrespective of race, color, ethnicity, gender, religion, language, profession and so on, are equal and deserve to enjoy equal rights and opportunities.

Those people who prefer hierarchical system than egalitarian approach appreciate a top-down structure that allows inequality; whereas people who have egalitarian culture (horizontal relations) recognize the relations of the equals, not that of superiors and inferiors. Indeed, there are differences but not superior or inferior qualities are attributed to them. These two systems of humans or social relations have orders, according to the values that the given society ascribes to them. The hierarchical system of relations allows the top-down or inequality (the superior and inferior) relations as desirable, whereas the egalitarian order of relation stands in favor of the horizontal type of relation that allows equality instead of inequality.

No one doubts the rampancy of gender discrimination in Ethiopia. But the degree of its severity differs from place to place. There is a common belief that it is more severe in the northern part than in the central and southern part of the country. Just like elsewhere in Ethiopia too, discrimination based on gender is a socially created phenomenon. Many times, people think that women are incapable of taking the lead or making critical decisions (Gerbi, 2021). This incorrect belief about the wrong treatment of women by men in the nation, civic associations, and governmental offices still exist.

Like every other nation in the world, the majority of the Ethiopian customary rules and institutions place women in subservient position and with dependent roles based on the power and authority of men. By giving women fewer benefits, rights, responsibilities, authority, and power in conventional and socioeconomic administrations, they maintain the lower status than that of men. This is particularly displayed through actions that limit them to domestic activity, committed to non-constructive practices, domestic abuse, stereotypes, early marriage etc. (Muluken Kassahun, 2021). The community uses culture and religion as justifications for moral standards in this way. Because of this, Ethiopian women have extremely in low status in all spheres of life, including political and social engagement, wealth, employment opportunities, and educational attainment.

Although the Ethiopian women have been making important contributions in different institutions, Bosen (2004) claims; the truth is that there aren't many historical documents in Ethiopia that provide insight into the roles that women have been playing in the social, political, and economic spheres from gender view.

The country's constitution guarantees gender parity. Furthermore, the government has accepted international human rights documents, such as the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Discriminatory legislation and provisions have been amended. In the light of this, gender-sensitive revisions have been made to the federal family laws and the penal code to better uphold women's human rights and protect them from all forms of violence attitudes (Ministry of women, children and youth Affairs, 2013). Despite these initiatives, the issue still exists in many ways. The persistence of violence against women is said to be primarily caused by a low level of legal awareness, limited access to legal services, a culture that is dominated by men, and deeply rooted traditional attitude and views.

All past governments had given lip service to feminist demands for action, and any attempts to bring about real changes in the way women were viewed had been abandoned. The legislation guarantees equal treatment for all, but actual equality had been never attained anywhere.

Nevertheless, cultural concepts have a significant impact on the type of violence against women that occurs in Ethiopia. Although quite good number of indigenous culture that equally serve the good purpose of both female and male exist in Ethiopia, we cannot also

deny the existence of some indigenous cultures that to some extent encourage violence against humanity in which women are the number one victims. For instance, it is accepted to beat a woman. This is consistent with findings from other African countries. There are other brutal acts such as forcing a woman leave her home, possession and go elsewhere, harassing and insulting and keeping her to live in terrible fears and tensions.

These damaging stereotypes serve to persuade women to submit to the will of male authority and put up with mistreatment. The idea gives men an excessive sense of dominance. Men dominate houses in villages and communities, severely undermining the status of women in almost all walks of life.

The Ethiopian women have spent generations residing in this hierarchical social environment ((Ministry of women, children and youth Affairs, 2013)). Culture is a human invention – invented either for good or bad purposes. But time and history change the quality of actions or things. Something which is originally supposed to be good and is expected to continue serving all the good of both males and females, even be changed into the opposite because of human interests, acts and behaviors. .

One of the hotly debated topics when it comes to defending and advancing women's rights is cultural attitude. The majority of feminists argue that cultural contexts serve as a justification for violating women's rights (Muluken Kassahun, 2021). So, working against change in the inferior status of women can bring about a change in the awareness of people for transforming the cultural attitude of a given society.

4.4 Proverbs and the Subordination of Social Positions

According to Tsegay Abie (2019) proverbs are remarkable collections of folklore and common sense expressions. They are found in many cultures. The reason of focusing on proverbs is to figure out the common values and ideas that the members of a community hold important. Proverbs are parts of language that best capture the ideas, ideals and principles of cultures. Almost all proverbs cover to explain and reflect all aspects of life and activity and can be used for educational and moralistic purpose. One of the most important subjects of proverbs is gender relations, and the majority of these subjects have heavy gender bias.

In addition to the above ideas Alemitu (2021) state that a proverb is one type of oral literature that focuses on the social lives of people and the worldview of a particular group. One might

argue that the roles being played in human power relationships are based on the characteristics of proverbs. In cultural trends there is a denial of equality to men and women through the use of proverbs, and this is known as gender inequality. Proverbs from a particular group might reflect underlying inequity as well as the worldview of philosophy, ideology, and life in general. Consequently, proverbs are employed by men and women as a means of delegating inequity.

Women have been pushed to the edge of society, culture, and history in many nations. The same thing is true to Ethiopia and Ethiopians, and this is primarily due to the pervasive traditional patriarchal attitude. In the political, economic, and sociocultural domains, women have been excluded (Daniel *et al.*, 2022). In addition to this the proverbs encourage the subordination of women.

Wife-beating was one of the ills of the ancient African communities. The saying "If you really love your wife, you have to beat her" (from Tigrigna language, in Ethiopia) is the best example. This means to acknowledge the subordination of women. The reason why I said that proverbs motivate subordination and inferiority of women is this. However not all proverbs are negatively depicting. There are proverbs that encourage social interactions. Therefore we must beware of using or un-using the negative proverbs that promote or demote the inferiority complex of women in order to rationally explain and understand the negative ones and preserve the positive.

Proverbs, among other things, are essential in describing the inferior character and subservient position of women from generation to generation. They are used to instill in women a sense of subservience and educate them to accept the superiority and control of men. Furthermore proverbs are another way that men use to condition the control of women (Ibid). This happens due to the cultural characteristic of women's subordination, which has its roots in the accepted societal norms and beliefs that place a negative value on women and feminine characteristics; and a positive value on men and masculine characteristics (ibid).

All of the proverbs mentioned in this section are used to devalue women's personalities and to witness that their status is socially inferior. They present women as a less sophisticated, less significant, illogical, and poorly qualified. I would like to consider the following list of proverbs as examples illustrating how men and women are compared in order to expose the weakness of one through the strength of the other.

Proverb in Amharic	Translated into English	Meaning
Set ena aheya dula yewodale	Women and donkeys love being battered	ሴት ከሃሳብ ይልቅ በዱላ ታምናለች
Set agbtew set biweldu yet ale nigedu	If you marry a woman and have a daughter from her, then where is the difference/benefit?	ሴት አግብተው ሴት መውለድ ምን ጥቅም አለው
Set Ye eletun wonde yeametun	While women think for today, men think for a year	የሴት አስተሳሰብ ርቀትና ጥልቀት የለውም
Ye set miskir yeshola atire"	Women's advice has no place	ሴት ዘላቂ አቅም የላትም
Set sibeza gomen teneza	Too many women overcook the cabbage	የሴት ብዛት ጥራትን ይጎዳል
Set le bet wofcho le dukate	Women are for houses, a mill is for flour	ሴት ከዚያ በላይ የመሆን አቅም የላትም

Set kemewulede yishalal maswered	Aborting is better than having a female	ሴት ከመውለድ ቢቀር
set yamene gum yezegene	He, who trusts a woman, takes a handful of fog	ሴት ማመን አያስፈልግም
Mistrihen keset gelahn ke esat tebek	Conceal your secret from women as you keep your body from fire	ሴት ሚስጥር አባካኝ ናት

Set na doro ke hadu betachewn ykdu	When woman and hen betray their houses then they betray their homes	ሴት ከወጣች ቤትዋን ትረሳለች
set na ye ayer nibret aytamenem	Women and weather cannot be predicted	ሴት አትታመንም
Set ena awlo-nefas aytamenem	Women and a whirl wind cannot r elide upon	የማይታመን ነገር አለማመን
“Nefs be fetariwa set be asadariwa	A soul in her creator, a woman in her husband	ሴት ጥገኛ ናት
Ye set agerwa balwa na masteryawa amelwa	(A woman’s country is her husband, and her temperament is her survival	ሴት በጸባይዋ ታድራለች
“Set bitmar dalewa enji chinklatwa aysefam	When a woman learns it is her posterior that gets broaden, not her mind	የሴት መማር ከንቱ ነው
“Ke set lib ye wend samba yishalal”	a man’s lung is better than a woman’s heart	ሴት አታስተውልም
Ke set wend ke chraro gind	As a trunk is better than a twig; man is stronger than a woman	ሴት አቅም የላትም
Set bitwefer akumada atasir	However fat a woman is, she cannot tie up a sack	የሴት ውፍረት ትርጉም አልባ ነው
Ye set glubetuwa melaswa	A woman’s power is her tongue).	የሴት ጉልበት ምላስ ላይ ነው

As was shown above, every proverb listed above, in one way or another, portrays women as worthless beings. They depict them as something that has nothing to offer to the family in particular or to the community at large. I can say all the above mentioned proverbs intend to

totally destroy every aspects of women's reality and at the same time highly encourage men to be superior.

The dissemination of these proverbs immensely contributes to the persistence of unfavorable perceptions of women, which in turn leads to women's low engagement in many communal social activities and unfavorable self-perceptions. Consequently, encouraging women to participate in society, educating them, providing awareness-raising training regarding women's equality, and opposing the usage of proverbs that degrades women's status could help to improve the self-perception of women in society. The position and role of women in a society is very important since they are often engaged in a lot of inclusive commitments the freedom they secure from all sorts of discrimination is liberation of mankind.

In general, the proverbs show how society disregards women when it is also a self-disregard for it. Society should also know that it is the constructor the proverbs that badly describe not only women but also the society itself as cause and effect of the bad exercise.

4.5 The Contributions of Zera Yacob to Gender Issues

Zera Yacob is a prominent Ethiopian philosopher who contributed important issues to gender equalities. Zera Yacob stated that men and women should be treated equally. He believed that Christian teachings wrongly highlighted the impurity of marriage and valued a monastic living. The Christian law that implies that marriage is inferior to monastic life is untrue and cannot originate from God, He was critic of monastic existence and advocates the equality of the couple's marriage. Following that she is not my maid servant was Habtu's replay to Zera Yacob's question about his desires to marry Hirut (Tassew Asefaw,2004).

I don't want her to be my maid servant, instead my wife, husband and wife have equal status in marriage; we shouldn't refer to them head and maidservant; for they are one body and single existence was Zera Yacob's response to Habtu, suggesting that he disagreed with the view that both spouses have a master-servant relationship. This demonstrates Zera Yacob's liberation from his hermeneutic background and pre-cross-examination thoughts, as well as his greater awareness to gender issues (ibid).

As a historian Belai Giday cited in Tassaw (2004) from Ethiopia asserts that Zera Yacob batted for equality of women. He stated that Zera Yacob disagreement of the monastic living and thought that marriage between a man and a woman was essential for the survival of the human race. More important is that, he stood against men controlling women. This being

the case. ZeraYacob as a philosopher made a great contribution in making balance among genders. To eliminate gender discrimination in Ethiopia other scholar's should laid their effort like Zera Yacob.

Chapter Five

5. Critical Assessment, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Critical Assessment

The thorough review, investigation, and critical analysis of this study attempts to prove that the supports that religious assertions and interpretations made are to demonstrate the inferior position of women. Not only that, to me it is also to strengthen the superior power and status of men, is empirically unfounded and conceptually illogical. Corresponding to each chapter of this study I attempted to provide my own critical remarks when and where required. In this section, I would like to offer some more critical observations on gender inequality to further disclose how complex and detrimental it is to the life and development of human societies.

5.2 The Cost-Benefit Analysis of Gender Discrimination

Why people are for and against gender inequality? Let us consider the importance or the value of gender discrimination from the perspectives of its cost-benefit analysis. Raising some questions is important for the provision of a clue as to whether gender inequality is a benefit or a cost to a part or the whole of human society. Is the equality of women to men a cost to humanity? What is wrong if women are equal to men? What benefit do males gain by making females inferior? What a cost does society incur if women secure equal status with men? Are inequality discrimination, inferiority and marginalization reward or curse?

Gender diversity is just as the diversity of humans attainable at different levels anywhere at any time. It is unfortunate that humans abuse their differences and make them a curse. Woman and man are the two different parts of the same reality or the same class of human being. No human society exists without women; and no women without men, and none of them is born superior or inferior. Undoubtedly both are born equal. It is biological for one to be born female but not inferior to male; and it is biological for the other to be born male, but not superior to the others. It is true that women and men are born different, but not anyone of them is born with superior or inferior quality. Thus “superiority” and “inferiority” are human creations for setting standards, or shaping and guiding human relations.

Historically humans have been suffering from their short-sightedness dictated by their ignorance and arrogance, selfishness and emotion. Most of the tragic experiences human society had encountered in the course of history were largely human constructs. Because of the mentioned vicious acts and behaviors they see only one thing when there are many other

visible things along with that. Human relations are simultaneously external and internal. When a man inflicts harm to a woman he also inflicts the same harm onto himself.

Honestly, when he subjugates a woman he also does the same thing onto himself. Both the male who subjugates the female, and the female who is being subjugated are internally tied together. Although he does not feel it, the culprit himself shares the pain that the subjugation inflicts in common with the victim (woman), although the degree of the pain differs. When the potential capacity of a person (say woman) is prevented from being realized, because of gender discrimination, the failure encountered is a common predicament to both the actor and victim.

The pain that gender inequality inflicts is felt not only at the level of individuals but also at the level of a nation. A society in which such inequality prevails suffers from multi-faceted problems. In every society there is at least fifty percent of woman population. When this number of women population is refrained from fully actualize its potential capacity because of gender discrimination, it is not only the immediate victims that sharply get affected negatively but also the community or society, the nation or the country as a whole.

The deficiency caused because women are weakened or impaired by gender discrimination is the pain of the entire society. One serious challenge of a person is that one does not see himself in the others. It is true that we cannot see John with our naked eyes in Johnson, and Johnson in John, although we think that one is in the other. It is with the help of our mind that we get to this reality. This is beyond the boundary of sensation.

Apparently gender discrimination is a personal problem. But in reality it is a common disease to be suffered in so many ways because people, in their life, are chained together. In this sense the harm men inflict on women through male chauvinism is to some extent a self-inflicted harm from the side of male. It is not only the private problem of women rather a common challenge of humanity - that all concerned people ought to battle against.

5.3 Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, reviews made by many philosophers on gender disparity have revealed that most of them, from antiquity to the present, were convinced that women are naturally less intelligent than men. As a result, a number of these thinkers argued that women should appreciate men's dominance and superiority over them [women], by presenting themselves to them in the manners slaves to their masters. This idea that women are inferior to men is

supported by all the prominent male-dominated religions, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Confucianism, and others. It is unfortunate that these religions are the popular world faiths that worked a lot to teach and demonstrate the superiority of male and at the same time the inferiority of women. Using their patriarchal and spiritual power they justified the subjugation of women. It seems reasonable to suppose that a society's psychological makeup and way of life may cause an impact by the prevalence of powerful religions like Christianity and Islam.

In this study I found out that gender discrimination a chronic disease that affects not only individuals but also the entire society. Therefore the society should be aware that it is unceasingly under ailment that hinders its development. Although it appears to be a personal/private problem, in actual fact it is a common disease that all including the one who discriminates suffer from. I, therefore, highly recommend that the awareness of society should be raised and every one should be taught to remove the bias and prejudice he or she has towards women and others.

Honestly gender discrimination, as well as other forms of discriminations for that matter, are immoral and unethical since they harm people who should deserve to enjoy the rights and opportunities the society grants them. We should understand that we all are committing discrimination as long as we mutely remain in compliance with it. Being unaware of this fact many of us have been standing in support of vicious acts and behaviors. This is one of the evils that each citizen unnoticeably commits against the interest and rights of individuals, groups, society and nation. I therefore recommend all possible efforts should exerted to make all people aware to earnestly feel responsibility in battling the evils invaded all of us.

To put an end to gender discrimination we need to battle against male supremacy. Each person should know where he or she stands concerning gender discrimination. I would like to recommend that men should play a special role in the fight against sexual discrimination. Who benefits what from a discriminatory acts and behaviors? Who is the subject and object of gender discrimination? Obviously, women are the victims. We may know how deep and severe, chronic and penetrating discrimination is to women.

But what good or benefit do men, as actors, gain from it – may be a sense of psychological superiority. Or, are men really victors in playing a discriminatory game? Discrimination is a shameful act and behavior that arises from ignorance and arrogance. Therefore, men from all

walks of life should and wives, understand that they must be the vanguard to fight against gender discrimination that has been degrading and dehumanizing their mother and wives, sisters and daughters. I highly recommend that a special mission be entrusted to them for eliminating discrimination. .

“Almost universally throughout human history, women have not had the same rights as men. Before the early twentieth century, most women in most countries did not have access to high-paying-jobs, could not vote or run for political office, and could not sue for divorce” (Grcic, 1989 At the end who suffers from the disadvantages that these discriminations cause?

Evidently, these opinions of highly positioned intellectuals and religions, are quite opposite and anti- women when considered from the side of the United Nations resolutions, treaties and forward-looking plans for making women equal to men. A lot of attempts were made to displace prejudices and predispositions as a first step to be taken. Such ideas continue to support gender equality and a rational mind set along with it.

Encouraging gender-inclusive interpretations of religious texts and traditions is essential for advancing women's existentialism in Africa and attaining equality. Thus, in order to rectify these misinterpretations and promote theological discussions that uphold women's equality and dignity in religious and communal contexts, religious experts and authorities must examine interpretations that promote gender bias. Religious authorities can also push communities to reconsider their customs and reinterpret them in ways that advance justice and equality in place of those that uphold gender inequality.

They can assist in promoting diversity and gender parity in the workplace by supporting initiatives to place women in leadership positions within religious organizations. Together with scholars, these religious authorities and specialists can reinterpret and spread teachings that focus the equality and dignity of every person. Gender equality does not entail giving women what they do not deserve or showing favoritism or sentimentality towards them. It is about establishing and providing opportunity for both genders to desire to be the greatest in an objective way, without any systematic or sociocultural barriers that would discriminate against one another. In order to meet the problems of the twenty-first century and the information/knowledge constructively with conventional burden and overloads, gender equality entails freeing both genders from the chains of antiquated conventions and traditions.

The society thinks women as they are unable to do everything isolated from man. But when given same incentives, women could perform equal with men. In all mental pursuits, regardless of intellectual ability. Women who live the lives that society expects them to live; or their upbringing shapes the way they live. As previously mentioned, men are raised to accomplish, while women are raised to comply. Additionally, the prior educational system was biased in favor of men and against women.

Proverbs and wrong cultural attitudes also laid their own contributions to subordination of women. Not mean all proverbs disregard women but there are proverbs that the society employ to show gender disparities in addition to this most proverbs admit the characteristics of men. Based on the negative proverbs one can able to say women are naturally inferior this shows how much gender influence the attitude of the society. I have to note here when I use culture and gender I mean to the wrong cultural attitude and gender to mean the social disparity among men and women. From African perspectives the image of women is still low. This is the consequence of the cultural and religious background. The philosophy of Zera Yacob provides important point to gender issue.

According to liberal feminism, women's oppression is a result of their unequal access to social, political, legal, and economic institutions. Such subordination of women stems from a system of societal and legal restrictions that prevent them from achieving success in the public domain. The socially manufactured patriarchal worldview at the heart of this work is what keeps men and women's inequality alive. In order to address these issues and ensure gender equality, stereotypes, prejudices, and other customs and practices that support gender discrimination must be gradually eliminated. Gender-based societal oppression would, I assume, be gradually avoided if the gender ideology were made clear.

I suggest that to keep gender imbalance pertaining to women under control, efforts to raise awareness must be made on all fronts. To shift consciousness, it is necessary to reevaluate current awareness-raising techniques. Thus, consistent, focused, economical, and community friendly strategies had to be created.

Using religious leaders for a variety of purposes, such as actively participating in education about the negative effects of the low status, providing guidance on how to interpret scripture and explain religious views on gender and policing the campaign to isolate gender differences and endorsing and supporting educational efforts by law enforcement and health

professionals, which lends legitimacy and authority in the eyes of the community. It is significant to remember that the religious approach has a prerequisite that must be met. Religious authorities must come to a consensus or accord regarding the Quran's and/or the Bible's position on women.

In creating gender balance media and parents carry their obligation well. A valuable resource for learning about gender culture is the mass media. Parents must convey their attitudes in a way that their family thought. First and foremost, parents serve as role models who help shape the beliefs and values that children acquire. Parents' sentiments, however, might not always be clear because of the inconsistent nature of their acts and attitudes. Second, when parents support gendered activities and behaviors, they may be openly expressing their attitudes.

For instance, parents who frequently give their children toys that are gendered also communicate certain views and expectations. Finally, some parents may transmit their gender ideas by declaring or approving stereotypes. Discovered, for example, that mothers frequently made generalization regarding gender, such as Boys play with trucks or Girls play with dolls. Children's gender stereotypes may be reinforced and spread by the frequent usage of these generics.

It is imperative to eliminate gender bias that impedes progress and reframe development to include equal opportunities for all genders. Expand women's earning potential and demonstrate a strong dedication to a job or activity other than being a wife, mother, housekeeper, kitchen manager, etc.

I suggest the following points aid in ending the wrong cultural attitude against women. First, women need to be taught to value themselves just like men are. The main problem seen in almost women is considering them as they are inferior and cannot able to perform anything without assistance. In the first step women must avoid the negative attitude towards themselves. They would become more partnered in marriage and in society as a result. Secondly, it is imperative to foster a culture of unity among women in spite of their diversity, beginning with religious communities. Third, women will need to gain abilities to identify their oppression so as to oppose it better. Fourth, it is imperative to continuously confront patriarchy in public and within women's organizations. Men and women alike must put these strategies into practice if they are to succeed.

“To achieve the goal of equality, however, several approaches must be devised. In the struggle against racism and sexism some favor a strict policy of nondiscrimination”. (Grcic, 1989)

Gender discrimination is a complex system of ideas and operations that are interknitted with many positive and negative attributes. To remove the negative attributes so as to be left with the positive ones for its further promotion is imperative. Nondiscrimination is the “belief in meritocracy; that is, the view that only high achievement, not race or gender is relevant in how individuals should be treated” (Ibid). In discrimination some citizens are culprits and the vast majority of citizens are victims. No one remains neutral. In mysterious ways the culprits themselves are victims; and hence there is no citizen who is not negatively affected by discrimination. The complete elimination of human discrimination is liberation to all people of a concerned society or nation.

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