

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF GENDER STUDIES**

**ATTITUDE AND THE PRACTICE OF AFFIRMATIVE
ACTION FOR FEMALE STUDENTS: THE CASE OF
MEKELLE UNIVERSITY**

BY: - TSIGEREDA TEFERA

JUNE, 2010

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF GENDER STUDIES**

**ATTITUDE AND THE PRACTICE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR
FEMALE STUDENTS: THE CASE OF MEKELLE UNIVERSITY**

BY: - TSIGEREDA TEFERA

**A Thesis Submitted to the Institute of Gender Studies in Partial Fulfillment of
the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Gender Studies**

June, 2010

**Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
Institute of Gender Studies**

**ATTITUDE AND THE PRACTICE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FOR
FEMALE STUDENTS: THE CASE OF MEKELLE UNIVERSITY**

Name of Student: _____ Signature _____

Approved by Board of Examiners

_____ _____ _____
Chair person Signature Date

_____ _____ _____
Advisor Signature Date

_____ _____ _____
Internal Examiner Signature Date

_____ _____ _____
External Examiner Signature Date

Declaration

I declare that this Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any university and all the sources of material used for the thesis are duly acknowledged.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Place _____

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

Advisor's Name _____

Signature _____

Acknowledgements

My deepest gratitude goes to my advisor Dr. Enguday Ademe, for providing guidance and encouragement throughout this research work. I am also grateful to Fedil Jihad, Shemelis Mebratu and Seid Ali in providing me comments on the instruments; and to Yegle Liben who supported me during data collections. I offer my fullest thanks to all staffs of Mekelle University for their patience and willingness to assist me at all times. Thanks to my sister, Meron Tefera, for her statistical expertise and guidance in quantitative part of this study ;and to Humph Pofong, Shewaye Belay, Desalegn Mebratu , Muluken Elias for encouraging ,guiding me and editing of my thesis. I also thank my family, especially my mom, Kuri Alemu, who have supported me in various ways through out the duration of this study. Most importantly, my appreciation extended to participants of the study. This would not have been possible without those who participated in the study. Last but not least, I particularly thank my examiners, Dr. Emebet Mulugeta and Dr. Wana Lake for their helpful and constructive comments.

| TABLE OF CONTENT | PAGE |
|--|-------------|
| Acknowledgements..... | I |
| Table of contents..... | II |
| List of Tables | V |
| Acronyms..... | VI |
| Abstracts | VIII |
| | |
| CHAPTER ONE..... | 1 |
| Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.1. Background of the Study..... | 1 |
| 1.2. Statement of the Problem..... | 2 |
| 1.3. Objectives..... | 4 |
| 1.3.1. General Objectives..... | 4 |
| 1.3.2. Specific Objectives..... | 4 |
| 1.4. Significance of the Study..... | 5 |
| 1.5. Delimitation of the Study..... | 5 |
| 1.6. Limitation of the Study..... | 5 |
| 1.7. Operational Definitions of Key Terms..... | 6 |
| | |
| CHAPTER TWO..... | 7 |
| Literature Reviews | 7 |
| 2.1. Gender Equity in Education..... | 7 |
| 2.2. Gender Stereotype in Education..... | 8 |
| 2.3. The Historical Development of Affirmative Action..... | 9 |
| 2.4. Practice of Affirmative Action in Various Countries..... | 10 |
| 2.4.1. Affirmative Action in U.S.A..... | 10 |
| 2.4.2. Affirmative Action in Sweden | 13 |
| 2.4.3. Affirmative Action in India | 14 |
| 2.4.4 Affirmative Action in Ghana..... | 16 |
| 2.4.5 Affirmative Action in Rwanda | 16 |
| 2.4.6. Affirmative Action in Uganda | 19 |
| 2.4.7. Affirmative Action in Kenya | 20 |
| 2.4.8. Affirmative Action in Ethiopia | 21 |
| 2.5. Debates on Affirmative Action Policy | 23 |
| 2.6 Theoretical Frame Work for Affirmative Action: Liberal Feminism..... | 24 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| CHAPTER THREE..... | 26 |
| Methodology..... | 26 |
| 3.1. Research Design..... | 26 |
| 3.2. Methods of Data Collection..... | 26 |
| 3.2.1 Survey Questionnaire | 26 |
| 3.2.2. Focused Group Discussion..... | 27 |
| 3.2.3. Interview..... | 27 |
| 3.2.4. Document Review..... | 28 |
| 3.3. Sampling Techniques..... | 28 |
| 3.4. Sample Size..... | 29 |
| 3.5. Source of Data | 30 |
| 3.6. Data Analysis Techniques..... | 30 |
| 3.7. Validity and Reliability of the Instruments..... | 31 |
| 3.8 Ethical Consideration..... | 31 |
| | |
| CHAPTER FOUR | 32 |
| Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of the Data..... | 32 |
| 4.1. Findings from Document Review..... | 32 |
| 4.1.1. Trends of Students’ Enrollment in Public Higher Education | 32 |
| 4.1.2. Trend of Graduates in Public Institutions of Higher Education /Undergraduate Degree | 33 |
| 4.1.3. Trends of Students’ Enrollments at Mekele University / Undergraduate Degree..... | 34 |
| 4.1.4 Academic Staffs in Mekelle University..... | 34 |
| 4.2. Presentation of Survey Findings..... | 36 |
| 4.2.1. Respondents’ Attitude towards the Need for Affirmative Action..... | 36 |
| 4.2.2. Respondents’ Attitude towards the Impact of Affirmative Action on Female Beneficiaries..... | 39 |
| 4.2.3. Respondents’ Attitude towards the Impact of Affirmative Action on Non- Beneficiary Students..... | 41 |
| 4.2.4. Respondents’ Attitude towards the Additional Supports given for Female Students in the University..... | 44 |
| 4.2.5. Instructors’ Attitude towards their Responsibility | 47 |
| 4.3. Presentation of Qualitative Data..... | 48 |
| 4.3.1. The practice of Affirmative Action in Mekelle University..... | 48 |
| 4.3.1.1. Types of Additional Supports..... | 49 |
| 4.3.1.2. Benefits to Female Students..... | 51 |
| 4.3.1.3. Shortcomings of the Practice..... | 52 |
| 4.3.1.4. Key Informants and Discussants’ Suggested Solutions..... | 53 |
| 4.3.2. Challenges of Female Students in Mekelle University..... | 55 |
| 4.3.2.1. Discussants and Key Informants’ Suggested Solutions | 69 |

| | |
|---|----|
| CHAPTER FIVE | 72 |
| Summary of Major Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation | 72 |
| 5.1. Summary of Major Findings..... | 72 |
| 5.2. Conclusions..... | 73 |
| 5.3. Recommendations..... | 75 |
| | |
| References | |
| Annexes –1-6 | |

LIST OF TABLES**PAGE**

| | |
|--|----|
| Table 2.1. Practical Changes Brought by Affirmative Action for minorities and women..... | 11 |
| Table 3.1. Sampling Techniques for Survey..... | 29 |
| Table 4.1. Trend of Students' Enrollment in Public Higher Education of Ethiopia from 2003/4-2008/9..... | 33 |
| Table 4.2. Trend of Graduates in Public Institutions of Higher Education / Undergraduate Degree (2003/04 to 2008/09)..... | 33 |
| Table 4.3. Trend of Students' Enrollment in Mekele University from 2005/06- 2009/10 (regular, evening, kiremt and distance)..... | 34 |
| Table. 4.4. Summary of Academic Staff in Mekelle University, 2002 E.C Academic Year..... | 35 |
| Table 4.5. Respondents' Attitude towards the Need for Affirmative Action | 38 |
| Table 4.6. Respondents' Attitude towards the Impact of Affirmative Action on Beneficiaries | 40 |
| Table 4.7. Respondents' Attitude towards the Impact of Affirmative Action on Non-Beneficiaries Students | 43 |
| Table 4.8. Respondents' Attitude towards Additional Support for Females in the University | 46 |
| Table .4.9. Instructors' Responses towards Their Responsibility | 47 |
| Table 4.10. Summary of additional supports provided to female students | 49 |
| Table 4.11. Summary of shortcomings of the practice | 52 |
| Table 4.12. Summary of suggested solutions | 53 |
| Table 4.13. Summary of suggested solutions | 69 |

CD001 CD-RTOS CD-BRIDGE

JUL_22_2002

ö " ø ø f•T

→ →ø

5- 1

IMAPI ISO-9660 Formatter Copyright (C) 2001 Microsoft & Roxio
2002072212530646 2002072212530646 0000000000000000 0000000000000000

CD-RTOS CD-BRIDGE
 û û%/E
 □□ 2 2ó

J u l 2 2 2 0 0 2
ô " ÷ ÷ □ □ f•T

1CD001

5- 1

I M A P I J o l i e t F o r m a t t e r C o p y r i g h t (C)
2 0 0 1 M i c r o s o f t & R o x i o
2002072212530646 2002072212530646 0000000000000000 0000000000000000

ÿCD001

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Education is a powerful means that significantly changes the life of an individual and empowers him/her to contribute to national development (*UNESCO, 2002*); also it is a human right and an essential tool for achieving equality and peace among nations (*Fourth World Women Conference, 1995*). Education has multiple benefits for women in particular, which include the reduction of child and maternal mortality, improvement of child nutrition and health, lower fertility rates, enhancement of women's domestic role and their political participation, improvement of the economic productivity and growth, and protection of girls from HIV/AIDS, abuse and exploitation (*World Bank, 2008*). In addition, it is believed that educating a woman means educating a nation (*Oxfam, 2005*).

However, according to *United Nations Statistics Division Report* in 2005, millions of young girls than boys never attend school; and millions never complete their education. This is due to the different treatment given to girls in comparison with the treatment given to boys; for example, families provide opportunities for boys to attend school, whilst they keep girls at home to help with household chores, because of an assumption that females ultimately end in marriage; and therefore, unlike males they do not require a formal education (*Debe, 2009*).

As a result of the many constraints faced by women, gender equality and women's empowerment in public and private sectors has been a center of most international policy statements. Among them are the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform of Action in 1995 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Many countries have tried to achieve gender equality in their public and private sectors. One common strategy is to narrow the existing gap in educational achievements between men and women. Ethiopia, being one of the many countries to adopt those conventions, has introduced positive discrimination policies in favor of women. That is, Article 25 and 35 of the 1995 constitution of the country does not only guarantee equal opportunities to all nation but also gives affirmative action for women as compensation for the past injuries (*FDRE 1995*).

Similar policies have not only been developed in student admissions to universities and professional schools but also are applied in recruitment within private and public enterprises, as a strategy to level some of the disadvantages suffered by women through past discrimination (Witt, 1990).

Accordingly, the focus of this research was on the affirmative action policy for female students at higher education. The student researcher was specifically keen to study on the practice of affirmative action for female students in Mekelle University. From her observation and experience as an instructor at the university, she thought that assessing the attitude and the practice of affirmative action directly or indirectly indicates the problems that come along with implementation of the program. Also, under this topic, the student researcher needed to look over the challenges that female students in general and female beneficiaries in particular face after they joined university as she believed uncovering these problems help the university to improve the inefficient part of the program.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Equity in higher education discourse represents strategies and procedures for enabling and encouraging groups underrepresented like women in higher education institutions, and programs or study areas to be granted access and to exit successfully (Faakye, 2007). However, according to the report of *UNESCO (2006)*, higher education in African university has generally favored the male populations.

When such inequality is prevailed, governments have sought to remedy it through strong affirmative action programs in higher education (Kochar, 2009). These programs can be implemented in diverse spheres in general and university admission in particular that include ethnic-racial, gender and socio-economic criteria in order to enhance the opportunity of access to higher education for underrepresented groups (Oliven, 2009).

When we come to our context, equity measures are taken in different policy statements and practiced as well. For instance, since the ratification of FDRE (1995) constitution, affirmative action has been practiced in education sectors. Girls are admitted to preparatory schools and higher education institutions with less point than that of boys. Regardless of the efforts done on side of the government, *University World News Report (2009)* revealed that Ethiopia is categorized as one of the countries where a third or less of higher education graduates is females. Similarly, according to *Education Statics Annual Abstract of MOE (2008/9)*, from 2003/4 to 2008/9, female students who graduated from under graduate degree were less than 20 % with the exception of 22% in 2008/09 academic year (*See Table, 4.2*).

The concepts and practices of affirmative action for women in education and in other sectors are still ongoing debates. On the one hand, advocates view affirmative action for women as a compensatory vehicle for leveling the playing field, and as an entitlement repayment for the “sins of the past” or for the past ignorance of half of the populations (Thomas, et al, 2004). On the other hand, others argue that affirmative action serves to devalue the achievement of women and perpetuate the idea that these groups cannot achieve without preferential help; it also reinforces the myth of female inferiority (Witt, 1990).

Regarding the low enrollment of women to higher education and the attitude towards affirmative action, the current study aimed to answer the following basic questions:

1. What is the trend of female students’ enrollment in public higher education institutions in general and at Mekele University in particular?

2. What is the attitude of instructors towards the practice of affirmative action for female students?
3. What is the attitude of students towards the practice of affirmative action for female students?
4. To what extent has affirmative action been practiced in Mekele University?
5. What are the challenges faced by female students, and especially female beneficiaries?

1.3. Objectives

This study has general and specific objectives:

1.3.1. General Objectives

This study generally aims:

- To assess the attitude and the practice of affirmative action for female students and problems related to the program and suggest some possible recommendations to solve them.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To review the trend of female students' enrollment to public higher education institutions in general and MU in particular.
- To show the attitudes of instructors and students towards the practice of affirmative action
- To assess practice of affirmative action in MU.
- To uncover the challenges of female students in general and female beneficiaries in particular at MU.

- To propose some recommendations to overcome the challenges

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study is expected to:

- Create awareness to the university community about the practice of affirmative action for female students in MU.
- Help the management of MU for making practical decisions in alleviating the challenges that obstruct full implementation of affirmative action for female students
- Provide valuable information to Gender Office and Women's Association at MU.
- Serve as a spring board for student researchers who want to do a related or further research on the topic.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

The study has been delimited to Mekele University, the student researcher has been an instructor at the university; and she thought that access to data and relevant information could be easy. Moreover, due to the need for more practicality, the study has covered four colleges out of the total eight and three departments from each college.

Mekelle University was established in May 2000 by the Government of Ethiopia as an autonomous higher education institution. Initially, in 1993, it was set up as an agricultural college. It is located in Northern Ethiopia in Tigray regional state. It is 783 kilometers away from the Ethiopian capital city, Addis Ababa. It has three campuses which are found within Mekelle.

- Endayesus/Arid campus (College of Dry Land Agriculture and Natural Resources Management, Natural and Computational Sciences, Engineering and computer sciences, Veterinary Science),

- Adi Haki campus (College of Law and Governance, Languages and Humanities, Business and Economics), and
- Aider campus (College of Health Sciences) (Mekelle University Boucher, 2009).

1.6. Limitation of the Study

Identifying non-beneficiary from beneficiary female students for the study was a challenge because the cut points for every year admission for beneficiaries were not an available data. Thus, the student researcher gave only a chance for those female students who score above 250 admission points to joint the university so as to be included in the sample selection because she considered this cut point as safe to identify non beneficiary from beneficiary female students. Thus, those who score below 250 entry point and who were not beneficiary female students had not given a chance to be included in the survey study. And to select beneficiary discussants, the student researcher took female students who had the least entry points.

1.7. Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Attitude – feelings, opinions, believes and views of some parts of the university community towards the practice of affirmative action.

Affirmative action – an action which is taken at education sector to increase the representation of women, especially in higher education institutions by lowering the admission point to female students and giving them additional supports during their stay in the university.

Female beneficiaries- are students who admitted to higher education institution with less point than that of boys.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Reviews

2.1. Gender Equity in Education

According to *UNESCO (2006)*, gender equity in all forms of education has the following significant dimensions require serious consideration: (1) Quality of access at all levels of education. (2) Factors that determine gender-specific attrition and the potential for retention. (3) Content of the programs regarding both the formal curriculum and informal education in terms of the systemic values in educational institutions that hinder or promote a real gender-sensitive context. Thus equity in education represents, in general, a package of policies which includes fair access and reasonable treatment including opportunities for underrepresented groups like women not only to enter, but to progress well in educational system (Faaye, 2007).

UNESCO (1993) as cited in *UNESCO (2006)* revealed that in developing countries, especially in Africa, there are still historical, cultural, and economic factors that have been hindering women's chances for access to and benefits from formal education especially at the tertiary level. However, nowadays, it has been generally assumed that the expansion of national systems of higher education in Africa would contribute to greater equality; to gain access through increased participation of traditionally disadvantaged groups such as women and the disabled (Maseno, 2005). As stated by Lopez-Claros and et al (2005), even if the access is open, the content of the educational curriculum and the attitudes of teachers serve merely to reinforce prevalent gender stereotypes and injustices, and then the mere fact of literacy and education does not, in itself, close the gender gap.

Therefore, *United Nation Head Quarter (2009)* suggested that governments have to invest in human capital from primary and secondary to higher education, life skills and job training and continue till it reaches the target for gender parity. This investment has

to start from introduction into the education system because of the fact that , as indicated by *Trans Africa forum* in 2009, in the case of primary schooling, unequal access to education in first grade leads to overall differences in school attendance between boys and girls; for instance, from 1999 to 2005, the regional GPI (gender parity index) of sub-Saharan Africa rose from 0.88 to 0.92, a step forward but still below the global average of 0.95. On the individual country level, although several African countries made significant strides in increasing the enrollment of girls in primary schools, the results are still far from the goal.

2.2. Gender Stereotype in Education

Gender roles and stereotypes have an impact on women's education particularly and on their life generally. On one hand, the universal gender bias within institutions of higher learning still persists; women are concentrating in education science and health-related fields of study (*UNESCO, 1998*). This is due to commonly held stereotype or believes that "boys are good at hard science and girls are good at social science". For instance ,particularly in Africa, as noted by Rathgeber (1995) in *UNESCO(2006)* report ,access to and utilization of technology will reflect major societal values which is not typically gender-neutral ; thus, based on misconception, women students tend not to enroll in fields of Science, Technology, Engineering since these fields continue to be clearly associated with male students.

Quinn (2003) as cited in Morley (2006) pointed out that in the hidden curriculum women are positioned as less intellectually and academically competent, while on the other hand, there is hysteria about the 'feminization' of higher education. Discrimination due to perceived incompetence is based on descriptive gender stereotypes (Rudman and Glick, 2001 in Morley, 2006). For instance, research conducted with European American young people has shown that boys are viewed as having more social power than girls, respond to more positively in classroom contexts, and have higher self-concept across social and academic domains and are viewed and treated as intellectuals compared to women and girls in their relationship to classroom

and school treatment (Belenky et al., 1986, Beyer, 1999 as cited in Chavous, et al, 2004).

On the other hand, Social structures, especially in developing countries, pressure women to start a family ahead of professional considerations. The society expects women to bare the burden of caring for the young, elderly and the sick or disabled. The overall welfare of the family falls on women, who are expected to somehow supplement their families' income (*UNESCO, 1998*) than prioritizing the long outcome of their education

2.3. The Historical Development of Affirmative Action

Every concept or idea has a historical background, and in order to acquire a full understanding of any topic, the history of the subject has a lot to contribute (Woodhouse, 2002). Thus , we oblige to go to U.S.A as it is the first country to introduce the concept and the practice of affirmative action.

John F. Kennedy is often cited as one of the first to use the phrase "affirmative action" in his 1961 executive order to ensure that applicants are employed regardless of their race, creed, color, or national origin (Jose, 2008). Again, at the time of Lyndon Johnson , as a result of United States' lack of readiness for diversity (Thomas, et al, 2004), the passage of the civil right in 1964 was written and produced affirmative action which has been a major step in direction of finally securing legal protection for discriminated groups (Witt, 1990).

Jose (2008) maintains that Johnson's rationale for affirmative action at that time is worth quoting, he says: "you do not take a person, who for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race; and then told him he is free to compete with all the others". He also expanded his executive order in 1967 to include affirmative action requirements to benefit women.

In 1972, the Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinating Council provided clarification to federal, state, and local officials on the role of affirmative action in the overall equal employment opportunity program (Jose, 2008). In the same year, the council also considered women educational equity and passed the Educational Amendments, known commonly as Title IX, which prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs; prior to this, many schools refused to admit women and or imposed limits on their admission (*National Counsel for Research on Women*, 2009).

Therefore, Affirmative action is an important drive in the achievement of employment and education equity for African Americans and other minority groups like women who had been historically oppressed and had experienced discrimination. It is also a policy that is intended to rectify exclusionary practices experienced by these groups with hopes of correcting past and present social injustices (Woodhouse, 2002)

2.4. Practice of Affirmative Action in Various Countries

After the practice of affirmative action was introduced in U.S.A to compensate women's and minorities' past disadvantages, the program has been employed world wide as mechanism to eliminate inequalities among nations in general and between genders in particular. The current study also attempted to look over some countries' experiences regarding to affirmative action in different sectors.

2.4.1. Affirmative Action in U.S.A

The development and evolution of affirmative action as a mechanism for attaining social justice; and equity is a lesson in U.S. history, recent and remote (Jose, 2008). When the Civil Rights Act (1964) as cited in Thomas, et al, (2004), passed into law and desegregation became the legal order of the day, and changes were seen in terms of minority groups and women representation where it previously had been limited legally. For instance, *American Association of University Women* (2009) and *US Department of Education* (2003) identified the practical changes brought by affirmative action programs as shown in the table below:

Table 2.1. Practical changes brought by affirmative action for minorities and women

| People | Profession/fields | Changes percentage /numbers | Year |
|----------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Women | Physicians | 7.6 percent to 25.2 percent(tripled) | between 1970 and 2002 |
| Women | Engineering bachelor degrees | 30 percent to 50.4 percent | Between 1972 and 2004 |
| Women | Engineering master degrees | 19 percent to 43.6 percent | Between 1972 and 2004 |
| Black students | Law school | 1.29 %-5.1% | Between 1970 to 1985 |
| Black students | Law school | 5.1%- 7.5% of all law students | Between 1985 to 1995 |
| Women | All professional degrees | 6.3%-27.5%(quadrupled) | Between 1971-1980 |

Since the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, it has transformed many women and blacks and minorities' life to the betterment through economic growth, professional development. Despite all these advantages enjoyed by women and minorities, as stated by AAUW (2009), opponents have taken a state by state approach to abolishing affirmative action programs because they believe that Affirmative action programs are illegal if (1) an unqualified person receives benefits over a qualified one; (2) numerical goals are so strict that the plan lacks reasonable flexibility; (3) the numerical goals bear no relationship to the available pool of qualified candidates and could therefore become quotas; or (4) the plan is not fixed in length.

At last, the opposition has been successful; thus, the program is banned from public sectors in different states. For instance, as indicated by *IJJ Affirmative Action Report (2006)*, the first state to end Affirmative Action was California. In 1996, Proposition 209 passed the general election with 54 percent of the vote. It ended the practice of granting preferential or discriminatory treatment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education and public contracting. Programs specifically targeting minorities, formerly widely in use at public universities, are no longer allowed under Proposition 209. And in 1998 Voters in Washington state pass Initiative 200—a measure essentially identical to California's Proposition 209, banning “preferential treatment” by state government. In 2006, Michigan made affirmative action unconstitutional in higher education, public

employment, and contracting in the state with 58 percent of the vote despite the effort done by the advocates of the program (AAUW, 2009).

In addition, over the last decade, affirmative action policies have been significantly rolled back through funding cuts, voter initiatives, and devastating court decisions. In 1996, Congress eliminated funding for programs that had for two decades supported Title IX and gender-equity services in 49 state educational agencies. These programs traditionally funded a state Title IX coordinator position and statewide training and assistance to local school districts. Since 1997, only two states have maintained their previous level of services, while only 14 states maintain part-time Services (NCRW, 2009).

Because of the outlaw of affirmative action act, the life of minority has been seriously affected. IJJ *Affirmative Action Report (2006)* showed that the impact over the last past ten years since the proposition of 209 and stated that immediately after its passage, minority student acceptance rates into the more elite public institutions such as the University of California-Berkeley dropped. Berkeley accepted half as many African-American and Chicano students as it did the year before; its law school enrolled a single African-American out of 268 students the same year. By 2005, numbers slowly crept up, but still remained below the pre-Proposition 209 levels. Specifically, as revealed by *US Department of Education (2003)*, when the ban on affirmative action was implemented at the University of California (UC)-Berkeley law school, the number of black students admitted dropped from 75 in 1996 to 14 (out of 792 applicants) in 1997. This university also, as the same report in the same year maintains that, admitted 61% fewer minorities in 1998—the year the state first implemented its ban on affirmative action at the undergraduate level. 800 black and other minority students with grade point averages of 4.0 and SAT scores of at least 1200 were denied admission to the 1998 freshman class.

At the University of Texas (UT) after the *Hopwood* decision overturned affirmative action, the number of black students at the UT Law School also dropped from 65 in 1996 to 11 in 1997. Only 4 black students enrolled in a first-year class of more than

400. At the University Law School, *Latino student enrollment has been cut in half* since affirmative action programs were outlawed in 1995. In its first year without affirmative action, the University of California (UC)-San Diego School of Medicine did not admit a single black applicant, of the 196 who applied (*US Department of Education, 2003*).

2.4.2. Affirmative Action in Sweden

The Nordic countries, in general, are getting closer, leading the way in providing women with a quality of life almost equal to that of men, with almost comparable levels of political participation, and with relatively equal educational and economic opportunity and participation (Lopez-Claros and et al 2005). For instance, the Education Act of Sweden stipulates that “all children and young people, regardless of sex, geographical domicile and social and economic circumstances, shall have equal access to education in the public education system”: For girls and boys aged 7 – 16 years attendance at school is compulsory and they are entitled to education (Sweden’s Follow-up of the Platform for Action, 2004).

Moreover, Sweden’s policy on gender equality has also ensured that women and men have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in all significant areas of life, for instance, equal access to education and opportunities for developing personal ambitions, interests and talents and equal opportunities for economic independence and equal conditions and opportunities as regards business activities, work, working conditions and development at work. This objective has been set since 1994 (*Sweden’s Follow-up of the Platform for Action, 2004*).

In higher education, women have been admitted for 120 years, and more than 60% of Swedish university students were women in 1994 (*UNESCO, 1998*). This report in the same year maintains that there are no formal obstacles preventing women from reaching high positions in colleges and universities now days. Even though Sweden has been regarded as one of the most advanced countries concerning equality between men and women, four years ago (1994), 93% of the professors in Swedish colleges and universities were men (*UNESCO, 1998*).

2.4.3. Affirmative Action in India

As revealed by Kapur and et al (2007), in 1951 a Brahmin girl was denied admission to a medical college in Madras, one of the cities in India, even though she had scored sufficient marks. The student appealed to the Supreme Court claiming she had been discriminated only based on her birth (caste). The Court agreed and struck down the Madras government order. Twelve major demonstrations broke out in the state and the resulting pressure forced India's first constitutional amendment. In the same year, the First Amendment Act made certain changes in Article 15(4) of the Indian Constitution; the Right to Equality for all citizens was guaranteed.

Kapur and et al (2007) maintains that the amendment empowered the state to make any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward class in India. The amendment further allows the government to reserve seats for the Scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes and other backward classes (Faakye, 2007). Since then, the Government of India's approach to historically marginalized groups draws on provisions made in the Indian Constitution, which contains explicit state obligation towards protecting and promoting social, economic, political and cultural rights ;for instance, Directive Principle of state Policy, (Article 46), is an extension of the constitution that address the rights of people: "The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation" (UNICEF, 2006).

The commitment to implement the provision was reflected in the financial incentives provided to Schedule caste and tribe students, namely, hostels, post-matric (high school) scholarships, etc.; also, special cells/administrative units were set up in universities to monitor the entry/progress of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students, staff and teachers (Chanana,2004) . For example, the 1950 Constitution of India, specifies up to 15% reservation in higher education for the Scheduled castes (a

notable disadvantaged group), and 7.5% reservation for the Scheduled tribes (also a predominant excluded group) (Faakye, 2007).

Chanana (2004) maintains that there is no gender-based positive discrimination in education or employment although some provinces or institutions may have made a separate provision for them; thus, women face cumulative disadvantages and they bear a multiple burden of inequality due to the dimensions of their caste, class, religion and region. However, now days, there is tremendous change in the enrollment of women in higher education particularly. For instance, starting from 1950-51 when the proportion of women was 10.9 percent to 40.04 percent in 2002-03, the increase has been significant. In other words there were, 14 women per 100 men in 1950-51 which increased to 67 in 2002-03. Thus, the proportion of women entering higher education today has increased rapidly from 1,685,926 (10 %) in 1991-92 to 40% (3,695,964) of all students (Chanana, 2004). In addition, India has several women's universities and colleges and the establishment of them is as a step towards enabling more female students to obtain the benefits of higher education (*UNESCO, 1998*).

Generally, there has been a significant increase in overall literacy rates and school participation rates across India since the early 1990s (*UNICEF, 2006*). Moreover, the country, compare to South, Asia has the world's third largest higher education system and plans to raise enrolment from 11% to 15% by 2012, (DFID, 2008), however, gender and social disparities have prevailed in education sectors (*UNICEF, 2006*).

2.4.4. Affirmative Action in Ghana

The dominance of equity themes in the Ghanaian constitutional and legislative framework can't fail to be noticed; because, on one hand, the 1992 constitution of Ghana provides a clear illustration of this phenomenon. In Article 35 (6) the following provision is made "Towards the achievement of the principles of national integration the government should take appropriate measures to achieve reasonable regional and gender balance in recruitment and appointment to public offices". Offering further strength to these provisions is article 17 (2) which provide "nobody should be

discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, color, ethnic origin, religion, creed or social or economic status” (Faakye, 2007).

On the other hand, the Education Act (Act 87) provides in section 1 that “No Person shall be refused admission as a pupil at any school on account of their religious persuasion, nationality, race, or language of himself or either of his parents” (Faakye, 2007). Even if there are good policies to enhance women representations and empowerment, Ghana missed out on the gender parity target of 1:1 as enshrined in the Millennium Development Goal 3 in 2005. The current school gender parity ratio of 1 boy to: 0.97 girls this is 0.03 short of reaching the 2005 target.

Moreover, gender parity averages particularly in rural areas is below the national average (Debe, 2009). This maybe the result of girls’ socialization stresses marriage and motherhood as the primary goal in life, a goal that is deeply rooted by the time they reach adulthood (Adusah-Karikari, 2008).

2.4.5. Affirmative Action in Rwanda

According to *ADBG (2008)* report, Rwanda is a signatory to a number of international and regional legal instruments that protect the rights of women including the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights. As a result; as indicated by Huggins and et al (2007), Rwanda has made a firm commitment to gender empowerment in the political and social realms, a goal which is most clearly laid out in its 2003 Constitution and the Vision 2020 development plan, adopted in 2000. Education for all, achieving gender parity in higher education, and practicing a policy of affirmative action to promote women’s educational and social advancement are designated as policy priorities for realizing the development goals of the country. In addition, the Constitution particularly states that education at the primary level should be free and mandatory for all primary school children. This part of the constitution works toward achieving the MDGs of ‘universal primary education’ and ‘gender

equality and women's empowerment' by promoting gender equality at all levels of education (Huggins and et al, 2007).

According to *USAID (2002)*, fifty-five percent of females and 48 percent of males are illiterate; and only 27.5 percent of females and 50.7 percent of males have completed primary school in 1996; and the enrollment statistics for both boys and girls at the secondary school level was 7 percent in 1998—far below the sub-Saharan average of 26 percent. The widest gender gap with respect to educational attainment is at the tertiary level.

But nowadays, as revealed by Huggins and et al, (2007), Rwanda has made enormous strides forward in improving access of boys and girls to education at all levels, and in promoting gender equality within its education system. The authors maintain that at the primary level, girls' net enrolment slightly surpasses that of boys, yet this trend is reversed at higher levels of education .At the university level, women represent only 4 out of every 10 students.

The statically evidence also shows the gender disparity in education particularly in higher levels. For example, as stated in *ADBG (2008)*, currently girls' enrollment is only 27 percent of the total enrollment in public universities, while they have a 49 percent participation in private universities. In 2001 girls received only 23.5 percent of the scholarships for the National University. This report also maintains that girls who passed the secondary school leaving examinations ("A" level examinations) don't get equal opportunities at public higher education institutions. For example 48.3 percent of those who passed the secondary school leaving examination in 2003/4 were girls.

While only 8 percent of the girls who passed the examinations were admitted to public higher education institutions 15 percent of the boys who passed the examinations were admitted. Even when girls advance through the education structure, a majority of women students in the higher grades focus on subjects relating to the arts, rather than the more marketable technical, scientific, and vocational study areas(*USAID, 2002*).

On top of this, a recent Women's Competence Profile Report by MIGEPROF gave some alarming figures about tertiary education outcomes in Rwanda. The National University of Rwanda had enrolled 3,002 women over the last 40 years, University of Lake Kivu: 3,969 in 10 years. There were only 13,119 women with bachelor's degree and at least 30 percent of women failed to finish their degrees (Huggins and et al, 2007)

There are different barriers which continue to prevent girls and young women from attending schools and universities and from performing equally to their male classmates. As (USAID, 2002, Huggins and et al, 2007, and ADBG, 2008) identify them as follows:

- need of families for older girls to help with domestic chores and care for younger children,
- cost of school (that is, having to make a choice, parents often send their boys over girls to school),
- sexual harassment of females at school by their teachers
- girls' low admission into public universities despite their high passing rate at secondary school leaving examinations.
- the prioritization of science and technology within the educational and development policies of the country may act to further exclude female students unless additional actions are taken to promote women's participation in these fields .

2.4.6. Affirmative Action in Uganda

Uganda adopted a gender-sensitive Constitution in 1995: section 21 of this new Constitution of the country provides for equality before the law "a person shall not be discriminated against on the ground of sex, race, color, ethnic origin, tribe, birth, creed or religion, or social or economic standing, political opinion or disability" (Ebeku,2004).

Additionally, in Uganda, affirmative action was legally endorsed in 1995 constitution where article 33 section 5 grants women the right to affirmative action for the purpose of redressing the imbalances created by history, tradition or custom (Government of Uganda, 1995 as cited in Maseno, 2005). This allows affirmative action policies to be practiced within public Institutions (Faakye, 2007). Morley (2006) confirmed that Uganda has a strong policy context of gender equity, with affirmative action programs and gender mainstreaming initiatives. As a result of these programs, as revealed by DFID (2008), Uganda women represent 38% of total higher education (*HE*) enrolment; because of slightly lower entrance thresholds and additional pre-entry teaching programs, the increased enrolment rates have also been reported.

Further, through the application of these programs in respect of university admissions for women the accreditation of 1.5 extra points to women students has boosted female enrolment from 20% to 35% over the past five years. Nevertheless the proportion of females to male students in engineering and science-based courses is still very low at about 10% (*UNESCO, 1998*).

However, a Ugandan academic suggested in Morley (2006) that the problem is how to go through the barriers. In her own words: *“they say the doors are open, but we are still tied. They tie your hands and blind fold you then they say ‘the door is open’. So how do you move, we are still very far”*.

As report of *Trans Africa Forum* (2009), there are different causes for insufficient participation of women in education in general. In Uganda, as in several other places in Africa, early marriages, pregnancies, sexual violence and circumstances related to HIV/AIDS are harsh realities that very often thwart a girls’ attempt at getting an education.

2.4.7. Affirmative Action in Kenya

The present government has passed rules that women occupy 30 percent of any position in any sector within the government (*IFLA 2007*). For instance, as Maseno (2005)

stated, in order to affect the gender- related access policy in Kenya, the government through the Ministry of Education employs a variety of instruments: one of policy instruments of obvious relevance to access is admission policy. In 1993, the Joint Admission Board (JAB) of the public universities lowered the entry requirement for female students (Irungu 2002 in Maseno, 2005) to contribute in lowering the gender gap in the sector.

As reported by *IFLA (2007)*; access to education has also facilitated the enrolment of children in Kenya primary schools as 102 girls to 100 boys. In secondary schools are 89 girls to 100 boys; and only 30percent girls to 100 percent boys at university level. However, Maseno (2005) noted that in higher education, gender disparity has been characterized over the years. A gendered analysis of admissions at public University illustrates a low representation of females. Further, in certain fields, such as natural sciences, the participation of females is even lower than the average

In contrast, Ngome (2003) as cited in *UNESCO (2006)* stated that in private universities, women constituting 54.5 per cent of the 1999-2000 total student enrolments because they fail to secure admission into the public universities, owing to their poor performance, on the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education. In general, it can be said that there was a steady increase in student enrolment to tertiary education since Kenya's independence in 1963 (Maseno, 2005).

2.4.8. Affirmative Action in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, equity that mainly revolves around gender and under served or marginalized regions looms large as issues seriously confronting higher education development (Teshome,2005) .While the concept of Affirmative Action or equity act for women was started in 1960's; it is still at an infancy stage in different public sectors of the country.

In 1991 the Marxist Leninist oriented regime of Derg was replaced by EPRDF. The new government due to its socio-economic ideology takes different measures to reform

the prevailing system. Education was one of the areas found to be transformed. For this purpose, a new Educational and Training Policy was drafted by the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) and was ratified by the office of the prime minister in August 1993; its final draft published in April 1994 (ETP, 1994). However, Education and Training policy does not deal the idea of affirmative action in detail, it is only limited to women teacher trainee, the new constitution of FDRE, which was written in 1995, has given due attention towards it and stated that:

The historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia taken in to account, women, in order to remedy this legacy, are entitled to affirmative action. The purpose of such measures shall be to provide special attention to women so as to enable them to compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in political, social and economic life as well as in public and private institutions (Article 35:3).

Since then ,affirmative action has been widely introduced and practiced in preparatory and higher education institution specifically and in public sectors generally. In addition , higher education proclamation (FDRE, 2003) includes the preferential treatment of the existing disadvantageous groups, including women, and states in its Article 33:1 that

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

The practice of affirmative action started in 1996 right after the ratification of the new constitution. Since then, there has been some changes observed; for instance, the rise of the number of female students in higher education. Abebayehu (1998) indicated that as the result of affirmative action strategy, female student enrolment at undergraduate level grew from 8.5% in 1985/86 to 13.5% in 1996/7. Similarly, as revealed by Teshome (2005), the total number of graduates in 2003/04 was over 39 thousand, of

which 29% were female-a significant increase from 1999 when less than 12 thousand students graduated.

Concerning the educational expectation of female beneficiary students of the program, Selamawit (2007) indicated that when the level of grade and the years goes by, there were no variations in academic performance of recipient and non-recipient female students. Similarly, Fentahun (2001) concurred that the mean cumulative GPA profiles of regular and quota students were not parallel, the gap in academic performance between the two groups moved closer and closer as the students progressed to higher classes, due to in particular, improved performance of quota students. However, he noted that almost all dismissal or withdrawals of quota students occurred at the freshmen year. This was possibly because of fear and doubt related to their relative lower entry grade.

2.5. Debates on Affirmative Action Policy

The practice of Affirmative action has undergone a lot of debate. One side argues that Affirmative Action is the idea that “to treat some persons equally, we must treat them differently.” This seemingly contradictory position is meant to ensure that persons of different races, genders, and religious backgrounds receive fair and equitable treatment (US Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackman stated in 1978 as cited in *IJJ Affirmative Action Report, 2006*). For instance, as indicated by *Equal Employment Opportunity Act in Australia (1986)*, women remain to be insignificant participants in nontraditional areas of employment, in middle and senior management positions, on corporation boards and government policy advisory committees. Rather, they are mostly predominant over low-paid, low-skilled, and unstable areas of employment; thus, it is essential that the Affirmative Action Act be maintained and strengthened in the public interest. Moreover, Thomas, et al, (2004) identifies the pros of affirmative action policy as follows:

- *To compensate those who have been discriminated against.*

Advocates view Affirmative Action as a compensatory vehicle for leveling the playing field, and/or as an entitlement repayment for the “sins of the past.”

- *To fight poverty:*

The greatest rationale for Affirmative Action is the need to help women out of poverty.

- *To foster diversity.*

Affirmative Action can bring about racial, ethnic and gender diversity that, in turn, will foster creativity and innovation.

In general, as Maddox,(1986) , affirmative action makes women engage in predominantly male dominated education institutions and workplaces that brings about change in the their culture. The present numerical focus could be taken to imply a conviction that equality is furthered by the simple fact of women's presence, seeing male and female employees and students as straightforwardly interchangeable.

The other side argues that affirmative action not only violates strongly held values regarding idealisms and individual achievement, but individuals who benefit from affirmative action programs are subsequently devalued (Witt, 1990). Similarly, even though affirmative action students, particularly girls, are admitted to higher education institution with only 0.2 GPA less than boys, they are considered and labeled as much inferior and of lower merit (Habtamu, 2004).

In addition, as indicated by Neumark (2005), affirmative action “Beneficiaries” actually hurt because they are “mismatched” with jobs or universities in which they cannot successfully perform, and ultimately bear the costs of failure – through dropping out of school, turnover in jobs, and the like. Such mismatches would point to inefficiencies generated by Affirmative Action, and suggest that some of the supposed distributional benefits to women are illusory.

2.6. Theoretical Frame Work for Affirmative Action: Liberal Feminism

Tong (1998) noted that the goal of women's liberation for liberal feminist is sexual equality, or, as it sometimes termed as, gender justice. And, they wish to free women from oppression, gender roles ,that is, from those roles used as excuses or justifications for giving women a lesser place, or no place at all, in the academy, the forum, and the market place. As a result, Mill and Taylor noted in Tong (1998) that if society were to achieve sexual equality, gender justice, it must provide women with same political rights and economical opportunities as well as the same education that men enjoy.

These liberal feminists have two different strategies to address the issue of gender inequality. One of the liberal feminists is Classical feminists who believe that the source of women's subordination or gender inequality is the state; because they view freedom as freedom from coercive intervention from the state. Strong position on the assumption that individual's freedom is violated when the state interferes with their liberty by providing discriminatory laws based on sex (Beasley, 1999). These feminist argued that the state has to remove discriminatory laws and policies from books which impede women from equal participation as their male counterparts. They rely heavily on the equal treatment for both sexes under the law (Tong, 1998).

Beasley(1999) stated that welfare/ egalitarian feminists support certain restricted forms of state intervention on the assumption that, since unregulated inequalities may lead to overly harsh social outcomes for some, a society in which inequality tempered with support towards those who are disadvantaged or less fortune better advance the welfare of all ; Liberal feminists follow this line of thinking in specifically asserting that women are not fundamentally different to men; and yet are denied opportunities on the basis of their sex. Sex, therefore, constitutes an unwarranted disadvantage, a barrier to competition and the recognition of merit. Thus, women's position in the society may be a legitimate subject of the government intervention. This feminist theory claims that gender specific laws rather than gender-neutral laws are better able to secure equality between sexes (Tong, 1998). Although integrating affirmative action in state's constitution and in policy statement in order to favor women is a controversial issue

among liberal feminists, these days, some countries, including Ethiopia, adopt this egalitarian liberalism concept as the only option to get away from gender disparity.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology applied in the study. It consists: the research design, methods of data collections, sampling techniques and sample size, source of data, data analysis techniques, and validity and reliability of the instruments. Under each sub topics, the motivations or reasons for using each methodology part has been explained.

3.1. Research Design

Cresswell(2003) indicates that when we are dealing with collection of both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time ,we have to use concurrent procedural design. In this research, concurrent procedural design was used; qualitative and quantitative forms of data were collected at the same time during the study and the information was integrated when necessary in the interpretation of the overall results.

3.2. Methods of Data Collection

To gather the required information for the current study, questionnaire, focused group discussion, interview and document review were used.

3.2.1. Survey Questionnaire

Survey questionnaires are conducted in order to provide the researcher with stastical information in particular issue(Henn,2006).Similarly, for the current study, questionnaire was mainly used to get numerical data on the attitude of students and instructors in Mekelle University towards the practice of affirmative action for female students.

The attitude scale items in the questionnaires were developed in the form of Likert scale which used to indicate agreement or disagreement with the statement; and the subjects indicate their attitudes by checking the place on the scale that best reflects their feelings and beliefs about the statement using five responses: 'Strongly Disagree', 'Disagree', 'Neutral', 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree'. In addition, the questionnaires were administered in the form of self-completion.

3.2.2. Focused Group Discussion

According to Nagy, et al, (2004), in FGD, collective sense is made, meanings are negotiated and identified and elaborated through the process of social interaction between people. Likewise, focused group discussions (FGDs) were held with instructors and students in order to uncover the attitudes towards the practice affirmative action and challenges faced by female students, and especially female beneficiaries in the university

In addition, FGD guidelines were prepared before the discussion was held as a reminder of the main points that addressed the research problems. It contained '7' open-ended questions.

3.2.3. Interview

Interviewing offers researchers access to people's idea, thought and practices (Reinharz, 1992). Therefore, for the current study, interview was used as part of the research process; it was held with six key informants. The interviews attempted to discover the practice of affirmative action given for female students after they joined the university. The interview had six semi-structured questions. According to McMillan (1996), semi-structured questions did not have predetermined and structured choices; rather, the questions are open-ended yet specific in intent, allowing individual responses.

3.2.4. Document Review

To collect additional data, various documents were reviewed. The data collected include trends of enrollments and graduates of female students at public higher education institutions in general and at MU in particular; and review the number of female academic staffs in Mekele University in relation with males.

3.3. Sampling Techniques

For the current study, the student researcher employed probability and non –probability sampling techniques. Out of eight colleges of Mekelle University, the student researcher selected four colleges and three departments from each using simple random techniques- lottery method: College of Dry Land and Natural Resource, College of Natural and Computational Science, College of Health Science and College of Business and Economics.

For the selection of sample of students and instructors for the survey research, stratification was used based on their colleges and departments (*see Table 3.1*). Furthermore, to reach to the sample of students' particularly, stratification technique was employed based on their year levels and sexes. The selection of the sample sizes from each category was made proportionally (*see Annex 6*). For final administrations of questionnaires, systematic random sampling technique was used.

According to McMillan, (1996), purposive sampling is used to select individuals that will be most informative. For the current study, the student researcher purposively selected the key informants who could give better information about the topic. In addition, convenient sampling was used to select discussants for the study. Convenient sampling involves the researcher selecting whichever cases are conveniently available (Henn, 2006)

Table-3.1 Sampling techniques for survey

| College | Department | Students | | Instructors | | No. Total population | | Samples | |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------|------|-------------|----|----------------------|----------|-------------|----------|
| | | M | F | M | F | Instructors | Students | Instructors | Students |
| CHS | Nursing | 99 | 50 | 19 | 2 | 21 | 149 | 4 | 8 |
| | Pharmacy | 218 | 63 | 18 | - | 18 | 281 | 8 | 16 |
| | Public Health Science | 67 | 38 | 16 | 1 | 17 | 105 | 3 | 6 |
| Total | | 384 | 151 | 53 | 3 | 56 | 535 | 16 | 30 |
| CNCS | Mathematics | 249 | 25 | 17 | - | 17 | 274 | 6 | 15 |
| | Biology | 152 | 131 | 15 | 1 | 16 | 283 | 7 | 15 |
| | Applied geology | 136 | 57 | 25 | 1 | 26 | 193 | 4 | 11 |
| Total | | 537 | 213 | 57 | 2 | 59 | 750 | 17 | 41 |
| CE | PDM | 265 | 256 | 43 | 4 | 47 | 521 | 10 | 29 |
| | Accounting & Finance | 219 | 463 | 28 | 5 | 33 | 682 | 15 | 36 |
| | Economics | 384 | 164 | 40 | 2 | 42 | 548 | 11 | 30 |
| Total | | 868 | 883 | 111 | 11 | 122 | 1751 | 36 | 95 |
| CDANR | LaRMEP | 292 | 125 | 44 | 4 | 48 | 417 | 21 | 23 |
| | Dry land Crop Scienc | 43 | 94 | 31 | 3 | 34 | 137 | 7 | 8 |
| | DCHS | 41 | 19 | 22 | 2 | 24 | 60 | 3 | 3 |
| Total | | 376 | 238 | 97 | 9 | 106 | 614 | 31 | 34 |
| Grand Total | | 2165 | 1482 | 318 | 25 | 343 | 3652 | 100 | 200 |

3.4. Sample Size

Totally, 109 instructors, 225 students, and six key informants were participants of the current study. Out of 109 instructors, 9 of them were participated in FGDs; where as, the rest were part of the survey research. Likewise; from the total of sample of students (225), 200 of them (non-beneficiary male and female students) were part of the survey research; while, the rest were discussants. I.e. out of 25 discussants, 13 were beneficiary female students; 14 were non-beneficiary female students; and 8 were male students.

3.5. Source of Data

The study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected using questionnaire, interview and FGD from the participants of the study. On the other hand, secondary data were obtained based on reviewing of documents found at the national and the university level.

Participants of the Study

The respondents of this study

- Male students
- Non-beneficiary and beneficiary female students
- Instructors in the university
- Head of Gender Office in Mekelle University
- President of Women Association in the university
- College deans

3.6. Data Analysis Techniques

For the data gathered through questionnaires, SPSS 15 software program was used for analysis. Frequencies and percentages were generated to indicate the profile of the participants and the tendency of their attitudes towards affirmative action for female students.

In order to determine the general tendency of respondents' attitudes whether positive or negative towards the attitude scale statements, the student researcher merged 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' responses together and named "Agree" and 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' combined as "Disagree" and the response 'Neutral' remains the same.

For the qualitative data, thematic analysis was employed. These themes were produced and interpreted to indicate the practice of affirmative action in Mekelle University and the challenges faced by female students generally and female beneficiaries particularly during their stay in the campus. In addition, the documents related to the topics are reviewed, analyzed and interpreted based on the research questions.

3.7. Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

For the current study, three researchers in the related field, including my advisor were consulted about the reliability and content validity of the instrument. For instance, they gave comment on repetitive words, ambiguous sentences that creates confusion on the side of readers; also, they remarked on the applicability of the statement to the targeted group. In addition, they also looked over each statement if it addressed the research problems or what it was intended to measure. After receiving all the opinions, revision was made to the instruments.

3.8. Ethical Consideration

Ethical practice is moral stance that involves conducting research to achieve not just high professional standards of technical procedures, but also respect and protection for the people actively consenting to be studied(Payne, 2004).As a result, the student researcher took the following ethics during the study:

- Informed the participants that all information would be used for research purposes only.
- Got the permission of the participants before recording their voice.
- Informed the respondents that their names would be confidential.
- Checked their willingness to offer information

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

This chapter deals with the presentation of the data gathered through questionnaire, focused group discussion (FGD), interview and document review which were prepared to answer the basic questions of the study, followed by the discussion of their implications. The presentation of survey and qualitative findings and findings from document review are presented in detail in this chapter.

4.1. Findings from Document Review

The document review has attempted to look over enrollment and graduates of students in general and female students in particular at national and at Mekelle University level in relation with that of males. In addition, it reviewed the academic staffs' profile at Mekele University if there are enough female instructors who can serve as role models.

4.1.1. Trends of Students' Enrollment in Public Higher Education

The need to see the enrollment trend of students has been necessitated to see if there has been a significant increment in the number of female students' participation in public higher education. As the focus of this study has been the undergraduate level, the review takes in to account the level.

In 2003/4, the percentage of female students' enrollment out of the total was only 19.4 in all the programs (regular, evening, kiremet and distance), during 2005/06 the enrollment of female student was 22.6 %; it showed 3.2% increase compared with the previous academic year. From the year 2005/6 to 2006/7, the increment of female students' enrollment was less than 1%, i.e. from 23% to 23.8%. And again, in 2007/8 academic year, the enrollment decreased to 23% from 23.8% in 2006/7. In 2008/9 academic year, the enrollment of female students was 27% which was a significant increment from 2007/8 to 2008/9 by 5%. The overall change within five years (2003/4-

2008/9) enrollment of female students at national level was less than 10 % i.e. in 2003/04 the enrollment was 19.4% and in 2008/09, it became 27%. (See, Table 4.1).

4.1. Trend of Students' Enrollment in Public Higher Education of Ethiopia from 2003/4-2008/9

| Year | Regular | | Evening | | Kiremet | | Distance | | Total | | Total % of F |
|--------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|-------|----------|-------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | BS * | F | BS * | F | BS * | F | BS* | F | BS * | F | |
| 2003-04 | 56,072 | 11,415 | 18,597 | 4,120 | 11,934 | 1,329 | - | - | 86,603 | 16,864 | 19.4 |
| 2004-05 | 78,232 | 17,579 | 28,841 | 7,772 | 13,311 | 1,856 | - | - | 120,384 | 27,207 | 22.6 |
| 2005-06 | 93,689 | 20,911 | 26,339 | 7,760 | 14,182 | 2,253 | - | - | 134,210 | 30,924 | 23 |
| 2006-07 | 107,960 | 25,321 | 39,500 | 11,807 | 19,856 | 3,097 | 1,733 | 136 / | 169,049 | 40,361 | 23.8 |
| 2007-08 | 127,033 | 30,058 | 48,362 | 13,550 | 34,299 | 5,272 | 4,505 | 451 - | 214,199 | 49,331 | 23 |
| 2008-09 | 157,429 | 45,517 | 47,852 | 12,334 | 35,604 | 7,020 | 13,307 | 5,398 | 254,192 | 70,269 | 27 |
| Grand Total | | | | | | | | | 2062097 | 164956 | |

Source: Education Statistics Annual Abstract (2003/04-2008/09) MOE: Addis Ababa: EMIS. BS*-Both S

4.1.2. Trend of Graduates in Public Institutions of Higher Education /Undergraduate Degree

Out of the total graduates in 2004/5, 15% of them were female .For the following year, the rate grows by 1 %. Female graduates in 2006/7 and in 2007/8 were 18 % and 19% respectively. Likewise, for Mekele University, as *Education Statistics Annual Abstract* (2003/04-2008/09) indicated, from the total graduates in 2007/8, 21% of them were female students. In nationwide, in 2008/9, the percentages of female graduates from the universities were 22%. Starting from the year 2004/5 to the end of 2008/9, female graduates in public higher education institutions of Ethiopia had not been more than 25%. The detail is presented in the table below:

Table 4.2. Trend of Graduates in Public Institutions of Higher Education /Undergraduate Degree (2003/04-2008/09)

| Year | Regular | | Evening | | Evening | | Kiremet | | Total | | |
|---------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-----|---------|-----|--------|-------|----|
| | BS | F | BS | F | BS | F | BS | F | BS | F | F% |
| 2004-05 | 7,380 | 961 | 2,278 | 572 | 1,110 | 66 | - | - | 10,768 | 1,599 | 15 |
| 2005-06 | 21,472 | 3,070 | 1,892 | 673 | 1,137 | 84 | - | - | 24,501 | 3,827 | 16 |
| 2006-07 | 23,367 | 4,077 | 4,672 | 1,020 | 1,315 | 99 | 47 | 2 | 29,354 | 5,196 | 18 |
| 2007-08 | 26,839 | 4,736 | 6,772 | 1,812 | 4,591 | 716 | 1,102 | 137 | 38,202 | 7,264 | 19 |
| 2008-09 | 31,926 | 6,131 | 8,786 | 2,932 | 2,560 | 549 | 535 | 246 | 43,272 | 9,612 | 22 |

Source: Education Statistics Annual Abstract (2003/04-2008/09) MOE: Addis Ababa: EMIS. BS*-Both Sex

4.1.3. Trends of Students' Enrollments in Mekele University /Undergraduate Degree

In 2005/6, from the total, 22% were female students; a year later they account 24%; the enrollment rate was only 2% between these two years. In 2007/08 academic year, female students who enrolled at MU account 20 %, which was 4% lesser than that of the previous year. In 2008/9 year, female students' enrollment was 42% of the total that was 22% increment from the previous year ,in 2007/8; it was considered as the greatest rate over these five years (2005/06-2009/10).The following years 2009/10 ,24 % of female students were enrolled , that is, the enrollment rate went down by 18% from 2008/9. Within the five years (2005/06- 2009/10), the total enrollment of female students is less than 25% with exception of 2008/9 academic year. The numbers and the proportions are presented in the table below:

4.3. Trend of Students' Enrollment in Mekele University from 2005/06- 2009/10(regular, evening, kiremt and distance)

| Arid Campus | | | Adihaki Campus | | | Aider Campus | | | Total % F |
|---------------|-------|--------|----------------|------|--------|---------------|------|--------|--------------|
| Academic Year | Male | Female | Academic Year | Male | Female | Academic Year | Male | Female | |
| 2005/06 | 4165 | 1118 | 2005/06 | 1465 | 495 | 2005/06 | 1405 | 379 | 22 |
| 2006/07 | 3480 | 977 | 2006/07 | 1031 | 473 | 2006/07 | 149 | 22 | 24 |
| 2007/08 | 3003 | 955 | 2007/08 | 761 | 416 | 2007/08 | 226 | 104 | 20 |
| 2008/09 | 3261 | 1632 | 2008/09 | 1780 | 2066 | 2008/09 | 383 | 156 | 42 |
| 2009/10 | 1817 | 535 | 2009/10 | 684 | 224 | 2009/10 | 249 | 115 | 24 |
| Total | 15726 | 5217 | Total | 5721 | 3674 | Total | 2412 | 776 | 29 |
| Sub.Total | 20943 | | Sub.Total | 9395 | | Sub.Total | 3188 | | |

Source Mekelle University Registrar, 2002 E.C

4.1.4 Academic Staffs in Mekelle University

At diploma level, 93 were male staffs; while 10 were female staffs. Out of 326, 1st degree academic staffs, only 40 were females. In 2nd degree staffs, 182 were males; whereas, 10 were females. From the total of 858 PhD staffs, only 58 were females. As it can be seen in Table -4.14, from the total of academic staffs including diploma, 1st degree, 2nd degree and PhD, only 9% was female staffs.

4.4. Summary of Academic Staff in Mekele University, 2002 E.C.Academic Year

| Year | Diploma | | 1 st degree | | 2 nd degree | | PhD | | Total | | % of F |
|----------------|---------|--------|------------------------|--------|------------------------|--------|------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | % |
| 2009-10 | 93 | 10 | 286 | 40 | 182 | 10 | 800 | 58 | 1361 | 118 | 9 |

Source: Mekele University Registrar, 2002 E.C

As the above findings show, female students' enrollment is very low compared to their male counterparts in all the programs/regular, evening, Kermit and distance/ both at the national level and Mekele University. At the national level between 2003/04 and 2008/09, the proportion of female students in government higher institution was below 30%. The increase in the enrollment rate during all these time is less that 10%. The findings have of the study shown similar condition at Mekele University. These also indicate that there are very few female instructors in Mekele University. Overall, taking in to account both Ethiopian and expatriate the proportion of female instructors in the university were 9 % in 2009/10.

In contrast, the developed countries experience of using affirmative action has significantly changed the lives of women at education sector. For instance, in U.S.A., women in all professional degrees between 1971- 1980 has grown from 6.3% to 27.5% which fourfold in 9 years (*US Department of Education, 2003*). Similarly, in Sweden higher education, women have been admitted for 120 years; and more than 60% of Swedish university students were women in 1994. There are no formal obstacles preventing women from reaching high positions in colleges and universities now days (*UNESCO, 1998*). This report in the same year maintains that even though Sweden has been regarded as one of the most advanced countries concerning equality between men and women, four years ago(1994), 93% of the professors in Swedish colleges and universities were men. From Africa, Uganda ,one of the developing countries, women represent 38% of total higher education enrolment due to affirmative action- slightly lower entrance thresholds and additional pre-entry teaching programs, and the increased enrolment rates have also been reported(*DFID ,2008*) *see chapter Two*.

4.2. Presentation of Survey Findings

The survey finding presents the attitudes of instructors and students towards the practice of affirmative action for female students. These findings are also presented using frequency and percentages. Parallel themes and topics resulted from quantitative and qualitative data are integrated under this section.

The total sample of students and instructors taken for survey research from four colleges of Mekelle University (i.e. College of Business and Economics, College of Dry Land and Agriculture Science, College of Natural and Computational Science and College of Health Science) was 300. Out of the total survey sample (300), 200 were students (78 were non beneficiary female students and 122 were male students); and 100 were instructors (25 female and 75 male instructors). However, from 200 questionnaires distributed for students, 155(78%) were filled and returned. Likewise, out of 100 questionnaires administered for instructors, 85 (85%) were filled and returned the questionnaire.

4.2.1. Respondents' Attitude towards the Need for Affirmative Action

The majority of male and female students, 83 % and 80% respectively believed in the idea stated as 'affirmative action helps many women to join higher education so easily'. Similarly, a large proportion of male (80%) and female (87%) instructors have responded positively towards the idea. Furthermore, almost equal proportion of students and instructors, 83 % and 81% respectively believed that it has helped many female students to enter university so easily (see Table 4.5, No.1). Strengthening this idea, some beneficiary female students believed that they could not have been enrolled to the university without affirmative action program .One of the beneficiary explains:

Affirmative action policy helps most female students to join higher education than ever before...if it had been like in the previous decades when the entrance was equal base with male counterparts, we could not have joined.

Sixty one percent of male and 51% of female students were against the issues raised as ‘unless affirmative action at admission to higher education is used, women will not be treated fairly in academic institution’; in contrast, the rest of male s (24%), and female (39%) students considered the statement positively. Likewise, most of male (69%) and 33 % of female instructors did not believe in the idea; while, 33% of female and 24% of male instructors favored the issue. Between statuses, more than half percent of instructors (62%) and students (58%) believed that affirmative action is not the only option that brings fairness among men and women in academic institution (*see Table 4.5, No-2*). One of the discussants in Instructors’ group explains the options:

In principle, affirmative action means creating opportunities and favorable situations for those groups who were unable to compete with others by providing them tutorial classes, guidance and counseling and other academic supports before exam or side by side with their formal education. But it should not be given at the end of the exam like it is commonly practiced now days.

Almost equal proportion of female (80%) and male (79%) students thought that affirmative action helps women use the country’s resources equally with men. Moreover, all female and 77 % of male instructors responded positively to the idea (*see Table 4.5, No-3*). Within status, a majority of instructors (81%) and students (79%) considered that the program helps women use the country’s resources equally with men.

The findings imply that the majority of the respondents believed that affirmative action program helps many female students join higher education .Similarly, Ababayehu (1998) showed that as the result of affirmative action, female student enrolment at undergraduate level grew from 8.5% in 1985/86 to 13.5% in 1996/7(*see chapter 2*).Generally, we can infer that most respondents, especially, female compared to male respondents have a positive attitude towards the need for affirmative action. Similarly, Selamwit (2007) in her study- entitled “The Effect of Affirmative Action on Recipient

Female Students and Non Recipient Students” found out that the majority of respondents had a positive attitude toward the general needs for this program.

Table 4.5. Respondents’ attitude towards the need for affirmative action

| 1. Affirmative action program has helped many female students to join university so easily. | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|----------|------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Status | sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | c | % | c | % | c | % | c | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 6 | 15% | 2 | 5% | 33 | 80% | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 13 | 12% | 6 | 5% | 95 | 83 % | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 19 | 12% | 8 | 5 % | 128 | 83 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 0 | .0% | 2 | 13.3% | 13 | 87% | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 9 | 12 % | 5 | 8% | 56 | 80 % | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 9 | 11% | 7 | 8 % | 69 | 81% | 85 | 100% |
| 2. Unless affirmative action at admission to higher education used, women will not be addressed fairly in academic institutions. | | | | | | | | | |
| status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | c | % | c | % | c | % | c | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 21 | 51% | 4 | 10 % | 16 | 39 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 69 | 61% | 18 | 16% | 27 | 24% | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 90 | 58% | 22 | 14% | 43 | 28% | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 5 | 33 % | 5 | 33 % | 5 | 33 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 48 | 69 % | 5 | 7% | 17 | 24% | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 53 | 62% | 10 | 12 % | 22 | 26% | 85 | 100% |
| 3. Affirmative action helps women use the country’s resources equally with men | | | | | | | | | |
| status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | c | % | c | % | c | % | c | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 6 | 15% | 2 | 5% | 33 | 80 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 12 | 11% | 12 | 10 % | 90 | 79% | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 18 | 12% | 14 | 9% | 123 | 79 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 0 | .0% | 0 | .0% | 15 | 100 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 6 | 9% | 10 | 14 % | 54 | 77 % | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 6 | 7% | 10 | 12% | 69 | 81% | 85 | 100% |

The findings further show that a large proportion of respondents were against the idea stated as ‘unless affirmative action is used at admission to higher education, women will not be addressed in academic institution fairly’. This shows, most respondents considered that affirmative action policy is not the only mechanism to address fairness among gender in academic institutions. As some discussant explained ,enabling female students score a good result is better than lowering the admission points to join higher

institutions which is commonly practiced now days ; for instance ,giving tutorial classes, developing self confidence, and providing guidance and counseling starting from elementary to higher education is very supportive.

4.2.2. Respondents' Attitude towards the Impact of Affirmative Action on Female Beneficiaries

More than half of female (56%) and 50% of male students favored the issues stated as 'affirmative action program places female students in the academic environment for which they are unprepared'; whereas, 34% of female and 33% male students were against the idea. Besides, 49% of male and 40 % of female instructors agreed with the issue raised; while, 33 % of female and 36 % of male instructors opposed it. Between status, more than half of students (52 %)and 47% of instructors believed that the program places female students in academic environment for which they are unprepared; while 35 % and 33 % of instructors and students respectively were against the issue (*see Table 4.6, No-1*) . Supporting the majority of the respondents, one of the non –beneficiary female students concurs:

The beneficiaries are not competent and fit with the academic expectations, for instance, we can see the last year (2008/9) experience, that is, out of 1800, 1500 female students were admitted to College of Business and Economics. These students were incompetent and low achievers .They got 0 out of 30 or 50and they could not survive even if they were given remedial classes after they failed at semester exams .Almost all were dismissed by now. At this point, we can say that they are unfit and unprepared to join higher education.

Table 4.6. Respondents' attitude towards the impact of affirmative action on female beneficiaries

| 1. Affirmative action program places female students in academic environment for which they are unprepared | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|----------|------|---------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | c | % | c | % | c | % | c | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 14 | 34 % | 4 | 10% | 23 | 56% | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 37 | 33% | 20 | 17 % | 57 | 50 % | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 51 | 33% | 24 | 15 % | 80 | 52% | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 5 | 33 % | 4 | 27% | 6 | 40 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 25 | 36 % | 11 | 16% | 34 | 49% | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 30 | 35% | 15 | 18% | 40 | 47% | 85 | 100% |
| 2. Affirmative action policy causes inferiority of beneficiaries. | | | | | | | | | |
| status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | c | % | c | % | c | % | c | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 30 | 73% | 3 | 8% | 8 | 20 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 75 | 66% | 16 | 14 % | 23 | 20 % | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 105 | 68 % | 19 | 13 % | 31 | 19 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 11 | 73 % | 1 | 7% | 3 | 20 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 34 | 49% | 7 | 10% | 29 | 41% | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 45 | 53% | 8 | 9 % | 32 | 38 % | 85 | 100% |
| 3. Affirmative action policy does not make positive contribution to the education of beneficiaries. | | | | | | | | | |
| Status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | c | % | c | % | c | % | c | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 32 | 78% | 4 | 10% | 5 | 12 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 99 | 87% | 6 | 5 % | 9 | 8% | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 131 | 85% | 10 | 6% | 14 | 9 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 13 | 87% | 0 | .0% | 2 | 13 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 47 | 67% | 7 | 10% | 16 | 23% | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 60 | 71 % | 7 | 8 % | 18 | 21% | 85 | 100% |

Most of female (73 %) and male (66%) students did not positively consider the statement: 'affirmative action causes inferiority among beneficiaries'; and a large proportion of female (73 %) and 49% of male instructors thought in the same way. Generally, more than half of students (68 %) and instructors (53 %) did not favor the idea under discussion (see Table 4.6.No.2).A majority of male (87 %) and female (78 %) students as well as 87 % of female and 67 % of male instructors believed that affirmative action has a positive contribution to the education of beneficiaries. Similarly, a majority of

instructors (71 %) and 85 %of students also considered the idea positively (*see Table 4.6.No.3*). Contrary; one of the key informants says:

Affirmative action beneficiaries perceive the program in wrong way; that is, they feel they can easily pass with some kind of power; and it does not create competitive spirit among them. For instance, in preparatory school, most female students say that they will join university; it is not because they think they deserve, but they know that some kind of power will push them forward they know that they can easily pass with no worries and without exerting a lot of efforts, however, they easily get dismissed after they join university ; thus, the program is not helping them ...it makes them dependent not competent

As the findings indicate, the majority of the respondents, and especially female respondents thought that affirmative action has less negative impact on beneficiaries. However, most of them believed that the program places the beneficiaries to the academic environment for which they are not well prepared. Some discussant also thought that these students cannot cope up with the academic expectation of the university; thus, they get easily dismissed. Like wise , as concurred by Neumark (2005), affirmative action “Beneficiaries” actually hurt because they are “mismatched” with universities in which they cannot successfully perform, and ultimately bear the costs of failure – through dropping out of school(*see Chapter 2 ,2.5*).

4.3.3. Respondents’ Attitude towards the Impact of Affirmative Action on Non-Beneficiary Students

More than half of female (61 %) and male (58%) students did not believe in the idea noted as ‘affirmative action affects the motivation of competent female students’; in the same way, 60 % female and 50 % of male instructors were against the statement. On the whole, more than half of instructors (52 %) and students (59 %) were against that the program weakens the motivation of competent female students (*see Table 4.7, No-1*). Contrary to the majority of the respondents, one of the discussants in the Non Beneficiary Female Students Group says:

Male students perceive affirmative action as the expression of female students' weakness and give them a message that we still need support to be equal with them. It underestimates us in the eyes of male students and others even though we are not beneficiaries.

Sixty four percent of male and 59 % of female students were against the idea: 'affirmative action discourages equal competition among students'. Similarly, a greater proportion of female instructor (60 %) compared to male instructors (40 %) opposed the idea; nevertheless, more than half of male (53 %) and 33 % of female instructor believed that the program discourages equal competition among students. Within statuses, a large proportion of students (62 %) compared to instructors (44 %) did not favor the idea; while, more than half of instructors (51 %) and 34 %of students favored the idea (*see Table 4.7, No-1*).

A majority of female (63 %) and male (68%) students did not believe in the idea stated as 'affirmative action might lead to conflicts between men and women'; most of female (73 %) and male (57%) instructors also against the idea. Between instructors and students, a majority of instructors (60%) and students (66 %) favored the idea (*see Table 4.7, No-2*).

The majority of female students (66 %) and female instructors (80 %) as well as 48 %of male students and 57 % of male instructors did not positively consider the statement: 'affirmative action is unfair for male students'. In contrast , a large proportion of male (43 %) compared to female (24%) students believed that affirmative action is unfair for male students; also, 31 % of male and 20 %of female instructors had the same attitude to the idea. Generally, a total of instructor (61 %) and students (53 %) were against the statement; whereas, 36 %of students and 29 % of instructors thought it is unfair for male students (*see Table 4.7, No-3*).

Table 4.7. Respondents' attitude towards the impact of affirmative action on non-beneficiary students

| 1. Affirmative action affects the motivation of competent female students. | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|----------|------|---------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Status | sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | C | % | C | % | C | % | C | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 25 | 61% | 4 | 10 % | 12 | 29 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 66 | 58 % | 13 | 11.% | 35 | 31% | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 91 | 59% | 17 | 11 % | 47 | 30 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 9 | 60 % | 3 | 20 % | 3 | 20 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 35 | 50 % | 9 | 13 % | 26 | 37% | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 44 | 52% | 12 | 14 % | 29 | 34% | 85 | 100% |
| 2. Affirmative action policy discourage equal competition among students | | | | | | | | | |
| Status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | C | % | C | % | C | % | C | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 24 | 59 % | 2 | 5 % | 15 | 37 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 73 | 64 % | 4 | 3 % | 37 | 33 % | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 97 | 63% | 6 | 4 % | 52 | 34 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 9 | 60 % | 1 | 7 % | 5 | 33 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 28 | 40 % | 5 | 7 % | 37 | 53 % | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 37 | 44 % | 6 | 7 % | 42 | 49% | 85 | 100% |
| 3. Affirmative action might lead to conflicts between women and men. | | | | | | | | | |
| status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | C | % | C | % | C | % | C | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 26 | 63 % | 7 | 17% | 8 | 20 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 77 | 68 % | 14 | 12 % | 23 | 20 % | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 103 | 66 % | 21 | 14% | 31 | 20% | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 11 | 73 % | 1 | 7 % | 3 | 20 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 40 | 57% | 15 | 21 % | 15 | 21 % | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 51 | 60 % | 16 | 19 % | 18 | 21 % | 85 | 100% |
| 4. I think affirmative action given to female students is unfair for male students | | | | | | | | | |
| Status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | C | % | C | % | C | % | C | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 27 | 66% | 4 | 10 % | 10 | 24 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 55 | 48 % | 10 | 9 % | 49 | 43 % | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 82 | 53 % | 14 | 9 % | 59 | 38 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 12 | 80 % | 0 | .0% | 3 | 20 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 40 | 57 % | 9 | 13% | 22 | 31 % | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 52 | 61% | 9 | 11 % | 24 | 28 % | 85 | 100% |

As the above findings indicate, most of the respondents, and especially female respondents believed that affirmative action has less negative impact on non-

beneficiary female students. In contrast, some non beneficiary female students disclosed that male students still perceived them as weak and always in need of support even though they are not beneficiaries. Similarly, as Witt (1998) found out in her study, affirmative action policy serves to devalue the achievement of competent women and perpetuate the idea that these groups cannot achieve without preferential help (*see Chapter 1, 1.2*).

4.2.4. Respondents' Attitude towards the Additional Supports given for Female Students in the University

Almost equal proportion of female (80%) and male (79%) students favored the idea noted as 'it is fair to give additional supports through tutorial classes, assertiveness trainings, guidance and counseling to female students in the university'. Likewise, all female instructors and most male (77 %) instructors also agreed on the issue raised. Within statuses, a majority of instructors (81 %) and students (79%) also thought that it is fair to give additional supports in the university to female students in various forms. Still, some male students considered that the additional support is unfair for them.

Sixty eight percent of female and 63 % of male students positively considered the idea stated as 'the university has to allocate budget for additional support for female students'. Again, 80% of female and 71 % of male instructors were in favor of the idea. Furthermore, about 65 % of students and 72 % instructors had positive attitude toward the issue (*see Table 4.8, No-2*). Though most respondents believed in the necessity of budget allocation of the university to enhance additional support programs; the actual practice remains to the contrary. Head of Gender Office in Mekelle University discloses:

To arrange additional support programs, we need finance, but the gender office does not have its own budget allocated by the university; thus it limits many activities we plan to do

Almost equal percentage of male (84 %) and female (85 %) students thought that it is fair if instructors could support female students in their spare time. Also, a large proportion of female instructor (93 %) was in favor of the issue as compared to male instructors (76 %). On the whole, a greater proportion of students (85 %) compared to instructors (79 %) had positive attitude towards the supports given to female students by instructors at their spare time (*see Table 4.8, No-3*).

About 84 % of male and 88 % of female students agreed on the idea stated as ‘the additional supports prepared for female students are important for improving their academic achievements’. Similarly, all female and 77 % of instructors favored the idea. Within status, 81% of instructors and 85% of students thought that the additional supports are important for improving female students’ academic status (*see Table 4.8, No-4*). Strengthen this idea; one of the discussants in the Male Students’ Group reveals:

Last year (2008/9) first semester, tutorial classes were given to female students continuously, even a day before the examination; as a result, most of them passed to the next semester. I.e. out of 19, 14 passed. After the tutorial program stopped, now we have only 4-5 female students left in our class

As the above findings point out, a large number of respondents, especially female respondents were in favor of the additional supports given to female students in the university. However instructors’ response drop sharply on the statement that regards their involvement in offering additional supports to female students; while, more proportion of students favored it (*see Table 4.8, No-3*). Besides, the attitude of students on the budget allocation of the university to additional supports for female students got less in percentage than the instructors’. Similarly, Witt (1998) noted that respondents support for affirmative action begins to fade away when faced with specific implementation of affirmative action programs; and she maintains that minorities and women have more tendencies to respond positively to these specific implementations of affirmative action programs than majorities and men.

Table 4.8. Attitude of the respondents towards the additional supports given for female students in the University

| 1. I think it is fair to give additional support in the university to female students through tutorial classes, assertiveness trainings, guidance and counseling | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|----------|------|---------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Status | sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | C | % | C | % | C | % | C | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 4 | 10 % | 4 | 10 % | 33 | 80 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 16 | 14 % | 8 | 7 % | 90 | 79 % | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 20 | 13 % | 12 | 8 % | 123 | 79 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 0 | .0% | 0 | .0% | 15 | 100 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 6 | 9 % | 10 | 14% | 54 | 77% | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 6 | 7 % | 10 | 12 % | 69 | 81% | 85 | 100% |
| 2. The university has to allocate budget to set up additional support programs for female students. | | | | | | | | | |
| status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | C | % | C | % | C | % | C | % |
| STUDENT | F | 9 | 22 % | 4 | 10% | 28 | 68 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 30 | 26% | 12 | 11 % | 72 | 63 % | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 39 | 25% | 16 | 10 % | 100 | 65 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 1 | 7 % | 2 | 13 % | 12 | 80 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 13 | 19 % | 7 | 10 % | 50 | 71% | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 15 | 18 % | 9 | 11 % | 61 | 72% | 85 | 100% |
| 3. I think it is fair that teachers are able to give psychological and educational supports to female students in some of their spare time | | | | | | | | | |
| status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | C | % | C | % | C | % | C | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 3 | 7 % | 3 | 7 % | 35 | 85 % | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 14 | 12 % | 4 | 4% | 96 | 84 % | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 17 | 11 % | 7 | 5 % | 131 | 85 % | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 0 | .0% | 1 | 7 % | 14 | 93 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 9 | 13 % | 8 | 11% | 53 | 76% | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 9 | 11% | 9 | 11% | 67 | 79 % | 85 | 100% |
| 4. The additional supports prepared for females are important for improving their academic achievements | | | | | | | | | |
| Status | Sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
| | | c | % | c | % | c | % | c | % |
| STUDENTS | F | 4 | 10% | 1 | 2 % | 36 | 88% | 41 | 100% |
| | M | 8 | 7 % | 10 | 9 % | 96 | 85% | 114 | 100% |
| | T | 12 | 8 % | 11 | 7 % | 132 | 85% | 155 | 100% |
| INSTRUCTORS | F | 0 | .0% | 0 | .0% | 15 | 100% | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 6 | 9% | 10 | 14 % | 54 | 77 % | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 6 | 7 % | 10 | 12% | 69 | 81% | 85 | 100% |

4.2.5. Instructors' Attitude towards their Responsibility

More than half of male (56 %) and female (60%) instructors said that they had been addressing the issue of gender in their lectures; while, only (13 %) and (21 %) male and female instructors respectively said that they never did. Seventy one percent of male and female (40%) instructors believed that male students as well as female students get their supports. In addition, 19 %of male and 40% of female instructors said that, most of the time, male students get their supports than female students do.

Forty Seven percent of female and 71% of male instructors said that they encouraged female students to get their supports; while, only (27 %) and (19 %) of female and male instructors respectively admitted that they did not encourage female students to get their support. One of the discussants in Instructors' Group reveals: '*Female students are not willing to come to office to get our support even if we encourage them to; but male students are always ready to get help without being encouraged*'. The statement and the proportion are presented below:

Table .4.9. Instructors' attitude towards their responsibility

| Items | sex | Disagree | | Neutral | | Agree | | Total | |
|--|-----|----------|------|---------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
| | | F | % S | F | % S | F | %S | F | % |
| 1. I have been trying to address the issue of gender in my lecture in the way that female should be treated fairly. | F | 2 | 13 % | 4 | 27 % | 9 | 60% | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 15 | 21 % | 16 | 23 % | 39 | 56 % | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 17 | 20% | 20 | 24% | 48 | 56 % | 85 | 100% |
| 2. Most of the time, males get teachers support than female students do. | F | 6 | 40% | 3 | 20 % | 6 | 40% | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 50 | 71 % | 7 | 10% | 13 | 19 % | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 56 | 66 % | 10 | 12 % | 19 | 22% | 85 | 100% |
| 3. I have not been encouraging female students to come to get my academic support in and outside of my class | F | 7 | 47 % | 4 | 27 % | 4 | 27 % | 15 | 100% |
| | M | 50 | 71 % | 7 | 10% | 13 | 19 % | 70 | 100% |
| | T | 57 | 67% | 11 | 12 % | 17 | 20% | 85 | 100% |

As the findings point out, the majority of instructors said that they tried to address gender issue in the class. They also thought that male as well as female students got their support; also they said that they encouraged their female students to come and get their support.

4.3. Presentation of Qualitative Data

The data gathered through interviews and focused group discussions are presented and interpreted using thematic analysis. The data in main deal with the practice of affirmative action in Mekele University; and the challenge female students as whole and especially female beneficiaries faced during their stay in the campus.

There were 34 discussants and 6 key informants were part of the qualitative research. Six key informants were interviewed from Arid and Adi Hadihaki campus. Three were female key informants: president of women association, head of gender office and one of the member of women association and the rest key informants were men: Dean of CoDANR, CNCS and CBE. Moreover, six FGDs were held with the following:

- Two FGDs with 13 beneficiaries of affirmative action policy from Adihaki Campus and from Endayesus /Arid Campus(Beneficiaries' Groups)
- Two FGD with 14 non-beneficiary female students from Adihaki Campus and from Aider campus were also took part in (Non -beneficiary female students' Groups)
- One FGD with 8 male students from Endayesus /Arid Campus(Male Students' Groups)
- One FGD 9 with instructors from Adi Hadhaki Campus(Instructors' Groups)

4.3.1. The practice of Affirmative Action in Mekelle University

To apply the education equity between gender in Ethiopia, especially at higher education ,the proclamation (FDRE, 2003) of the higher education includes the preferential treatment of the existing disadvantageous groups, including women, and states in its Article 33:1 that(*see Chapter Two*):

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

However, the practice of affirmative action for female students at admission level was introduced in Mekele University in 1998, which was before the proclamation of higher education but three years late of the declaration of FDRE (1995) constitution which addresses the issue of affirmative action on Article 35(see Chapter Two). Moreover, the special /additional supports have been given to female students during their stay in the university since 1998.

Therefore, the study attempted to explore types of special/additional supports available to female students in the university, the benefits to female students, shortcomings of practice bases on the interview conducted with deans of colleges, head of gender office, president and one member of women association. More over, this part includes some solutions suggested by the key informants.

4.3.1.1. Types of Additional Supports

According to key informants, there are different kinds of additional supports available to female students. The table below summarizes the supports:

Table 4.10-Summary of additional supports provided to female students

| No | Types Of Support | The Nature And Extent Of Support |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|
| 1 | Tutorial Class | Most of key informants believed that tutorial class is widely known additional support program in the university. It has been given for female students; thus, they can cope up with their academic challenges. |
| 2 | Remedial Class | Remedial class is one of the academic supports given for every student who |

| | | |
|----|--|--|
| | | has got deficiency in their academic performance; and female students tend to benefit more from this program |
| 3 | Guidance and Counseling Service | Guidance and counseling service has been given in the university to give advice to females students; thus, they are able to deal with academics and social difficulties. |
| 4 | Legal Service | Legal service is one of the ways that protect female students if she was unreasonably obstructed from her education. This kind of problems may be resulted from either by instructors or by peers. |
| 5 | Photocopy Service | The service is one of the opportunities given to female students by the university so that they easily duplicate books and handouts which are limited in number. It also reduces the costs they spend for duplication. |
| 6 | Giving Solved Questions | Giving solved questions to female students before exams is one of the practices of the university in order to reduce anxiety they may have at exams. |
| 7 | Giving Sanitary Napkins | In taking consideration of the economic challenge of some female students, the university used to give sanitary napkins |
| 8 | Quota System | 20% reservation is given to females students in every department; thus, they have a better chance to join the field of their prior choice. |
| 9 | Female Library | The female library was created as a place where female students could work without disruption from their male counterparts. It provides a more focused environment for the female students |
| 10 | Orientation for Female Students | Orientation is prepared once in year to introduce and aware the new comers or fresh female students about the environment of the university; the different services available for them; and the difficulties they might face |

| | | |
|----|-------------------------|---|
| | | forward and how they could solve them. |
| 11 | Abortion Service | Abortion service is given legally by women association in the university to protect pregnant female students from taking unsafe abortion and risk their lives |

From all of these supports, remedial class, photocopy service, quota system, female library and orientation for female students are very important activities carried out by Mekele University.

4.3.1.2. Benefits to Female Students

As indicated by participants of the study, as a result of additional supports at university level and affirmative action policy at national level, there are some benefits gained so far. These are: the number of female students in the university has increased due to lower admission points at the entrance; and the attrition rate of female students has decreased because of remedial program .Dean of CBE indicated that there is an increase number of female students in the university than ever before. In his own words:

Last year (2008/9), out of the total admitted students to College of Business Education, 80% were female students; in this year, 42% admitted to the college were female students. In general speaking, Mekelle University reaches an equal gender representation (50%) that is considered as a great achievement.

Due to remedial program, many students have been advantageous, especially, female students. Dean of CBE says:

Last year (2009), out of 35% of students who were beneficiary of the remedial program, only 13% were failed. In this year, around 200 (26%) students have passed as results of the program. Most beneficiaries of this program were female students.

4.3.1.3. Shortcomings of the Practice

As informants and discussants pointed out, there are different barriers faced during the implementation of additional support programs. These are presented as follows in the table:

Table 4.11. Summary of shortcomings of the practice

| No | Shortcomings | Nature of the Shortcoming |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | Lack of Financial Resources | Lack of financial resource has been one of the major obstacles during the implementation of the additional supports. Dean of CNCS says: <i>‘there is deficiency of financial resource to carry out some additional support; for instance, due to this problem, the university cannot pay salary to tutorial and remedial class instructors.’</i> |
| 2 | Lack of Awareness | Lack of awareness among female students about the specific services available to them is found to be one of the major problems. Most female students are not able to get services since they do not exactly know about them. One of the discussant in Beneficiary’s Group concurs: <i>‘most of us do not have any information with regards to specific services available to female students since we do not participate in meeting or orientation concerning female students.’</i> |
| 3 | Lack of Organization and Consistency | There is no consistency and organizations of additional supports in the university, i.e. these supports are being only an issue of occasions. A member of women association concurs: <i>‘There are a lot of efforts exerted on the side of instructors ,students and the university to enhance female student in their academy, social and personal lives though these supports lack consistency and organization ;as a result the outcomes of the efforts are became insignificant.’</i> |

| | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| 4 | Lack of Participation | Most female students are not willing to participate in additional supports like tutorial classes since they perceive the supports as the extension of their weakness. Supporting this idea Dean of CoDANR says, “ <i>only few female students are participated in tutorial classes as most of them do not morally accept the supports...they think it is an expression of their incompetence or weakness.</i> ” |
| 5 | Lack of Follow ups | Due to the lack of consistent follow ups, the status of each supports is not clearly known, as indicated by a member of women association there is deficiency of follow ups in academic supports |

In general, as the above findings indicate ,Mekelle university makes efforts to enhance female students’ academic, social and personal lives using tutorial and remedial classes, guidance and counseling, female library, legal service, and photocopy services . However, there are shortcomings of the practice: lack of finance, consistency and organization, follow ups and awareness and participation among female students.

4.3.1.4. Key Informants and Discussants’ Suggested Solution

The table below presents the summary of suggested solutions by key informants and discussants to solve problems that affect the practice of affirmative action.

Table 4.12. Summary of suggested solutions

| No. | Suggested by | Suggested Solutions | Summary of the Solutions |
|-----|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 1 | A member of women association | Consistency of support | <i>“If there were consistent and organized additional supports available to female students, I think, every female student would be willing to participate; also the effect became significant.”</i> |

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|---|
| 2 | Male Students' Group | Emphasis on specific and important supports | <i>“Rather than giving photo copy service and financial supports to female students, the university has to focus on developing their academic potential; thus, they are able to compete with male students.....it has to give more focus and work on tutorial classes and remedial classes”</i> |
| 3 | Instructor's Group | Give adequate and organized additional supports or lowering survival grade | <i>“I do not think only admitting female students with lower entrance to higher education is not enough but also lowering the survival grade in the university has to be taken in to consideration since we cannot equally threat who are not equally admitted....this has to be done if the university fails to give sufficient and organized academic supports”</i> |
| 5 | Instructors' Group | Follow up | <i>“Enabling them is better than pushing them forward by lowering their grades at exams; i.e. after giving tutorial classes, observe and follow up their result ; find out the factors that affect their achievement and try to fill the gap if there are problems .”</i> |
| 6 | President of women association | Awareness creation | <i>“When any service is started, it has to be informed to female students through meetings or other mechanisms to reach and inform them”.</i> |
| 7 | Head of Gender office | Allocation of budget to Gender Office | <i>“The university has to allocate sufficient budget to gender office; thus it can work on varies supports for female students to able them fit with the academic and social expectation”</i> |

4.3.2. Challenges of Female Students in Mekelle University

Most informants and discussants revealed different kinds of challenges that female students, and especially female beneficiaries faced during their stay in campus. These challenges are:

- **Lack of Psychological Preparation**

Beneficiary female students are not well prepared mentally when they join the university that they have to compete equally with their male counterparts. They always expects of supports that enhance them to the educational expectation. One of male students uncovers the challenges of beneficiaries:

Mostly, beneficiaries fail in campus because of their interpretation of the affirmative action which makes them hope that they always have a second chance. They don't have a psychological preparation at all.

Strengthen this point, one of beneficiary students agree: *'We have adapted this affirmative action since high school when it stopped here in campus, we confused.'*

- **Lack of Study Habit**

Most female students admitted through affirmative action had no habit of giving much time to their study at lower level of education. When they join university, they face difficulty in building the study habit. One of a discussant from Male Students' Group says:

Beneficiaries not only lack potential and knowledge but also they do not have study habits that help them go along and compete with others. Most beneficiaries did not use to study hard when they were in high school... ..since they do not develop a habit of giving so much time for their study, they are likely to fail when they join university where a lot of reading is needed .

- **Language Problem**

Media of instruction is one of the challenges for some female students. One of beneficiary students says:

In class room, we could not listen and understood one of our instructor's lectures as his English was fluent and he was quick in speaking. At the end our results became 'D & F'.

- **Lack of Focus**

Some female students lack an appropriate focus towards their education i.e. they are not serious enough. Dean of CNCS says: '*Female students do not study hard .They spend time in downtown .Generally, they lack focus on their education.*'

- **Challenges After Dismissal**

Female students are not only damaged psychologically but they are also faced with another consequence after they get dismissed from the university. Most of the time, they do not return to their home towns after their dismissal since they are afraid of facing the disappointment of their family and society. One of the instructors indicates:

In the first place, when female students admitted to the campus, they kept two things in mind; if they could make it, they would continue; otherwise, they would back home .But, in the reality, if they failed, they embarrassed to return home; and they worked in hotel and in bars in Mekelle by considering no one knows them in the city.

- **Economical Challenge**

Some female students who have financial challenge try to get money by becoming prostitutes. As President of women association points out:

Due to financial problem, some female students go to night clubs; they drink smoke and practice commercial sex. There is a girl whom I know, in order to survive, she learns at day and practice commercial sex work at night because no one sends her a pocket money.

Moreover, some beneficiary discussants revealed that they cannot cope up the cost they spend in duplicating handouts and other reference materials for every course they take. One of them from Adhaki campus says:

In our college, there is no photo copy service; each instructor gives a handout to the representatives; and we duplicate it with our expense. For instance, last year, because I had financial problem, I had to share the material with other students whom she had the copies. And, I did not read them as much as I needed to. As a result; it drugged me back and influenced my academic performance. Moreover, the charge for per copy in the campus is the same as outside, instead, it should be lower.

- **Emotional Challenge**

Feeling of loneliness is discovered to be one of the problems that female students face when they join university, especially, if the university is remote from their hometown. One of the beneficiary discussant says:

Since I joined the university, I have been feeling loneliness. I have missed my family so much .For instance, I have finished phone cards worth 250 per week to communicate with them. Sometimes, I don't think about my education as I am thinking about my family day and night. Thus, I am not that much successful in my education.

- **Lack of Role Model**

Role models tend to act as an inspiration for others to follow; to believe that they too can attain the same level of success as their role models. One of the instructors said that

since there is less number of female instructors in the campus, female students do not have a role model to follow on.

- **Shortage of Material**

Lack of sufficient materials, especially, books is found to be one of the confronts female students particularly and students generally faced. One of non beneficiary discussants discloses her experience that:

There are only 10 books which three departments have to refer. For instance, last semester, we had given an assignment that only stays for three days. Though we went so many times to the library; and we waited until 2pm at night for three days; we could not get the book. We had to extend our submission date.

One of the beneficiary students puts:

At the library line, male students push you away; and most of the time, they get the service first, especially, they get access to the limited copies of books during exam. Though librarians appointed us to come after 2-3 hours later when the book might be available, when we went, they informed us it was still occupied. We wasted our time by wandering forth and back from our dorm to the library.

In addition, even those limited books are sometimes lent for staffs that they pass them to students; and the books are also hidden by other students, especially, during exams.

One of the beneficiary students tells:

When there are limited copies of books in the library, no one is allowed to lend it but some students will take out these books through instructors and administrative staffs. I know a girl who did that; and she returned the book a week after the exam. This is completely unfair, especially, during examination.

More over, a discussant from Beneficiary's Group says: 'when assignments are given, books are hidden or misplaced .For instance, if it has to be in management shelf, it may be

found either in accounting or in economics shelf. Some female student also do that but not comparable with male students.'

- **Unbalanced Representation**

Lack of equal representation of male and female students in classroom is also became a challenge for female students. One of male students believed that equal representation of both gender in classroom has an advantage, especially for female students. In his own words:

Female students are also want to learn with male counterparts; because when assignment is given, female with male students can work together and help each other. But if all or most are female students, since they are shy, they don't even speak of what they know unless somebody encourages them to. If they were with male students, they would better perform in their academy.

- **Lack of Stability of Exam Schedules**

Some female discussants said that most of the time, the exam schedule fluctuate; and it results in extra stress among them. One of the beneficiaries from Adi Haki Campus uncovers: *'The examination programs have not been stable; and there are no gaps between them; for instance, exam that expected to be tomorrow may be changed overnight to be today.*

- **Lack of Facilities**

Due to insufficient provision of facilities, some female students said that to get the services are time consuming, especially during exam. One of the discussants from Beneficiaries' Group says:

There is so called 'female lounge', but there are a lot of male students who are customers. Letting them be there is not the problem; but at the time of examination there will be a long queue which wastes our study time. Moreover, male are

dominantly found in the lounge, we are not comfortable to stay and enjoy the service in the lounge; thus, we bring what we bought from the lounge to our dormitory .This affects the environment of the dormitory, especially, during exam....i.e. some eats; some drinks; and it really distracts us if we are studying.

- **Incompetence**

Female beneficiaries cannot compete with the rest of students who are not admitted through the program as a result of their lower academic points they had at admission. According to Dean of CNCS, there are more drops out of female students because of their lower entry grades. One of the beneficiary discussants from Endayesus campus concurs: *'In our class ,I can tell that all female students have lower grades than male students .For example, one of the course that we took last semester ,out of 60 female students ,30 of us got 'D' and 'F'. That means half of female students have failed.'*

This problems of incompetence is not only remained to the beneficiaries, but it also a concern of non beneficiary female students. One of the non beneficiary female students indicates: *'It is hard to compete with male students equally, we study hard even stay till midnights in the library but most males stay even longer. They have really a great potential. It could be their nature. Even a female student who considered as better achiever "Sekay" has difference of 2-3 hour less time of study than male students'.*

Likewise, one of the beneficiary discussant agrees: *'In our class, out of 60, there are 12 male students. They are better than us; they participate in the class and do great in assignments.'*

One of the discussants in Non-Beneficiary Female Students Group explains the difference in achievement between female and male students: *'If a girl failed a course, she believed that she could never be successful by other course. She might loose focus on her study as she thought of her failure. However, male students are strong enough to revive themselves from their failure and learn from it and move on. Moreover they work cooperatively toward their success.'*

Moreover, another non beneficiary female students generalizes: *‘Most of the time , male students run to have front seat in classroom; they push and fight to be first at library and cafeteria queue; and they easily get access to the limited books in the library; thus ,it is hard to have a better and competitive score like them’*

These findings show that even though there is less number of male students in some departments, they are still the one who participate in the class, coordinate the group works and academically help female students. Moreover, the findings indicate that male students are always the first to get any kind of services in the university. For instance, it is male students who are to be at front seat in classroom, the first to access the limited copy of books in the library. Similarly, research conducted with European American young people has shown that boys are viewed as having more social power than girls, respond more positively in classroom contexts, and have higher self-concept across social and academic domains and are viewed and treated as intellectuals compared to women and girls in their relationship to classroom and school treatment (Belenky et al., 1986, Beyer, 1999 in Chavous, et al, 2004...see chapter two). Gmelch (1998) explained that many classroom and school inequalities are not caused by deliberate hatred but result from socialization experiences of students and staff who have grown up in a male-dominated society.

- **Problems in Group Assignment**

One of the benefits of group work is students are encouraged to become active rather than passive learners by developing collaborative and co-operative skills, and lifelong learning skills(<http://www.edsw.usyd.edu.au>). But, some female students are found it difficult starting from the selection of group members to the end of the group work. These challenges are presented as follows:

- **Grouping Based on Ability**

Most students are grouping themselves for group works based on ability. One of beneficiary discussants shares her experience:

There are a lot of female students in our class; but, at grouping time, females who better perform are grouping themselves together; and we who, less perform, group ourselves as we do not have any choice.

➤ **Grouping Based on Ethnic Group and Gender**

Lovett and et al (2001) defined primary dimensions of diversity as those characteristics that cannot be changed, such as gender, ethnicity, race, age, physical abilities or qualities. The current findings indicate the effect of primary diversity on female students' academic life. Some female discussant thought that they were being discriminated by their male counter parts due to their ethnicity and gender, especially, during the group assignments. However, Bauman and et al (2005) said that meaningful engagement with diversity benefits students educationally.

Selection of members for a group work is not only based on ability and closeness but it is also based on ethnicity which is a common practice. One of a discussant in Beneficiary's Group points out: *'Grouping for a group work is done based on ethnicity, if I asked one of male students be his group member ; he gave more priority to female student who is in his ethnic group than me. For instance, in our class, for a group work, Tigray students group with Tigray students, Amhara students with Amhara students. Unless the instructor group us by him/her self, students group themselves based on ethnicity.'*

Some female students also experienced that they became disadvantageous in gaining academic support from male counterparts as a result of their gender. One of beneficiary students from the Endayesus campus says that:

I know one of my friends class's situation, there are only three females and a lot of male students who come from the same region .But, and the male students neither helped the female students in academic nor included them in the group assignments. I think this is because of their gender. That is, as a girl, you have to be ok with one of male students like walk with him; be his girl friend and the like. If you are not willing to do so, you will be discriminated, as the result the ineffectiveness of these female students is perpetuated

➤ **Lack of Social Skill**

Lack of Social skill is found to be one of the factors that hinder most female students enjoying the academic supports from their peers. One of the beneficiary female students says: *‘unless we approach competitive students friendly, they neither provide us academic supports nor incorporate us in group work.’*

➤ **Lack of Willingness to Work Cooperatively**

Most students are not willing to work the group assignment cooperatively: thus most of the time a group work becomes a burden of few students. One non beneficiary female students shares her experience : *‘I remember last year (2008/9), I did the group assignment by myself though there were 15 members in the group .Since then, I have stopped to work; and what I just do now is to group with male students and to leave all the burden to them. This is not because I cannot do, I know that I am better than them, but it kills my study time.’*

One of the discussants in Non Beneficiary’s Group from Aider campus says:

Last semester, I really wanted to participate in the group assignment which all members were male students except me. To my surprise, one of the members said that I should not worry as they would give me after it was completed. I was upset and told him that why could not I participate and work equally with them. This shows how they are really undervalued us.

One of male student explains the reason for not letting girls participate in the group work: *‘Most of the times, we accomplish the group work without the participation of female member is that because we do it in our dorm.’* Moreover, a non beneficiary female student says: *‘After we became a member of a group, we left the entire job to male students as they can easily access different books and related materials to do the assignmentbut we can not.’*(See the sup topic **incompetence**)

As findings reveals, male students are not willing to incorporate female students in group work; also female students accept this reality believing that male students can do

better without them though it is upsetting for some female discussants. Quinn (2003) as cited in Morley (2006) explained that in the hidden curriculum women are stashed as less intellectually and academically competent, thus they are discriminated due to the perceived incompetence (*see chapter 2*).

➤ **Lack of Confidence**

Some beneficiaries said that they did not believe in themselves that they can do better in group work unless male students are with them. One of them says:

Including me, most female students don't believe in ourselves that we can do and competent with male students. Last semester, when our civic instructor gave us group assignment which contains 25%, unfortunately 10 of us were female students who he assigned basing on an alphabetical order. We didn't know what to do; how to search a specific book in the library; and how to organize and write it. It was really impossible for us; and then we decided to plagiarize from other students' work. Before that, when we consulted with male students in our class, they told us to contribute some money so that they work on our assignment. We agreed and contributed 3 birr each; and finally we submitted the assignment.

• **Sexual Harassment and Abuse**

Sexual harassment in education is unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that interferes with a student's ability to learn study, work or participate in school activities (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2001). The current study also finds out that sexual harassment as one of the challenges that female students have to face.

➤ **Sexual Harassment and Abuse between Students and Instructors**

Abuse includes humiliations, maltreatments, intimidation, psychological and verbal abuse (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2001). There are some

instructors who verbally abuse female students; in particular if they saw them at the city. One of the non beneficiary female students says:

If we went down town, we felt uncomfortable to eat in the restaurant and go shopping and buy necessary staffs. We are always afraid of their presence when we are out of the campus as we scared of what they might say in the class .Not only they humiliate us in front of the class, but we could also be graded less than we deserve. I know the story of the girl whom her instructor saw her at a jewelry shop; and unfortunately she missed his lecture once; in the next lesson, he threw her out of the class and freighted her that she would get an “F”. When she asked him the reason, he says: ‘because you are wandering to jewelry shops’ .She was really shocked.

Giving inappropriate comments to female students in classrooms are a common practice for some male instructors; and it becomes fun for male students. For instance, one of non beneficiary female tells:

I know an instructor who criticized hair and clothing style of each female student in the classroom .For instance; he says to one of the girls “have you worn a uniform?”-“zare uniform new yeleshew”; if he saw a girl with straight freeze hair, he says: “today, you look like a women worrier”-“zare degmo yenat arbegnochen Mesleshal”. Thus we carefully selected our style before we went to his class. He humiliated us in front of the class; and it was fun for male students while all female students were covered with shame and anger.

Some instructors sexually harass their female student; they reduce grade point of a female student as revenge to the refusal and give her a better grade point as reward to the acceptance of their proposal; however, measures taken by the university to stop sexual harassments are generally weak. One of beneficiary female students also indicates:

I know an instructor who always asks female students for sexual favors .There was a girl, last year, whom he wanted to start an affair with. When she turned him

down, he gave her three 'D' of his courses as a reaction for her response. She had no choice but graduated with less GPA.

One of male students tells: *'sexual harassment is not commonly occurred directly. Female students are in fear of dismissal; thus, they may respond positively to their instructor's proposal against their will'*

Having been afraid of sexual harassment, some female students avoid getting an advice from their male instructors in person. One of the discussant in Non –Beneficiary Female Student's Group says:

Most female students are no willing to talk with their assigned advisor, who is their instructor as well, .Because, they afraid that the instructor might start another issue when they are alone with him; that is, no one can solve the problem. For instance; if a girl turns him down, he will give her an "F" which she does not deserve. Therefore, they kept their distance as much as possible.

But, most female students who have been harassed by instructors are not willing to report. One of the non beneficiary female students said that rather than reporting sexual harassment to so-called concerned bodies, negotiating with the instructor in person is taken as a common solution in the campus. She also reveals:

There is one girl who has been sexual harassed by her instructors. In her freshmen year, she was readmitted as she refused to accept to start love affairs with one of her instructors. When she came back by the next year, she shifted her department to another in order to avoid unnecessary attention of the previous instructor .However; she could not escape from being sexually harassed by a friend of her previous harasser who became her instructor. For the reason that she turned him down, he gave her 'no grade' for his course .She reported to women association; and when they talked to him about the reason why he gave her 'no grade', he said that she did not attend his class; and they cross checked the situation with the class representative who witnessed that she was an attentive student. However, they could not go further because they lack more evidence; and the girl herself was not willing to progress the case forward since he also give her other course the following semester.

One of the discussants in Non Beneficiary Female Students' Group shares her experience:

One day, my instructor invited me to come to his office and asked me to start love relationship with him. Another day, he informed me that if I tried to report the case to the top bodies, I would get no result as they all were his friends; and they did not take this issue seriously.since then what I have understood is that there is no solution brought by reporting or complaining to the concerned bodies about this kind of issues and other. It is easier to deal the issues with the instructor in person than reporting to the so called 'concerned bodies' which finally affects us when it come out with no result; that is, what we all afraid of. Because there is a shortage of instructors, the university prefers loosing a student to an instructor.

According to Gmelch (1998), Sexual bribery promises a reward (e.g. Good grade, financial aid, prize internship" in exchange for sex) and Sexual coercion ask for sex using the threat or punishment. Similarly, such harassments are mostly practiced by instructors. the discussants revealed that some instructors threat a girl that they would give her lesser grade than she deserved if she turn them down ;and they promise to improve her grade in exchange of sexual favor.

➤ **Student on Student sexual Harassment**

Some male students harass female students at nights especially when the light is off. One of the non beneficiary female students discloses:

I remember one night that I was in the library, unfortunately when the light was off, some male students touched every part of my body...they loosen my bra.... I could not do anything to protect my self and I did not know who touched and abused me at that darkness.... being afraid of such harassment, I do not go frequently to open classes and libraries to study at nights.

Another non beneficiary female student also shares her story:

I remember one evening when a drunk student seized and pull me towards him ,I pushed him away ;when I run , he chased me till I reached to my dorm with bare foot since one pair of my shoes was cut off while I was running .Students and guards were out there but no one cares if somebody happened to harasses us.

Strong measures are taken if the victim of sexual harassment has courage to report to the concerned bodies. One of male students says: *'I heard the case that one male student dismissed who raped female students. The university takes strong measures on such cases even if the girl provides fewer evidences.'*

To the contrary, the victims of sexual harassment are not usually willing to report the case to the concerned bodies because they afraid of being discriminated by their peers. Strengthening this idea, a discussant in the Non Beneficiary Female Students' Group says:

If we reported the case of sexual harassment to concerned bodies like women association, a student may get dismissed. However, the consequences after reporting may damage us. That is, other students may discriminate us or may not have good feeling towards us...If there is a rape case; we will better die than reporting the issue. Even if we reported, we may not get the expected measures unless we have good evidence. I know a girl who was raped; as a result, she discontinued her education and turned back home.

Findings also reveals that female students who are victim of sexual harassment are usually afraid of reporting the case to the concerned bodies; because it is hard to gather the practical evidences; also the victims are afraid of being discriminated by their peers if they press charges against the abuser. Thus, in the mean time, these victims may get depressed and discontinued their education. Strengthening this idea, National Women's Law Center (2007) also demonstrated that targets of sexual harassment experience anxiety, confusion, loss of self-esteem and hard to pay attention in school .

4.3.2.1. Discussants and Key Informants' Suggested Solutions

Based on the problems identified by informants and discussants, they also recommended alternative solutions and the summary presents in the table below:

Table 4.13. Summary of suggested solutions

| No | Suggested by | Suggested Solution | Summary of the Solutions |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1 | Non-beneficiary female discussant | Some Instructors have to Focus only on Academic and Related Issues | <i>“The only relation instructor should have with female students is to teach, grade assignments and examinations. It should be professional relationship, but not personal. But, if a girl had a serious and annoying behavior, he has to talk to her in private, not in public”.</i> |
| 2 | Beneficiaries' Group | Balanced Representation of Female and Male Students in Classrooms | <i>“If there were balanced male and female students in class, we could have helped each other”</i> |
| 3 | One of non – beneficiary female discussant | Find Ways to Check the Participation of Students in Group Assignment | <i>“The instructors did not ask who work and participate in the group assignment... most of them did not have a mechanisms to check each group members' participation...if they did, it would be compulsory for us to do; and male students to let us participate. Frequently, there are no questions from the part of group assignment; it is just submitted and graded equally”</i> |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 4 | Male student | Provide Guidance and Counseling | <i>“The university has to consistently give orientation or guidance and counseling to female students so as to let them focus on and give priority to their education”</i> |
| 5 | Beneficiaries’ Group | Provide Sufficient Copies of Books | <i>“There should be a lot of additional copies of books in the library; thus, everybody get a chance to read before an exam”</i> |
| 6 | One of the Beneficiaries | Use Different Teaching Style | <i>“Some instructors do not recognize that there are different abilities of students: fast, medium, and slow learners. Instructors should take all these in to consideration while instruction”</i> |
| 7 | Beneficiaries’ Group. | Fixed Exam Schedule | <i>“The schedule for exam must be stable and should have reasonable gap between them because we may have to cover nine chapters of a course before exam”</i> |
| 8 | President of women association | Financial Support | <i>“The university has to see women differently from men .It is not because we are weak, but we are physically different. At least any women deserve to have lotion, comb, sanitary napkins and hair oil, but men can learn with no such basic expenses”.</i> |
| 9 | One of Female non-beneficiary students | Sufficient Security | <i>“There should be enough security around the dormitories and around the campus to protect sexual harassments of female students from male counterparts, especially during nights”</i> |

| | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| 10 | One of non-beneficiary female students | Cooperative Work | <i>“We, female students, have to help each other, i.e., the one who understand fast should help the other. If there is a kind of habit, we could better achieve and be competitive students.”</i> |
| 11 | One of beneficiary female students | Develop Self Confidence | <i>Female students have to believe in themselves that they can do equally and better than male students.</i> |
| 12 | One of non – beneficiary female students | Provide Sufficient Facilities | <i>“Life in campus is not education; there should be a lot of facilities provided like water light and the like”</i> |

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary of Major Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter deals with summary of the major findings; conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.

5.1. Summary of Major Findings

The main objective of the study was to assess the attitude and the practice of affirmative action for female students in Mekelle University. It also aimed to identify challenges faced by female students as whole and especially female beneficiaries in the university. 85 instructors and 155 students filled the questionnaires and returned. Beneficiary and non beneficiary female students, male students and instructors were also participants in FGDs, head of gender office, president of women association and one member of women association and Dean of CBE, CNCS and CoDANR were interviewed. Furthermore, data were collected from documents related to the topic. After the data was collected, presentation, analysis and interpretation were done. In this section, the major findings of the study is stated as follows:

1. The result of the document analysis show that, female students' enrollment is very low compared to their male counterparts in all the programs/regular, evening, Kermit and distance/ both at the national level and Mekele University. At the national level between 2003/04 and 2008/09, the proportion of female students in government higher institution was below 30%. The increase in the enrollment rate during all these time is less that 10%. The findings have of the study shown similar condition at Mekele University (*see Table 4.1 & 4.2*).
2. The research has indicated that there are very few female instructors in Mekele University. Overall, taking in to account both Ethiopian and expatriate the

proportion of female instructors in the university were 9 % in 2009/10(see *Table 4.4*).

3. Findings show that the majority of respondents as a whole have a positive attitude towards the need for affirmative action for female students. Still most of them believed that affirmative action is not the only mechanism to address fairness among gender in academic institutions. Some discussants referred that providing additional supports throughout females' education life is the better option than lowering the grade points to join higher educations.
4. Findings indicate that most respondents, and especially female respondents believed that affirmative action have less negative impact on beneficiaries as well as on non beneficiaries .However, most of them concurred that the program places the beneficiaries to the academic institutions for which they are unprepared. In addition, some non beneficiary female students said that male students perceived them as weak and in need of supports even if they were competent.
5. Majority of respondents and especially female respondents have a positive attitude towards the additional supports given to female students in the university. However, some male students have seen this program suspiciously that female student might get better than them.
6. The majority of instructors as a whole said that they addressed gender issues in their lecture. They also added that they encouraged female students to get their supports. However; some told that most female students were not willing to get their support.
7. In general, it appears that the university makes efforts to enhance female students' academic, social and personal lives using tutorial and remedial classes, guidance and counseling, female library, legal service, and photocopy services . However, there are shortcomings of the practice: lack of finance, consistency and organization, follow ups and awareness and participation among female students.

8. The findings also indicated that there are a lot of challenges that female students and especially female beneficiaries encounter during their stay in campus. The challenges include lack of confidence and role models, language problem, emotional challenge, unbalanced representations, sexual harassment, financial challenges, lack of facilities and securities, fluctuation of exam schedules and etc.

5.2. Conclusions

Based on the findings, the student researcher concludes the followings:

1. Based on the findings from the document review, we can conclude that even though affirmative action has been implemented through out the country, its contribution in increasing the number of female students has been insignificant.
2. We can conclude from the findings that female students in the university do not have sufficient female instructors who can serve as role models to inspire, motivate and help them develop the belief that they too can have an outstanding academic achievement.
3. It was found that both instructors and students of Mekele University have a positive attitude towards the practice of female students' affirmative action. Hence we can conclude that there is a favorable condition for the successful implementation of the program with regards to the attitude of the university community.
4. The majority of instructors have indicated that they address gender issue during class time, and encourage female students to get their support after class, however, some students remain suspicious of the real motives of the instructors, and in fact some indicated that especially young male instructors use such opportunities as a chance to harass female students. Hence, there seem to be a mistrust of some instructors by female students.

5. In addition, though the university has provided different additional supports to female students, the organization and the consistency of most supports is poor. As a result, the full enjoyment of the program by female students has been obstructed.
6. Even though the university's community has a positive attitude towards the provision of additional supports for female students, the gender office does not have its own budget allocated by the university to carry out these supports. Hence, it can be concluded that the university does not take women's concern seriously.
7. Based on the data gathered, we can conclude that female students problem of; adjusting to campus life, language, financial challenge, poor high school educational background, shortage of reference materials ,stress during exams and low confidence have negative impact on their academic performance.
8. From the findings, we can conclude that additional to other academic related problems, some times female students get less GPA and dismissed because of sexual harassments caused mainly by instructors.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions arrived the following recommendations are suggested to solve the problem:

1. The root cause of female students' low enrollment and relatively poor academic performance in higher education institutions originates at primary or secondary level of education. Hence, the Ministry of Education and all others who are engaged in the field of education should consider tackling problems by conducting a continuous follow up of the progress of female students, and providing supports in especial focus on guidance and counseling and tutorial classes starting from their elementary school with the intention of preparing them mentally as well as academically to next levels of education.

2. There are very few female instructors at Mekele University. For instance, in 2002 E.C, they account only 9%. As female instructors serve as a role model and inspire students, Mekele University should consider increasing the number of female instructors. It should seriously give higher priority to competent female applicants during recruitment and selection of instructors.
3. Female students' low confidence, sexual harassments, problems of adjusting to campus life contribute to their lower academic performance. Therefore, the Gender Office and Women's Association of Mekele University should collaborate and organize trainings to female students on assertiveness, raising their self confidence and mechanisms to cope up the environments.
4. Female library has to be enriched with important reference material that can be easily accessible for female students
5. Female students indicated that they had problems of security especially during the night time at "study spaces". Therefore, the university should provide proper protection and orient security personnel /guards/ so that they give protection to female students.
6. Mekele University provides additional supports to female students, however, as the research indicated due to lack of follow up, finance, awareness and consistency, female students are not satisfied. Hence, the university should consider improving the actual implementation of these supports through sufficient allocation of budget, follow ups and proper planning in addressing the issues.
7. Moreover, Gender Responsive Budgeting has to be institutionalized in Mekelle University so that gender office will have its own and consistent budget flow that enable to address each and every concern of women in the university.
8. Sexual harassment Act has to be developed at the university level so that female students will not be distracted from their education because of sexual harassment

caused by instructors, students and other staffs. Also trainings and orientations has to be given for students and staffs of the university that the consequence of the harasser and the impact on the victims.

References

- Abebayehu Aemero (1998). Problems of Gender Equity in Institution of Higher Education in Ethiopia. *Quality of Education in Ethiopia for the 21st Century*. Proceeding of National Conference Held in Awassa College of Teachers Education. 12-18 July 1998. IER, AAU.A.A.U: unpublished material
- Adusah-Karikari, A. (2008). *Experiences of Women in Higher Education: A Study of Women Faculty and Administrators in Selected Public Universities in Ghana*. Ghana. Ohio University .Retrieved on 6 September, 2009 from <http://drc.ohiolink.edu>
- African Development Bank Group (2008). *Gender Assessment, Progress towards Improving Women's Economic Status*. Retrieved on 15 November, 2009 from <http://www.afdb.org>
- Bauman, G (2005) *Achieving Equitable Educational Outcomes with All Students: The Institution's Roles and Responsibilities*: Association American Colleges and Universities: U.S.A. Retrieved on 23, January, 2010 from <http://www.aacu.org>
- Beasley, Chris (1999). *What Is Feminism? The Introduction to Feminist Theory*. Australia: Allen and Unwin.
- Bloom, D. et al (2005). *Higher Education and Economic Development in Africa*. Harvard University: U.S.A .Retrieved on 7 October, 2009 from <http://www.arp.harvard.edu>
- Branda, M., et al (1994). Attributional Ambiguity of Affirmative Action. *Journal Article by basic and applied social psychology, vol.15.No.1* Retrieved on 29 April ,2009 from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc>
- Chanana, K. (2004). *Gender and Disciplinary Choices: Women in Higher Education in India*. Paper prepared for the UNESCO Colloquium on Research and Higher Education Policy 'Knowledge, Access and Governance: Strategies for Change'. Paris.
- Chavous, M. et al. (2004). Racial Stereotypes and Gender in context: African Americans at predominately black and predominately white colleges. *Sex roles , vol.51,Nos 1/2*.
- Creswell, W.J (1996). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. UK. Sage publications.
- Debe, P.(2009). *Progress on MGDS in Africa: for wome's rights: the missing link towards accelerated achevment of millinium development goals in Africa*. United Nations Millennium Campaign, Africa office. Retrived on 1 December, 2009 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org>
- DFID(2008). *Higer education*. Retrieved on 08 October, 2009 from <http://www.dfid.gov.uk>
- Ebeku, S. (2004). A new hope for africa women: overview of Africa's Protocol on Women's Rights. *Norsic Journal of African Studies 13(3) , 264-276*.

Etsegenet Hailemariam (1996). *The Problem Of Women's Education*. AAU:unpublished material

Faakye, S (2007). *Equity Policies in Higher Education: a legal evaluation of institutional responses*. The University of Oslo, Norway, the University of Tampere, Finland and the University of Aveiro, Portugal. Retrieved on 21, February 2010 from <http://www.lulu.com>

FDRE (2003) *Higher Education Proclamation*. No 351/2003. Addis Ababa. Birhanna Selam.

Fentahun Abegaz (2001). Admission types and female students' academic success at Addis Ababa University: the case of social science students. *The Ethiopian journal of higher education*.vol.1, No.2.

Fourth World Conference on Women (1995). *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*:A/CONF.177/20 (1995) and A/CONF.177/20/Add.1

Fine, P, et al, (2009). Women no longer the second sex. *University world news: The global window on higher education*. Retrieved on September 6, 2009 from <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article>

Gmelch, M. (1998) *Gender on campus: Issues for college women*. USA: Rutgers University press

Goodman, N. et al. (2008). *Bridging the Gaps: Implementation of Comprehensive Abortion Care in Ethiopia*. Retrieved on 19 January, 2010 from <http://www.gpia.info>

Habtamu Wondimu (2004). Gender and regional disparities in opportunities to higher Education in Ethiopia; Challenges for the promotion of social Justice. *The Ethiopian journal of higher education*.Vol.1, No.2.

Hall,K.L.(2005).Affirmative Action. *The oxford companion to Supreme Court of the United States*. Retrieved 13 May, 2009 from <http://www.encyclopedia.com>

Henn, M (2006). *A short Introduction to Social Research*. U.S.A: Sage Publication

IFLA. (2007). 73rd IFLA Genral Conference and Cousil. (pp. 19-23). Durban,South Africa: World Liabrary and information congress.Retrieved on 18 January ,2010 from <http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla73/index.htm>

IJJ. (2006). *Background Information On Affirmative Action*. FAQ.

Jose J. Soto, J.D (2008). *Policy Brief on Affirmative Action and Historic and Contemporary Context for Informing the Discourse*. 8/14/2008. Retrieved on 4 November ,2009 from <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us>.

Kapur, D. and et al (2002) *Indian Higher Education Reform: From Half-Baked Socialism to Half-Baked Capitalism*. New Delhi, India. Retrieved on 9 September ,2009 from <http://www.sciencerepository.org>

Kochar, A. (2009) *Affirmative Action through Quotas: The Effect on Higher Education in India*. Stanford Center for International Development, Stanford University .Retrieved on 17 June, 2009 from <http://scid.stanford.edu>

Kwesiga, C.J. (2002). *Women's Access to Higher Education in Africa Uganda's Experience*. Uganda: foundation published Ltd

Lopez-Claros, A, et al (2005) Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap. *World Economic Forum*. Retrieved on 4 May, 2009 from <http://www.weforum.org>

Lovett, M. et al (2001) Diversity Awareness among a Diverse Business Student Population: Insights and Curriculum Implications. *Research in Higher Education Journal Diversity awareness, Page 1*. Retrieved on 12 April, 2010 from <http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts>

Macmillan, H.J (1996). *Educational Research Fundamentals for the Consumer*. UK Harper Collins College Publication.

Maseno, I. (2005). Practices in higher education policy:gender-related access as a policy issue in kenya. Oslo, Norway. Retrieved on 26 January, 2010 from <http://www.uv.uio.no>

MOE (2008/09). *Education Statistics Annual Abstract*: Addis Ababa: EMIS

Mekelle University Registrar (2009/10). *Trend of Students' Enrollment at Mekele University from 2005/06- 2009/10*

Mekelle University Registrar (2009/10). *Academic Staffs in 2009/10 at Mekele University*.

- Mekelle University Boucher (2009).
- Morley, L. (2006,). *Hidden transcripts:the micro politics of gender in commonwealth universities* Women's studies International Forum: .Retrived on 28 November,2008 from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science>
- Nagy, S., et al, (2004). *Feminist Perspectives on Social Research*. New York: Oxford university press.
- National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001). Retrieved on 5 October ,2009 from <http://wcd.nic.in/empwomen.htm>
- National Women's Law Center. (2007) Retrieved on 3 February, 2010 from <http://www.nwlc.org>
- Neumark, D., et al, (2005). Affirmative Action: What Do We Know? Prepared for the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*.Retrived on 29 July, 2009 from <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com>
- Oliven, C. A. (2009). *Universities and Affirmative Action: Comparing Brazil and the United States*. Retrieved on 10 December, 2009 from <http://www.vibrant.org.br>
- Oxfam (2005). *Beyond The Mainstream* : Education For Nomadic And Pastoralist Girls and Boys. Retrieved on 5 September, 2009 from <http://www.oxfam.org.uk>
- Payne, J., et al (2004). *Key Concepts in Social Research*. UK: Sage publication Ltd
- Reinharz, S. (1992). *Feminist Methods in social research*: New York: Oxford University press, Inc:
- Teshome Yizengaw. (2005). Policy Development In Higher Education In Ethiopia And The Role Of Donors And Development Partners. *Achanging Landscape*. Ethiopia.Retrieved on February 15 ,2010 from <http://www.nuffic.nl>
- Tong, R. (1998). *Feminism Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*. U.S.A: West View Press.
- Tomas, Jr, et al, (2004). Diversity Management and Affirmative Action: Past, Present and Future. *Diversity Symposium*. Thomas & Associates, Inc. Retrieved on 13 May ,2009 from <http://www.diversitycollegium.org>

Transitional government of Ethiopia (1994) *Education and training policy*, Addis Ababa The American Association of University Women (2009). *AAUW Public Policy and Government Relations Department*. Retrieved on 8 November, 2009 from <http://www.aauw.org/takeaction>.

The National Council for Research on Women (2009) *NCRW Big Five: Keeping the Doors of Opportunity Open—Women, Minorities and Affirmative Action*. Retrieved on 27 August, 2009 from <http://www.ncrw.org>

Selamawit Yilma (2007). *The Effect of Affirmative Action on Recipient Female Students and Non Recipient students in Selected Schools in Addis Ababa*. Addis Ababa University: unpublished

Sutherland, H.A (1973). *Women and education*. New York and London. R.R Bowker Company

United Nations (1979). *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*.

_____ (1995) *Platform of Action, Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing*

_____ (2000) “*Millennium Development Goals*”. Retrieved on 15 May, 2009 from www.developmentgoals.org/

_____ (2003) *woman watch: Ethiopia National Action Plan* (UN, 2004). Retrieved on 7 April, 2009 from <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>

_____ (2004). *Sweden's Follow-Up Of The Platform For Action. Fourth World Conference On Women In Beijing (1995) And Beijing+5(2000)*. Sweden. Retrieved on 24 February ,2010 from <http://www.un.org>

_____ (2005) *Statistics Division: Statistics and indicators on women and men. The World's Women 2005: Progress in Statistics*. Retrieved on 9 September ,2009 from <http://unstats.un.org>.

UNESCO (1998). *Higher education in twenty-first century vision and action. Thematic debate: women and higher education: issues and perspectives*. World conference on higher education. Paris. Retrieved on 26 January , 2010 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org>

_____ (1998). *A Good Practice Handbook Follow Up To The World Conference on Higher Education. Women And Management in Higher Education*. Paris. Retrieved on 26 January, 2010 from <http://www.unesco.org>

- _____ (1998). Higher Education In Twenty First Century Vision And Action . *World Conference On Higher Education*, (Pp. Ed-99/Hep/Wche/Vol.V-Ms-178 Volume V-Panery Uganda). Paris. Retrieved on 24 January, 2010 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org>
- _____ (2003). *Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Quality*. EFA Global Monitoring Report. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNICEF (2006). *Social Exclusion of Scheduled Caste Children from Primary Education in India*: New Delhi, India. Retrieved on 13 October, 2009 from <http://www.altoona.psu.edu>
- UNHQ (2009). *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Policies to Advance Social Integration*. New York: Commission For Social Development.
- USAID (2002,). *Gender assesment and action plan for USAID/Rwanda*. Retrieved on 6, March, 2009. <http://www.peacewomen.org>
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2001). *Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students By School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties: Title IX*. Retrieved on 6 January, 2010 from <http://www2.ed.gov>
- Woodhouse, S. (2002). The Historical Development of Affirmative Action: An Aggregated Analysis. *The western journal of Black studies*, Vol.26, No.2 .Retrieved on 11 June, 2009 from <http://www.questia.com/goole scholar>.
- Witt, L. S. (1990). *The pursuit of Race and Gender Equity in America Academe*. New York. U.S.A: Praeger Publisher; One Madison Avenue.
- World Bank (2008) [Selected Projects with Girls' Education components](http://www.worldbank.org/education/girls). Retrieved on 5 May, 2010 from <http://www.worldbank.org/education/girls>
- Yaiser, L., et al (2004) *Feminist Perspectives on Social Research*. U.S.A: Oxford University press.

Annexes

ANNEX- 1

ADDISS ABABA UNIVERS
COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF GENDER STUDIES

Dear Instructors:

The purpose of this research is to study the attitude and the practice of affirmative action for female students in Mekelle University. The result of the study is expected to directly or indirectly indicate the problems that come along with implementation of the program which will help to provide some suggestions/recommendations on how to overcome them. Your responses are worth while for the study; thus be as genuine as possible.

Direction:

-No need of writing your name

-Your urgent reply is appreciated

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

PART I- Background Information of the Respondents

Sex: - Male Female

College:-..... Department: -.....

PART II- Attitude Scale Items

For the following attitude scale items, put ‘√’ mark in the box where alternative answers are given. The symbols in the table are written in short as follows;

1. Strongly disagree,
2. Disagree,
3. Having no idea/undecided,
4. Agree,
5. Strongly agree

| No. | ATTITUDE SCALE ITEMS | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Affirmative action program has helped many female students to enter university so easily. | | | | | |
| 2 | Unless affirmative action policy used, women will not be addressed fairly in academic institutions. | | | | | |
| 3 | Affirmative action helps women to use the Country's resources equally with men. | | | | | |
| 4 | Affirmative action weakens the motivation of competent female students | | | | | |
| 5 | Affirmative action policy discourage equal competitions among students | | | | | |
| 6 | Affirmative action might lead to conflicts between Women and men. | | | | | |
| 7 | I think affirmative action is unfair for male students | | | | | |
| 8 | Affirmative action policy causes the inferiority of beneficiaries. | | | | | |
| 9 | Affirmative action policy does not make positive contribution to the education of beneficiaries. | | | | | |
| 10 | Affirmative action program places female students in an academic environment for which they are unprepared | | | | | |
| 11 | The university has to allocate budget to set up additional support programs for these female students | | | | | |
| 12 | It is fair to give additional support to female beneficiaries through tutorial classes, assertiveness trainings, guidance and counselling, and so on. | | | | | |
| 13 | The additional supports prepared for females are important for improving their academic achievements | | | | | |
| 14 | Whatever support is given, female students admitted through affirmative action program, are unlikely to be graduated from the university | | | | | |
| 15 | The environment of the university favours males' than female's learning. | | | | | |
| 16 | The implementation of rules and regulation that protect girls is weak in the university | | | | | |
| 17 | I have been trying to address the issue of gender in my lecture in the way that females should be treated fairly. | | | | | |

INSTITUTE OF GENDER STUDIES

Dear Students:

The purpose of this research is to study the attitude and the practice of affirmative action for female students in Mekele University. The result of the study is expected to directly or indirectly indicate the problems that come along with implementation of the program which will help to provide some suggestions/recommendations on how to overcome them. Your responses are worth while for the study; thus be as genuine as possible.

Direction:

-No need of writing your name

-Your urgent reply is appreciated

PART I- Background Information of the Respondents

Sex: - Male Female

College:-.....

PART II- Attitude Scale Items

For the following attitude scale items, put ‘√’ mark in the box where alternative answers are given. The symbols in the table are written in short as follows;

- 1. Strongly disagree,
- 2. Disagree,
- 3. Having no idea/undecided,
- 4. Agree,
- 5. Strongly agree

| No. | ATTITUDE SCALE ITEMS | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
|-----|----------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | Affirmative action program has helped many female students to enter university so easily. | | | | | |
| 2 | Unless affirmative action policy used, women will not be addressed fairly in academic institutions. | | | | | |
| 3 | Affirmative action helps women to use the country's resources equally with men | | | | | |
| 4 | Affirmative action policy discourages equal competitions among students. | | | | | |
| 5 | Affirmative action weakens the motivation of competent female students | | | | | |
| 6 | Affirmative action might lead to conflicts between women and men. | | | | | |
| 7 | I think affirmative action is unfair for male students. | | | | | |
| 8 | Affirmative action policy causes inferiority of beneficiaries | | | | | |
| 9 | Affirmative action policy does not make positive contribution to the education of beneficiaries | | | | | |
| 10 | Affirmative action program places female students in an academic environment for which they are unprepared | | | | | |
| 11 | The university has to allocate budget to set up Additional support programs for female students | | | | | |
| 12 | It is fair to give additional support to female beneficiaries through tutorial classes, assertiveness trainings, guidance and counselling, and so on. | | | | | |
| 13 | The additional supports prepared for females are important for improving their academic achievements. | | | | | |
| 14 | Whatever support is given, female students admitted through affirmative action program, are unlikely to be graduated from the university | | | | | |
| 15 | The environment of the university favours males' than female's learning | | | | | |
| 16 | The implementation of rules and regulation that protect girls is weak in the university | | | | | |
| 17 | Teachers should give their spare time to give additional s psychological and educational supports to female beneficiary students. | | | | | |
| 18 | Affirmative action carries out the idea that the beneficiaries require extra help to compensate for supposed failure | | | | | |

1. Position
2. Since when has Mekelle University started to practice affirmative action?
3. What are the different practices in the university done in relation to affirmative action for female students?
4. What are the benefits obtained?
5. Have you faced problems while trying to implement additional support for these beneficiaries
6. What do you suggest to overcome problems related to affirmative action?

FGD Guidelines for beneficiaries

1. Department /college
2. What is your attitude towards affirmative action policy? Do you think it has an advantage? Or disadvantage? Why?
3. What has done to you as a part of affirmative action program?
4. What have you benefited from this program?
5. What challenges have you faced during your stay in campus?
6. How do you think the implementation of rules and the regulations that protect girls in the University?
7. What do you think the university has to do for the future to overcome problems related to affirmative action?

FGD Guidelines for non –beneficiary female students, male students and instructors

1. Department/College
2. What is your attitude towards affirmative action policy? Do you think it has an advantage? Or disadvantage? Why?
3. Do you think the policy has an effect on non-beneficiary female students and male students?
4. What kind of opportunities given to female students in particular by the university?
5. From your observation or experience, what kind of challenges female students in general and especially female beneficiaries faced during their stay in campus?
6. How do you think the implementation of rules and the regulations that protect girls in the University?
7. What do you think the university has to do for the future to overcome problems related to affirmative action?

Proportional stratification of students based on year level and sex

| COLLEGE | DEPARTMENT | 1 st yr | | 2 nd yr | | 3 rd yr | | 4 th yr | | TOTAL |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------|----|--------------------|----|--------------------|---|--------------------|---|-------|
| | | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | |
| COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCE | PUBLIC HEALTH | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | | | | | 6 |
| | PHARMACY | 3 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 16 |
| | NURSING | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | 8 |
| TOTAL | | 4 | 3 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 30 |
| COLLEGE OF DRY LAND AND AGRICULTURE | DLCS | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | | | | | 8 |
| | DCHS | | | | | 2 | 1 | | | 3 |
| | LaRMEP | 8 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1 | | | 23 |
| | | 9 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 2 | | | 34 |
| COLLEGE OF BUISNESS AND EDUCATION | PDM | 8 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 1 | | | 29 |
| | ACCOUNTING AND FINAINCE | 5 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 4 | | | 36 |
| | ECONOMOCS | 11 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 2 | | | 30 |
| TOTAL | | 24 | 15 | 16 | 19 | 14 | 7 | | | 95 |
| COLLEGE OF NATURAL AND COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCE | MATHEMATICS | 7 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | | | 16 |
| | BIOLOGY | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | | | 16 |
| | APPLIED GEOGRAPHY | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 9 |
| TOTAL | | 14 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 4 | | | 41 |

