



Addis Ababa University

College of Development Studies

Department of Gender Studies

**Gender and Politics: Women's Political Participation and Their
Voice in Politics: The case of Ethiopian Parliament.**

**A Thesis Submitted to Center of Gender Studies in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirement of Master's Degree in Gender Studies**

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Addis Ababa

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Declaration

The researcher here by declares that the thesis on the title, “Gender and Politics: Women’s Political Participation and Their Voice in Politics: The case of Ethiopian Parliament.” is my original work and that all sources that have been referred to and quoted have been dully indicated and acknowledged in the references.

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Acronyms

AI	Amnesty International
ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Organization
AU	Africa Union
BPA	Beijing Plan of Actions
CDU	Coalition for Democracy and Unity
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSP	Civil Societies Proclamation
ESM	Ethiopian Students Movement
ESPS	Ethiopian Society of Population Studies
EWLA	Ethiopia Women Lawyers Association
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGDS	Focus Groups Discussants
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GTP	Growth and Development Plan
GMMP	Global Media Monitoring Project
HPR	House of People Representatives
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IES	Institute of Ethiopian Studies
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union

MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
NAPGE	National Action Plan for Equality
NDI	National Democratic Institution
NEBE	National Electoral Board of Ethiopia
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OPCO	Oromo People’s Congress
OPDO	Oromo People’s Democratic Organization
SEPDF	Southern Ethiopian People’s Democratic Front
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TPLF	Tigray People’s Liberation Front
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nation Development Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNECD	United Nations Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

Definition of the Term

Gender: explain the differences between men and women in social terms as men, and as what a man can do; as woman and as what a woman can or cannot do. Therefore, gender is an analytical category that is socially constructed to differentiate the biological difference between men and women. The term gender is also used to describe the differences in behavior between men and women which are described as masculine and feminine.

Politics: refers the necessary involvement of power struggle of the state and influence and the way in which power is distributed among the male and female in the process of decisions making.

Women's political participation: refers to women's participation in the formal political office, political institutions (parliament and political parties) which paved the way for women collective mobilization.

Voice of women: refers to an informed and aware woman who can participate in political processes, hold the state to account, and exercise rights and responsibilities.

Parliament: refers to an assembly in which a group of people makes the laws, policies and strategies of the country.

Soft Issues: refers to fundamental issues of people. Soft issues consist of less tangible aspects that are much more subjective and less easily measured than hard. It consists of the issues of human right, culture, environment and social welfare.

Hard Issues: refers to political issues that concerns majority will and majority vote and the final result of a sophisticated decision. It can rest on inducements ("carrots") or threats ("sticks"). Hard issues generally concerns issues of military, economic, war, peace, health, diplomacy and international relations, scientific development and political research.

Senior Position: refers to the group of people at high level decision-making position that actively participate in the daily political supervision, planning and administrative process required by a parliament to help meet its objectives.

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to assess women's political participation and their voice in politics. To deal with the problem, fundamental research questions were formulated to assess the women's political participation and their voice in Ethiopian politics to enhance women's political participation. To conduct the study, qualitative research method study design was deployed. The study was carried out in the House of People's Representatives, and purposive and multistage and random sampling methods were used to select 25 female parliamentarians, 15 male parliamentarians. In addition, in order to explore political experiences of women in the Ethiopian parliament, snow ball sampling techniques were used. The main instruments of data collection were unstructured, in- depth interview and focus group discussion. The data were analyzed using descriptive content analysis. The finding of the study reveals that the majority of participants have acknowledged that descriptive political representation of Ethiopian women is improving. Further, dramatic increase from 0.5 percent representation in 1954 to 38.8 percent in 2015 that illustrated the positive result of commitment to address gender equality in the parliament. Women are efficiently participated in politics and they make a significant difference in the issues they prioritize and the solution they provoke comparing to previous time. Men informants have also recognized that women are more active in supporting legislations that will benefit women and children. Both men and women share common issues and bring different point of views in their legislative work to impact wider range of the society. From the findings of the study, it is possible to conclude that a lot of procedural and structural changes in the parliament that may perhaps help to promote gender equality in politics. However, men are still dominating and the parliament still maintains the tradition of male superiority. In contrast, women hold senior position in Ethiopian national parliament. They are mostly presented in "Soft political portfolio". In its place, they are generally under-presented in "Hard political portfolio". There are several factors that determine active political participation of women and their voice in politics. However, there is a general consensus that women parliamentarians have become a voice for women's right advocacy and make a significant difference in bringing gender friendly agenda.

Chapter One

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Equal participation of women and men in politics is central to more inclusive and democratic governance. As stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives” (UN, 1946).

As the 2011 UN General Assembly resolution on women’s political participation states “gender equality relates to the dignity, rights, opportunities and worth of men and women to participate in different spheres of life. Both men and women have equal rights and opportunities to participate all aspects and at all levels of political processes. The extent of women’s involvement in politics and women’s access to decision-making can be seen as the key indicators of gender equality in a society". Therefore, the full and equitable participation of women in public life is essential to building and sustaining strong, vibrant democracies. Accordingly, the meaningful participation of women in national, local and community leadership roles have become an important focus of global development policy (UNICEF, 2012).

The possibility for all citizens to participate in the management of public affairs is at the very heart of democracy. At the same time full and equal participation of both men and women in political decision making provides a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society, and may as such enhance the legitimacy of political processes by making them more democratic and responsive to the concerns and perspectives of all segments of society (Shimelis,2015).

The participation of women in political decision making positions was recognized as a political right after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. The Beijing Declaration and Platform deal broadly with the issues of women in power and decision-making. Through the Declaration and Platform for Action, States are committed to taking concrete measures to ensure women’s equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making, and to increase women’s capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership, in accordance with its detailed recommendations. The Beijing Platform stresses that

equality in decision-making is integral to the advancement of women's rights and that women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a question of simple justice or democracy, but also a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account (UN, 1995).

Similarly, Meaza (2009) has stated that participation of women in decisions making and politics is a civil right and a matter of justice and equality. It is also crucial that women are represented in decisions making positions to present, reflect and protect the interest of the female consistency. Increasing women's participation in politics and securing their access to political life is of particular importance to democratic development and sustainability. Efforts to promote and increase women's political participation have taken place all around the world and brought together women from different political, social and cultural groups with the common aim of reaching the goal of gender equality.

In some countries the process of reaching equal representation of women in political institutions and parliament has taken a long time for example, in the Nordic countries while in other countries the transition to democracy has contributed to a more rapid development and the overall change in society has opened 'windows of opportunity' to promote women's participation in political life. However, no matter what the contextual differences, the struggle to reach a higher representation of women in parliament and to let the women elected make a greater impact has met stiff resistance and required a strong group of women negotiating for their rights as equal members of the society. Women all over the world have mobilized across political lines and from the standpoints of different social and cultural status and ethnic affiliations' to reach the goal of gender equality (Lovenduski, 2005).

There have indeed been positive changes in most regions of the world: the average number of women in parliament has increased from 11.8 percent in 1998 to nearly 16 percent in 2005; but there is still a long way to go to reach the Beijing Platform for Action target of 30 percent women in decision-making positions. It is therefore of great importance to continue to enhance the tools that are available to women and continue the debate regarding women's political participation. This means not only increasing the number of women represented in parliament but also moving 'beyond numbers' and looking at ways of increasing the effectiveness of the women who are elected and the impact of women elected to powerful positions (IDEA, 2005).

A global survey of 187 women who hold public office in 65 countries, the Inter Parliamentary Union found that 90 percent believe they have a responsibility to represent women's interests and advocate for other members of society (UNICEF, 2004).

A study conducted in (2006 –2008) among parliamentarians from 110 countries showed that women in parliament were more likely than men to prioritize gender and social issues such as childcare, equal pay, parental leave, pensions, reproductive rights and protection against gender-based violence (IPU, 2008).

Changing international political norms have also exerted an influence on women's political representation in Africa. The end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century has seen a steady increase in women's political participation in Africa (UN, 2005). For instance, the 3rd World Conference on Women held in Nairobi, Kenya, was a major turning point for improving women's representation because it explicitly called for countries to adopt constitutional and legal framework order to ensure that women were no longer politically marginalized (Stephanie ,2014).

The global average of women in national parliaments has nearly doubled, from 11.3 percent in 1995 to 22.1 percent in 2015 (+10.8 points) (IPU, 2015). Four of the world's top 10 countries, in terms of women's share of single or lower houses of parliament, are in Sub-Saharan Africa: Rwanda, with 63.8 percent; Seychelles, with 43.8 percent; Senegal, with 42.7 percent; and South Africa, with 41.5 percent (IPU, 2015).

In the history of Ethiopian politics, there were times when few women become prominent figures in the society. Those women who got the chance to participate in the political process demonstrated their ability to handle government affairs in the parliament equal to men (Fantaye, 2005). During in the monarch regime, the first time in Ethiopian history, the late Honorable Wz. Sinedu Gebru became only women member of parliament (Degu, 1999). Since coming to power in the early 1990s, the current ruling EPRDF has conducted five formal elections in a little more than 25 years quite an achievement when compared with the track record of its two predecessors, namely, the Imperial regime and the Military regime (Meheret and Tsedey, 2017).

In Ethiopia, the women share of parliament grew from 2 percent in 1995 to 38.8 percent in 2015 (36.8) (IPU, 2015). Accordingly, nowadays, out of 547 seats of the House of Peoples Representatives of Ethiopia, 212 (38.8 percent) seats are occupied by women. Therefore, during

the last two decades, the number of women in the Ethiopian lower house has shown considerable change. The country could also attain the Beijing platform 1995 goal of 30 percent women in decision-making. However, despite this change Ethiopian women still lack the chance and experience of participating in public decision-making life including parliament's substantive representation of women (Tonnessen, 2011). Though the number of women who were elected to national Parliament increased from time to time, their representation still low compared to the 30 utmost that is said to be required for women to have strong voices (Gennet, 2014).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Traditionally, the public field and government system was the dominion of men while the private dominion of family and social relationships was entrusted to women (Meaza, 2009). Due to this gender stereotyping, women are overrepresented in the informal sectors than formal sectors. They have typically been excluded from politics throughout the world (WCI, 2008). Politics has traditionally been a male domain that many women have found unwelcoming or even hostile (UN, 2005).

As a result, in societies around the world, men typically hold most positions of power and decision-making, an area in which gender inequality is often severe and highly visible. Global progress has been made towards the recognition of the principle of women's political, economic and social equality. Despite the declaration and recognition of these regional and international rights, women in Africa continue to face inequality in all spheres. Africa women are often less participated and low represented in decision making positions. Women's low access to information and media, less employment opportunity, organizational barriers coupled by cultural factors reduce their decision making power in the society in general and in organizations in particular (UNDPE, 2005).

Likewise, Ethiopia is a patriarchal society that keeps women in a subordinate position (Haregawoyin and Emebet, 2003). Ethiopian society is socialized in a way that men are superior to women. Men are expected to become self-reliant, major bread winners, and responsible in different societal activities, while women are kept within the confined of the household and family where they are thought to accept decisions that men make on their behalf (ESPS, 2008).

Then the society has developed traditions that confined women's role in home which affect their psychology and restrict their right of taking part in politics and join parliament. Hence, the

socialization process, which determines gender roles, is responsible for the subjugation of women's parliamentary participation in the country (ESPS, 2008). Women in Ethiopia constituted half of the Ethiopian population. Despite their significant representation in national population and contribution to the national economy, women in Ethiopia historically and at the present marginalized both politically and economically (UN, 2005).

Similarly, the study of Sosen and Tsehai (2008) has clearly indicated that women in Ethiopia face a set of multiple, cross cutting and interrelated problems. These problems limit Ethiopian women's access to productive resources, basic health services, and educational and employment opportunities. Hence most of them do not participate in decision making processes. Most of all, parliaments were established, organized, and dominated by men, acting in their own interest and establishing procedures for their own convenience without considering women's conditions (Lovenduski and Karam, 2005).

In Ethiopia among other things, women were not considered as capable of decision making as the result the number of women in the lower house of parliament constitute only 28.9 of the total representation in 2010 (Awotash, 2010). The Ethiopian Electoral law has simply assigned the top leadership of political organizations to notify the list of candidates nominated by the organization, who fulfill the criteria provided under it (Proclamation 532/2007, Article 46(1)). However, the law has failed to provide mandatory rules forcing the political parties to draw special attention toward women and adopt quota system for them, in selecting their candidates.

Therefore, the candidate selection system that they apply may vary and the way they may treat women in this regard depends on their will. Several evidences show that, women in Ethiopia continue to be marginalized in many areas of society, especially in the sphere of politics and decision making. Women continue to be underrepresented in national parliaments. They are seldom leaders of major political parties, participate as candidates in elections in small numbers and, during electoral processes, face multiple obstacles deeply rooted in inequality in gender norms and expectations (Tsegaye, 2005).

The other most serious setback associated with women political participation in Ethiopia there is the major contradiction between the EPRDF's rhetoric of democracy and constitutionalism and its actions. For instance, the current electoral landscape has been dominated by a single party, and

little or no headway has been achieved in instituting multi-party competitive politics because the ruling party has always been the winner in all the elections, often with a landslide. Simply put, Ethiopia is effectively a one-party state today, as it was when the EPRDF came to power in the early 1990s. Given this political culture, it can be argued that mere numbers by themselves can be deceptive, serving either as symbolic expressions of representation of women or facades to lend legitimacy to the system rather than genuine tools of democratic representation and participation of women (Meheret and Tsedey, 2017).

Consequently, it is against the conditions that the increasing number of Ethiopian women member of parliaments and their contribution to gender empowerment and equality members of parliaments must be considered. Hence; the aforementioned weaknesses of the representation system are prevalently manifested in the country and are one of the obstacles for women's parliamentary participation. Nonetheless, the government simply tries to increase women's parliamentary participation by providing more budgets to political parties with more women candidates, but no reserved seats or affirmative action for them (Tadesse, 2016).

This approach, on the other hand, lead to argue that political parties may select women candidates not from the perspective of ensuring women's political participation strictly. Rather, they will do it just for the sake of securing the financial grant using women's candidanship as an instrument. Therefore, to join the national parliament, Ethiopian women are required to win seats by competing with men without any particular legal support from the government (Eden, 2017).

Thus, political participation of women goes beyond guarantee the election of large number of women in the parliament. Indication shows that, despite the declaration and recognition of the regional and international instrument and rights, women in the Ethiopia occupy low rank in the politics, they are still at the soft power position and annihilate from public influence. Significant parliamentary participation of women has also a lot to do with producing role models for the rest of women to encourage their involvement in higher decision-makings (Delys, 2014).

Depriving of active participation of women in politics and hijacking their voice in decision-making processes poses a serious challenge to achieve democracy and sustainable development goals, since over half of the citizenry is de facto excluded from public affairs. Even if women's parliamentary representation is increasing, the majority of Ethiopian women has not been given

enough attention and has remained invisible in development planners and policy makers. They are also excluded from hard power positions such as policy making process and defense rather they are confined in soft power positions (Alemu, 2007).

Furthermore, if men monopolize the political process, passing laws which affect society at large, the decision-making process does not always balance the interests of the male and female populations (Meaza, 2009). Additionally, speedy look at the current composition of political decision makers in Ethiopia provides evidence that women still face numerous obstacles in articulating and shaping their own interests. However, studies on political participation of women in Ethiopia acknowledge the importance of women's presence in the political institutions. The studies also show a lot has to be done to ensure women's ability to participate effectively and the need for their voice to be heard in politics.

Therefore, the researcher as a student of Gender Studies by using feminine research value would explore the genuine political participation of women and their voice in politics in the Ethiopian parliament. And the research would examine political participation of women beyond their numerical representation.

Furthermore the research has shown the actual gap that has not been well studied by the other researcher. Therefore, it is important to understand the level of women's political participation and the level to which voice of women are heard in their capacity as members of house of people's representatives.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective of the Study

The central objective of this study is to explore women's political participation and their voice in politics.

1.3.2 . Specific Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are:

- ✓ To examine women's leadership position and their impact in soft and hard political issues as MPs.
- ✓ To explore the political experience of women parliamentarians and the level to which they have voice to promote legislations benefiting women.
- ✓ To assess the policy priorities of women parliamentarians in their legislative work.
- ✓ To investigate the formal and informal barriers that impede on women's political participation in the Ethiopian parliament.

1.3.3. Research Questions

In order to address the above objectives, the following research questions needs to be answered?

1. Are women parliamentarians holding senior leadership spots and how they make significant difference in hard and soft political issues?
2. What are the political experience of women parliamentarians in terms of advancing women interest in their legislative occupation and policy making?
3. What policy areas do women parliamentarians prioritize in their legislative work?
4. What are the formal and informal barriers that impede on political participation of parliamentarians women and their voice in politics?

1.4. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its ability to show the actual women's political participation and their voice in politics. Furthermore, the suggestions from the study would also lead to policy makers' new orientation in formulation and implementation of policies that could enhance women's political participation and their voice to be heard in politics. Above all, this study would help to realize factors that deter women's political participation and their voice in politics and by suggesting possible strategy in order to overcome the challenges that hinder women's political participation and their voice to be heard in politics. Finally, the study would serve as a guideline for those who interested to study the same topic in wider scope and it can serve us a basic document for student and researchers.

1.5. The Scope of Study

This study was conducted in the House of People's Representatives (HPR) which is the highest political organ of Ethiopia according to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution (1995). The researcher selected House of People's Representatives because of the fact that it has the ultimate power of legislation in all matters assigned by the constitution to the Federal Jurisdiction (FDRE, 1995). Besides this, the House can be a representative of parliaments and parliamentarians across regional states and federal government.

1.6. Ethical Considerations

Women's political participation is considered a very sensitive topic for research in terms of qualitative methods. There are issues of confidentiality, problems of disclosure, and the need to ensure adequate and informed consent. The researcher would pay special attention in ensuring the safety of informants and safety for interviewers. Research on issue of studying women's experiences in politics interfere their private life. Before holding interviews the objective and purpose of the study have been clearly explained to get the consent of the study participants and increase the response rate of the study. Informants' names are also keeping anonymous for the reason that all informants are from one political party; they are from the ruling party of Ethiopia. So their outlooks and opinions towards some issues are kept confidential.

1.7. Organization of the Study

With regards to this, the study was organized with five chapters. The first chapter consist background of the study, statement of the problem, research question, objective of the study general objective and specific objectives, research question, significance and scope of the study. The second chapter portrays the overall reviews of related literature. In this chapter different book, journals, articles, different office reports, proclamation, published and unpublished material related to the subject under study were reviewed. The third session discourse the description of the study area and research methodology. Furth chapter encompasses date presentation, interpretation and analysis part. In this chapter the participant's personal experience and contribution for political participation of women and their voice on improving the women political life were discussed on the side with the analysis and findings. Finally, in chapter five the summary of major findings and recommendations based o the findings of the study would be forwarded.

Chapter- Two

2. Review of Related Literatures

2.1. Gender and Politics

The issues of gender are evidently central to understand the political world. Sapiro (2003) asserted that, power is an essential part of the study of politics, and one too often ignored in dominant approaches to political psychology. It can provide handles on understanding how cultural norms become integrated into the actions of human beings, how people act and interact within different systems of rules and social expectations, why and how systems of stigma operate in everyday life, how people cope with being victims of inequality and stigma, and what is the effect on them.

According to Endale (2014) Power referred as the ability to control in a situation where other human beings must obey and do what the duty requires. Political power is a definite aspect in relations between large social groups (subjection, cooperation and social partnership. Moreover, the exercise of political power is related to needs, interests which are complied with and implemented in social groups.

The term “politics” refers to the exercise of power. It is used to describe the key interests of social groups, citizen participation in state duties and also to characterize the main directions in the operation (economic, national, social, cultural etc.) of the State and parties (Murnieks, 2003). On the other hand, gender refers to the social attributes associated with being male and female and the relationships between women, men, girls and boys. These attributes and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization. The concept of gender also includes expectations about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviors of both women and men, and when applied to social analysis, reveals socially constructed roles (Wood and Eagly, 2010).

The study of Burns and Kinder (2012) has acknowledged that gender is a site of “durable inequality”. In many societies, including the United States, women and men are raised from birth to inhabit feminine or masculine role expectations respectively, and those expectations entail very different approaches to power (Wood and Eagly, 2010). Thus, gender affects how power is kicked off, reinforced, or undermined when people exercise voice. It does so in ways both overt and subtle, through means that may be simultaneously political, psychological, and social. Therefore, understanding gender is a path to understanding the psychology of power in politics (Mendelberg and Karpowitz, 2016).

Therefore, unequal distribution of Political power is thus intimately entangled with gender. Some anthropologists have argued that male political dominance has evolved logically from primitive man's occupation of hunting, while women remained preoccupied with gathering food. Hunting gave men control over weaponry and the art of war, leading to control of political power. Anthropologists dissenting from the above theory observe that the hunting - gathering model is not universal to all primitive societies (Ibid).

Many scholars have acknowledged that women in general are excluded from positions of power, dominance and are subjugated to men. Such a system founded on inequality has apparently been approved by society since domination is a premise of patriarchy. For instance, Kate Millett in her study of sexual politics has pointed out, unbalanced relationship of dominance and sub-ordination that has prevailed between the sexes throughout history and continues to exist even at present.

Moreover, Mendelberg and Karpowitz (2016) have demonstrated that gender is not simply a sorting mechanism; it is specially assorting mechanism that places people on different rungs of society's hierarchy. In other words, it sorts in ways that implicate power and influence. Power, authority, and influence are fundamental resources in both gender relations. Men are far more likely than women to access and use them. All the so called authorities who are invariably men seem to have raised their voice with an end to silencing women and downgrade them to subjugated positions.

For instance, men are expected to become self-reliant, major bread winners, and responsible in different societal activities. While women are kept within the confined of the household and family where they are thought to accept decisions that men make on their behalf (ESPS, 2008).

With the emerging methodologies, debates within political studies have tended to be polarized between advocates of politics as institution of governments, and as relations of power. In the former, the politics is equated with issues of rights, justice and responsibilities. In the latter, the politics is equated with issues of power, policy and pragmatism (Squires and Judith, 1999). Contrary to these, Brook and Morgen (1988) makes the assertion that politics is wrongly understood as the activities of elected officials and the working of the government both out of the reach of the ordinary people when there is an attempt to change the social and economic institutions that embody the basic power relations in our society that is the politics.

In the process of challenging the conventional definition of politics, feminist writers have articulated and analyzed how gender structures affect women's political experience. They have demonstrated how politics and the reality of everyday life are related. Captured in the slogan, "the personal is the political," issues of violence, abortion, reproductive rights, childcare, sexual harassment, and housework have become part of the political agenda (Meaza, 2009).

In the same way, Brook and Morgen (1988) recognize that politics can mean at least to some people, efforts to challenge entrenched power relations whether between individual men and women or between groups with and without economic and political power". Diverse groups of women have made critical contributions to transform social and economic institutions that constitute the basic power relations in the society outside the electoral politics. Despite this, women have always been considered as the passive and non-political (Meaza, 2009).

On the other hand, many scholars have confirmed that politics has historically been the explicitly masculine human activity of all. It has been more exclusively limited to men and is more self-consciously masculine than any other social practice. The institutional manifestations of politics located in the government have been notoriously resistant to the incorporations of women's and their interests or perspectives from traditional political activity and discouraged from defining their activities as political.

The issues of gender are largely assumed to be irrelevant to the political. Furthermore, if gendered has been understood, as synonymous with women, the absence of women from the political sphere can imply that gender issues are simply not relevant to politics (Patem, 1989).

Feminists contend that in a male supremacist world owned and controlled by men, it is no wonder that women consistently find themselves in subjugating positions. As has been shown by statistics, ninety-nine percent of the world's resources are owned by men (Spender and Man Made, 1990). Since each and every avenue of power within society is in male hands, it cannot but be without some impact of its own since the essence of politics is power. It is quite natural that the ability to influence the thoughts and actions of the subjugated group goes hand in hand with dominance and power. Man's power to dominate, tyrannize, choose or reject woman" endows him with a "charisma" which comes "purely from his power over woman and his control of the world by force" and "not from anything fertile or life giving in him" (Phillips, 1995).

According, Lovenduski (2000) he claims that women do not dispose of public power, belong to political elites or hold influential positions in government institutions. Likewise, Brush (2003) has indicated that the state is male in the feminist sense because it sees and treats women the way men see and treat women. Politics has traditionally been a male domain that many women have found unwelcoming or even hostile (UN, 2005).

Additionally, the study of Lovenduski and Karam (2005) shows that political institutions were established, organized, and dominated by men, acting in their own interest and establishing procedures for their own convenience without considering women's conditions. As a result of this, the sphere of politics always considered as the sphere of men. Besides, there is another assumption that women are not really interested in mainstream political parties; because of this there is a further marginalization of women. In any kind of political decision-making, a gender gap seems to exist in the fact that the female electorate is much less engaged in politics.

Nevertheless, gender gaps persist in most other types of political participation, and men are significantly more involved than women in a number of outlets such as strikes, demonstrations, contacting political officials, and political party membership (Coffé and Bolzendahl, 2010; Inglehart and Norris ,2003; Marien et al. 2010).

Thus, gender remains a meaningful source of inequality in political participation. The exclusion of women in political participation and decision making processes was one inherited by human history. Even when democracy had birth ancient Athens in 5th century BC, the exclusion of women from political participation and decision making was existed. The Athenians women had no a right to vote or to participate in the democratic process and even they had not considered as a citizens (Khadar Mohammed; 2013). Even in European countries women had neither a right to political participation nor involve the decision making and public affairs up until the beginning of 20th century. Therefore, women franchise right is not recognized in the first wave of democratization (1828–1926) in many of European countries (Hague R. and Harrop M; 2004).

However, through women's organizations and movements struggled and fought for women's suffrage. Many women's activists, notably the "suffragettes" in British demanded and mobilized people to fight for women's right to vote; hence, American and British women gained the right to

vote in 1920 and 1928 respectively, marking the beginning of women entering political activities (Bryson; 1992).

In same manner, in African countries women have lacked an enough space in both political engagement and decision making process. Although the whole African constitutions and laws enshrined provision that recognize the right of women to equally participate in politics, African women is the most disadvantageous and marginalized groups in political arena. Because this the result of several underlined and perceptible factors. One of the most remarkable factors was the African customary and traditional laws which were based on the patriarchy supremacy (Abdo and Abegaz, 2009).

For example the African traditional assembly leaders were male dominant; male has exercised the power of the law making, decision or policy making and leadership of the African society traditionally and even religiously. Women had neither decision nor had the right to sit and speak or vote at the assembly (Khadar, 2013).

Women are less participated and low represented in decision making positions in East Africa countries. Women's low access to information and media, less employment opportunity, organizational barriers coupled by cultural factors reduce their decision making power in the society in general and in organizations in particular (UNFPA, 2005).

Ethiopia is a patriarchal society that keeps women in subordinate positions (Haregawoyin and Emebet, 2003). The socialization process, which determine gender role is partly responsible for the subjugation of women in the country. The differences in the ways in which individuals are treated through the socialization process due mainly to their sex status leads to the development of real psychological and personality difference between males and females (Almaz, 1991).

Historically, disparities between men and women in division of labor, share of power, resources and benefits have been justified and maintained by patriarchy social norms and structures (UNDP, 2005).

Women constitute half of the Ethiopia population. In Ethiopia women are the backbone of society and the economy. The continent is dominated by small-scale farming and "informal" traders, close to 50-65 % of whom are women and are often the sole providers for their families. Yet, despite

their central role shouldering this economic and social burden, women are often struggle to gain a seat at the decision-making table (UN, 2005).

In Ethiopia society there is unequal decision-making and inequitable division of labor between men and women. Women in Ethiopia are clearly in a disadvantageous position. Women continue to face inequality and inequity in several spheres of their societies. They hold inferior positions in political and public affairs. Their participation and influence has been minimal at the public policy and decision-making levels (MoWA, 2006).

Furthermore, Ethiopian women's political representation has been limited for a long time and even historically some of the great women leaders that had impact such as Queen of Sheba, Empress Eleni or Empress Taytu and some others had access to power via their husbands or sons. Today, those women that do enter into politics face various barriers including, lack of exposure and experience, limited support networks, exclusion from informal decision-making process in male dominated associations and meetings, as well as limited information about female political candidates.

Nonetheless, in the face of these difficulties the number of women parliamentarians is increasing; between 2007 and 2010 women holds 116 parliament seats out of 529 total seats (<http://www.indexmundi.com/Ethiopia/gender-party-in-national-parliament.htm>).

2.1.1. Political Participation

Political participation of citizens is vital to build vigorous democratic culture. Political participation simply refers to activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of representatives who make those policies (Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999).

For Smith (2003) political participation refers to a framework of policies, principles, and techniques which ensure that citizens and communities have the opportunity to be involved in a meaningful way in making decisions that will affect them, or in which they have an interest. The participation may involve both individual voices coming directly from citizens who choose to express their views and collective voices that able to synthesize or aggregate shared messages.

Other than this, Political participation refers the active involvement and engagement by individuals both women and men with political process that affect their lives. The act of active engagements includes voting, standing for office, joining of political party or to take part the political campaigns of the political parties and to exert influence in the decision making process through public debate, and dialogue with the representatives they elected or through their capacity to organize themselves; or exercise public power by holding public office at different levels of administrations- local, regional, national and international (Khadar, 2013).

Likewise, Awofeso and Odeyemi (2014) has refined Political participation as a voluntary act which encompasses wide range of political activities, including voting at election, contesting for political and party offices, attending political rallies, joining political parties and many more. Although, these political activities are considered to be "free zone" to all qualified citizens, especially in liberal democracies irrespective of disparities in wealth, education and gender, experiences.

2.1.2. Women Voice in Politics

Voice refers both to the act of making known one's preferences, demands, views and interests and to the capabilities this requires (O'Neil et al., 2007). These capabilities include confidence and belief in the worth of one's opinions and the legitimacy of expressing them.

They also include the ability to make informed choices based on critical awareness, education and information. Voice can be exercised at the household, community and national levels, and through individual or collective action. Voice is therefore closely linked to processes of empowerment and change in what Jo Rowlands (1997) calls 'the power within'.

In many societies, women are (or have been) expected to remain silent in debate, denied the right of consent (to marital sex, to vote, over property) and seen as irrational or trivial. This diminishes the perceived validity and reliability of women's voice, even when these discriminatory norms and assumptions are historical (Goetz and Nyamu, 2008).

According to the study of Goetz and Nyamu (2008), there are two common assumptions in the literature about women's voice. The first is that women's access and presence will allow them to have actual influence over public decisions. The second is that women with influence will champion issues of concern to women, including gender equality.

For them, the quality of women's voice and participation in decision-making processes is informed by factors such as whether women represent the constituency they claim to speak on behalf of (which might be themselves but, in the case of civic and political leaders, is usually a group), whether they have the capabilities, information and choices to formulate informed views and to express them freely, and whether they are able to influence public decisions-makers effectively. As such, indicators like the number of women parliamentarians, women's organizations or women in paid employment provide insights into the presence of women in public life. But they are only a starting point for assessing the quality of women's participation and the extent to which they have actual influence (Ibid, 2008).

Women's voice and participation should therefore not be viewed in absolute terms but as a matter of degree, women rarely have complete voice or none at all, but instead have more or less voice in different areas of their lives. In turn, their individual and collective capabilities, as well as their socio-political environment, shape the extent and quality of their voice and public engagement (Goetz and Nyamu Musembi, 2008).

2.1.3. Forms of Political Participation

Different researcher has classified political participation in diverse forms. Political participation has distinguished in to two participation in a directly political context, such as elections or political institutions, parties or interest groups and participation in social contexts. This is referring as direct, to the latter as indirect political participation. These contexts, the political as well as the social, can be further categorized as either supportive of the system, or critical of the system (Trinkle, 1997).

Direct political participation is defined by the expression of a political interests and a political aim. A citizen who participates directly is politically motivated, either with the aim of making his or her favorites political party or personality win in elections, or with the aim of promoting his or her own political convictions or interests within a certain field. Such direct political participation is usually categorized into conventional and unconventional participation (Barnes and Kaase et al., 1979).

Indirect political participation is a voluntary engagement in social activities or networks with political implications but without clearly defined political interests or political aims (Fuchs, 1984). In general, indirect political participation is, in most cases, implicitly political through its influence

on society and societal values, thereby either affirming the status quo or triggering political reactions and changes in the structures of a state (Putnam, 1993).

2.1.4. Overview of Women's Political Participation

In nineteenth century feminist campaigned for the right to vote and stand in election. A Few countries have granted women the fundamental democratic rights. New Zealand was the first country to give women the right to vote, in 1893; and Finland was the first to adopt fundamental democratic rights in 1906. Countries like Britain, USA, India, and Portugal where women were able to vote and stand in election in 1918, 1928, 1945 and 1975 respectively. However, it was only in the beginning of 21st century women were globally entered the corridors of power and participated in state based politics (IPU, 2004).

Equal participation of women and men in public life was one of the cornerstones of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 and came into force in 1981(Squires, 2007). Women's political participation refers to the insertion and integration of women both in terms of number and ideas into the process of politics (Lovenduski, 2005).

Ballington (2008); Have notes that "The attainment of gender equality and the full participation of women in decision making are key indicators of democracy. The involvement of women in all aspects of political life produces more equitable societies and delivers a stronger and more representative democracy." Available researchers have revealed that 1990s marking the beginning of women in Africa entering political activities. Several countries in Africa began revising their constitutions in the 1990s; they were influenced by calls from domestic and international women's groups to adopt gender-based quotas .Women are becoming more engaged in a variety of institutions from local government, to legislatures, and even the executive (Stephanie, 2014).

Today, Africa is a leader in women's parliamentary representation globally. African countries have some of the world's highest rates of representation: Rwanda claimed the world's highest ratio of women in parliament in 2003 and today Rwandan women hold 64% of the country's legislative seats. In Senegal, Seychelles and South Africa, more than 40% of parliamentary seats are held by women, while in Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania and Uganda over 35% of seats are occupied by women (Aili, 2013).

In the present day, like other countries of the world, in Ethiopia women's political participation and representation increasing time to time in the house of people's representative (Shimlies, 2015). For instance, in the first multiparty election Ethiopia election of 1995 women were gained only 15 (2.56%) seat in parliament whereas ,in 2000 women gained 42(13%) and in 2005 the number of women seats in the House of People Representative were 117(21%),in 2010 women were gained128(28%) and in 2013 women have taken215 (38.8) nearly 40% seats in the parliament and for the first time in history of Ethiopia two female became speakers of the house and deputy speakers in the fifth of Ethiopia parliaments respectively (HPR,2018).

In addition to political participation and representation in parliament, women's political participation in the executive branch of the government is increasing. With coming of new prime minster six women were appointed in different sector of ministers and one female politician became vice president of Oromiya Region (HPR, 2018).

2.1.5. International Legal Frameworks for Women's Participation in Politics

There is no single factor that can be ascribed for the existing positive trends in women's political participation. Different of factors have worked together in raising women's participation in politics in the global level. This section will focus on factors such as; quota systems, global, regional and national agreements, conventions and commitments amongst others. Good numbers of international and regional and sub-regional conventions and declarations, as well as resolutions provide for the equal participation of women in decision making.

At international level, the participation of women in political decision making positions was recognized as a political right after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to take part in the government of his or her country. Article (7) guarantees the right of women to vote in all elections and public referendums and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies, the right to participate in the formulation of government policy and its implementation, to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, and the right to participate in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or associations concerned with the public and political life of the country (UN, 1979).

The Beijing Declaration and Platform of Actions (BDPA) have identified women's participations in decision making as one of the 12 critical areas of women concern. Through the Declaration and Platform for Action, States are committed to taking concrete measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making, and to increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership, in accordance with its detailed recommendations. The Platform stresses that equality in decision-making is integral to the advancement of women's rights and under its strategic objective (G) state that: "Women's participation in decision making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interest to be taken account. Without the active participation of women and incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved" (UN, 1995).

In 2000, the United Nations also recognized the central role of women in development in the Millennium Development Goals, which has the empowerment of women as one of its measurable goals. The proportion of seats held by women in parliament is one of the key indicators in measuring progress of Millennium goals (Sonia and Kareen, 2005). Gender equality and empowerment of women, the third goal of MDGs, is recently and widely recognized as central to fulfilling all the rest of the MDGs. Both of them are the objectives of poverty reduction and sustainable development that facilitate women's access to and control over fundamental assets and resources (MDGs, 2004). Improving gender equality and empowering women is the road-map to making sustainable human development and to attaining other MDGs in the world (MDG, 2014).

At the regional level, Protocol to the Africans Charters on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the African Protocol) under article (9) requires sates parties to take all necessary measures, including affirmative action to ensure increased and effective representations of and participation of women at all levels of decisions making. In addition to such binding instruments as CEDAW and the African Protocol, other important global, regional and sub-regional declarations have also called upon governments to ensure the equal participation of women (Meaza, 2009). At the regional level, Maputo Declaration on gender mainstreaming and the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa are the main instruments that promote gender equality in political participation in Africa (UN, 2014).

Currently, Rwanda has been ranked first globally as it has more than fifty percent of women in its elected public offices. The Rwandan experience has proven to be a referenced landmark not only in Africa, but for all democracy (Cole, 2011).

Other African countries such as Senegal, South Africa, Mozambique, Uganda, Ethiopia and Angola have also been highly ranked for their level of women's representation parliament. In addition to such global and regional commitment, women's political participation increased has largely been the result of quota system. Genders quotas draw legitimacy from the discourse of exclusion, according to which the main reason for women's under representation are the exclusionary practices of the political parties and the political institutions at large. Quotas place the burden of candidate recruitment not on the individual women, but on those who control the recruitment processes, first and foremost the political parties. They force those who nominate and select to start recruiting women and give women a chance which they do not have today in most parts of the world (Dahlerup, 2005)

Currently, at least half the countries in sub-Saharan Africa have mandatory quotas in place, and several have voluntary quotas in place at the political party level. Further, there appears to be a link between women's presence in the legislature and their increasing presence in executive cabinets in Africa, suggesting that their holding seats in one political institution may have a spillover effect on others (Gennet, 2014).

Not far behind the Americas, sub-Saharan Africa increased its regional average by 0.7 percentage points, bringing women's representation up to 23.2 percent .The strongest gains were made in Ethiopia and the United Republic of Tanzania, where a form of quotas is in place. In Tanzania, 113 seats are reserved for women (allocated to political parties in proportion to their share of the electoral vote). In addition, two of the five members from Zanzibar and five of the 10 members appointed by the President were women. Women also contested open seats. A total of 136 women (36.6%) were elected to the National Assembly (IUP, 2015).

2.1.6. National and Institutional Legal Framework

Ethiopia has ratified and endorsed a number of international and regional convention and declarations related with granting equal participation of women in politics and government. The African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Maputo Declaration on gender mainstreaming and the AU Solemn Declaration on Gender and the Ethiopian constitution of 1995 guarantee the rights of women as equal to those of men. Ethiopia is therefore making several efforts to strengthen national structures for achieving gender parity (UNICEF, 2012).

Ethiopia's constitution and national policies are consistent with international legal instruments on gender equality, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the most comprehensive treaty on women's human rights, which came into force in 1981, has been ratified or acceded to by 165 states worldwide. It calls for equality between women and men in all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and it emphasizes the importance of equal participation of women with men in public life (Norris and Inglehart, 2000).

In addition, the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia formulated several laws and policies to promote gender equality. Particularly Article 35 of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia clearly stipulates the rights of women. The government has also been promoting the mainstreaming of gender in all of its development policies and strategies to address gender inequality. Women's National Policy was formulated and adopted in 1993 in order to address gender inequality. The national Ethiopian Policy on women in 1993 with the following objectives (FDRE, 2006).

- ✓ Facilitating conditions conducive to the speeding of equality between men and women so that women can participate in political, social and economic life of their country on equal terms with men and ensuring that their right to own property as well as their other human rights are respected and that they are not excluded from the enjoyment of their fruits of their labor or from performing public functions and being decision makers.
- ✓ Facilitating the necessary conditions whereby rural women can have access to basic social services and to ways and means of lightening their work load.
- ✓ Eliminating step by step, prejudices as well as customary and other practices that are based on the idea of male supremacy and enabling women to hold public office and to participate in the decision making process at all levels.

Furthermore, the new Federal Family Code, based on the principle of gender equality is also come into effect in July 2000. It rose the minimum age of marriage from 15 to 18 years and established the rights of women to share any assets the household had accumulated if a couple has been living together for at least three years in an irregular union. The Ethiopian penal code criminalizes domestic violence and harmful traditional practices including early marriage, abduction and female genital mutilation or cutting (UNICF, 2011).

For the proper implementation of these policies and the constitutional principles provided, different laws that discriminate women have been revised in a way of securing gender equality. Among these laws, the revised Federal Family Code (Proclamation 213/2000), Labor and Public Service proclamations (Labor Law: Proclamation 377/2003: Article 87), Laws on Violence against Women enforced since July 2004, and Rural Land Use and Administration Laws (Article 5(1(c)) of Proclamation 456/2005) are major examples.

Ethiopia is also signatory of Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) which called for the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the design, implementation and monitoring of all policies, programs, committed countries to design their own specific programs and activities in consultation with women's group and other stakeholder for its implementation(UN, 2005).

In contrast, the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAPGE) is the sole commitment document to putting gender mainstreaming into action in Ethiopia and its regions across the various policies (Julie, 2007).

The country has also incorporated gender issues in different national policies of health, education and training, HIV/AIDS, population and other sector development and governance policies (MoFED, 2010). Establishment of the NAPGE and development plan, and gender unit structures at the national ministries and regional sector bureaus in 2006 G.C is also an incidence of the Ethiopian government's commitment to gender equality (MoFED, 2010). According to quite a lot of evidence, gender inequality is still persistent in Ethiopia, enabling the country's gender mainstreaming practice to be in crisis (WABEKBON Development PLC, 2006).

Even though, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) has formulated several laws and policies, and established institutional/organizational machineries and structures at all levels to promote gender equality through gender mainstreaming, the issue of political will and

institutional/organizational practices for the success of the implementation of NAPGE at all levels is still lacking (Julie, 2007).

Ethiopia is also one of the countries that embraced the principles of the millennium declaration action where by 147 heads of State and Government and 191 nations became signatories for their adoption and implementation. A task has also been set up to realize MDGs in Ethiopia. A national action plan for gender equality is also underway to make the gender specific goals of the MDGs a reality in Ethiopia .The Ethiopia government is making several efforts to strengthen national structures for achieving gender parity (UNICEF, 2012).

The government of Ethiopia works a lot to close gender gap in the country and to bring women at the center of policy making and development. Equality between men and women, and boys and girls, is one of the central pillars of the Growth and Transformation Plan: the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) the five year national development plan for Ethiopia and the Development Plan for Women and Children (2011-2028) have included specific commitments to increasing women's participation in political life and decision making, promoting women's economic empowerment and reducing violence against women (UNICEF, 2012).

National and regional level policies targeted towards improving and strengthening women's status; their roles in political, civil, social, economic, and cultural life; and combating all forms of discrimination against women and girls are fundamental to sustainable development and poverty reduction. Though gender equality is essential for growth and poverty reduction and reaching MDGs, gender inequalities are still entrenched in the various political systems in the developing world (ENPI, 2011).

Moreover, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front has a voluntary 30 percent candidate quota and reportedly nominated women in 40 percent of its lists. In the bargain, the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia increased its financial support from 10 percent at the last election to 15 percent in 2015 for parties that fielded women candidates. As the front and its allies won all the seats in the House of Peoples' Representatives in 2015, women accounted for 38.8 percent of the House's seats (+11 percentage points)(IUP, 2015).

Beside the quote system, several countries with majoritarian systems have seen dramatic increases in recent years, including in the single-member district aspect of mixed electoral systems (Russell

et al., 2002). In case of Ethiopia, the Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), has adopted a regulation to include 30% women the list of candidates for the 2005 general election. Furthermore, Ethiopia utilizes a majoritarian system. The number of women parliament has dramatically increased from 0.9% in 1957 to 38.8% in 2013 (Ethiopian House of People's Representative, 2018).

2.2. Overview of Women's Political Representation in Parliament

Representation is defined as "acting in the interest of the represented in a manner responsive to them (Squires and Judith, 1999). A strong and vibrant democracy is possible only when parliament is fully inclusive of the population it represents. Parliaments remain the peak legislative structures the world over, the place where a country's policy direction is set. Truly democratic parliaments reflect the views and interests of the society from which it is drawn, in its composition and its agenda setting and policy direction. A representative parliament also allows the different experiences of men and women to affect the social, political and economic future of society. Parliaments cannot consider themselves inclusive, however, until they can boast the full participation of women (IUP, 2008).

Women political representation has been desired for many reasons, the major one includes; women for being human they are entitled to participate in every aspect of life that provided for human beings; since they have different experience and identity from men, women can be represented better by women themselves; because women constitute half of the world's population, they should have equal say with men; and also women's parliamentary representation can be justified by the realization of democracy. Significant parliamentary participation of women has also a lot to do with producing role models for the rest of women to encourage their involvement in higher decision-makings (Delys, 2014)

For instance, women political participation in African and Asia are making women's political representation a policy priority. The election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2005 as the first female president in Africa (Sirleaf is Liberia's president) opened new windows of opportunity for women with Johnson viewed largely as a role model on the continent that had hitherto not considered women for public roles (Kathambi, 2009).

Over the past decade, the focus on increasing women's political participation has been a global trend. The drastic rise in women among public officials at the turn of the millennium has been explained in terms of democratic justice and civil progress among many nations of the world (Kittilson, 2011).

The trend in terms of women's access to parliaments in recent decades has been one of gradual but steady progress. In 1975, at the time of the First World Conference on Women held in Mexico City, women accounted for nearly 11 percent of representatives in unicameral or lower houses of parliament world- wide (IUP,2008).

A decade later, women's representation had increased by only one percentage point. By 1995, the proportion of women parliamentarians had actually decreased slightly. A new impetus for women's participation in decision-making circles found expression, however, at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, and the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, which highlighted special measures that states could implement to increase the participation of women in politics, including setting targets with a view to achieving equal participation of men and women (Sonia and Kareen, 2005).

According to the global survey conducted by Inter Parliament Union (2000-2006), the proportion of women parliamentarians had increased to 13.4 percent in the lower or unicameral houses of parliament, and it reached a high of nearly 18 percent at the beginning of 2008. The highest rate of increase in women's representation has been registered in the past decade. The global figures conceal some interesting national and regional nuances, however. While some states have made significant progress, others have remained static or even regressed. At the regional level, the Nordic countries have consistently maintained the highest overall average during the past decade. In 2008, more than 41 percent of parliamentary seats were held by women in that region. Significant strides have been made in the Americas and in Europe, too, where women's representation hovers around 20 percent (IUP, 2008).

In 2015 globally, women's parliamentary representation, seemed to increasing by only 0.5 percentage points compared to the previous year. The more significant gains achieved in 2013 that saw an increase of 1.5 percentage points in the global average were not repeated. Stronger gains were made in the Americas (+0.8 points), sub-Saharan Africa (+0.7 points) and Europe (+0.4

points); but those were tempered by meager increases in the Arab States (+0.3 points), Asia (+0.2 points) and the Pacific (+0.1 points). The Americas remain in the lead in terms of regional averages, with women's parliamentary representation standing at 27.2 per cent. Interestingly, there was a noticeable decrease in the Nordic countries (-0.4 points): that sub-region has now raised ground at 41.5 percent (UN Women, 2015).

In a total of 67, or 25.1 percent, of parliamentary chambers across the world, women now represent more than 30 per cent of the membership. A slightly higher percentage of upper houses (27.6%) include more than 30 percent women, compared to single or lower houses (24.1%). Following elections in 2015 to single or lower houses, two countries returned to the prestigious (30 %+) group (United Republic of Tanzania and Switzerland), while five were included for the first time (Ethiopia, Trinidad and Tobago, El Salvador, Portugal and Sudan). Both parliamentary chambers in Ethiopia and in Trinidad and Tobago reached the 30%+ milestone (IUP, 2015).

Currently, Rwanda is ranked as number one (64 percent). Other countries or areas ranking high in the representation of women in parliament are Bolivia (53 percent), Andorra (50 percent) and Cuba (49 percent). They are followed by a group of countries with representation by women ranging from 40 to 44 percent and include Ecuador, Finland, and Iceland, Mozambique, Namibia, Norway, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Spain and Sweden. All these countries have reached and surpassed the international target of 30 percent of women in leadership positions originally set by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1990 and reaffirmed in the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995(UN,2015).

2.2. 1. Types of Women's Political Representations in Parliament

According to United Nations (2005) the two types of representations can be classified as descriptive (numerical) representation and substantive representation. Descriptive representation is about increasing women's participation in and access to political decision making (Squires, 2007).Accordingly, the question of women achieving descriptive representation is simply about counting the number of women in political office and not examining what women representatives are actually saying.

Descriptive representation addresses the extent to which a parliament mirrors then composition of society, and thus also comprises women among the MPs. On the other hand, substantive

representation does not focus on who the political representatives are, but on what they do. It nonetheless is a logical outcome of descriptive representation. Substantive representation addresses the added value of women in political decision-making beyond their mere presence, looking at the extent to which women make a difference when it comes to taking into account women's interests and needs. The underlying question is to what extent the increase of women in political decision-making enhances the consideration of women's needs and interests in parliamentary work (Celis et al. 2008).

The focus is on what women members of parliament and their male colleagues deliver. In that respect substantive representation focuses both on process and outcomes, on what work is conducted in parliaments by representatives and others, and on what it leads to (Childs and Lovenduski 2013). This actually brings us back to the concept of the critical mass or critical acts, whereby the underlying idea is that women should enter politics so as to allow for a qualitative shift in parliamentary outcomes.

2.2.2. Argument for Women's Political Participation and Representation

Many arguments have been made by different scholars on women's political participation and representation. Women's participation and representation in politics can facilitate democracy, not only because it improves their civil rights and helps them speak out their interests, but also because powerful women tend to make different policy choices from their male counterparts, which are beneficial to the local distribution of public resources and the development. When a woman is in charge, they invest more in infrastructure which matches the needs of women in order to cover the imbalance of women resulting from the past ignorance of women (Coleman, 2004).

Many scholars have argued that increasing the numbers of elected women in a legislature may even produce negative consequences. The possibility that an increase in women's descriptive representation might produce negative outcomes has not been considered in the literature (Carroll, 2001; Childs a, 2005; Child and Krook, 2005).

From functionalist standpoint, it seems that the questions of women representation are not the question of the physical existence of or descriptive representation of women in the parliament. Rather having women in parliament is questions whether the interest of women which needs to be

well represented and recognized in all decision making is taken well account (Pitkin and H.P, 1999).

According to the feminist schools of thought in which women representation in parliament has much more functional than representing the mere interest of women. Further feminist argues that if increasing women come into higher decision making institutions including representation in parliament , other women will also be encouraged to have self-confidence and be able to say that they also capable of doing what they aspire for including gaining positions in the higher political matter (Kudith and Squires, 1999).

Another way, Lovenduski (2005) recognized descriptive representation is criticized for being impractical and undesirable on the basis of three arguments: One, descriptive representation draws attention to difficulty for any system of meeting demands by all possible competent groups. Second, descriptive representation leads to pressure on feminist and women activists to take responsibility for the representation of other excluded groups. For that proponents, responding to claims by women point out to the claim of others, like small, possibly more “deserving” or “oppressed” groups such as ethnic minorities have a strong basis to claims than women. In the contrary, other scholars have argued that women do not have a feminist consciousness, and thus their descriptive representation through the gender quota will not make any difference either politics or to women’s interests (Farzana, 2002).

Thus, the adequate numeric representation on the parliament seats of the different interests of women belonging to different social groups was ignored. Quite the opposite, other have argued that substantive representation associated with the presence of women in parliament is also supposed to shape other women’s political attitudes and behavior, to make them become politically more involved, and to make them feel politically more efficacious (Gilardio 2014; Wolbrecht and Campbell ,2007).

Finally, the study of Gretchen and Hanna (2006) has concluded that the distinction between descriptive and substantive representation can be seen as a distinction between “Feminine Presence” and “Feminine Activism” in politics, and suggested that the distinction between substantive and descriptive representation may be overdrawn. Accordingly, it may be more useful

to consider descriptive representation as a necessary first step to the institutional transformation that is required if substantive representation is to be achieved.

2.2.3. The Importance of Women's Political Participation and Their Voice

Women's participation in politics helps advance gender equality and affects both the range of policy issues that get considered and the types of solutions that are proposed. Research indicates that if a legislator is female has a distinct impact on their policy priorities, making it critical that women are present in politics to represent the concerns of women and other marginalized voters and help improve the responsiveness of policy making and governance(Volden, Alan and Dana,2010).

Several studies have revealed that political participation of women's results in tangible gains for democratic governance. For Thomas (1994), women legislators embrace priorities dealing with issues of women, and children and the family. Men do not share this priority list. There is also strong evidence that as more women are elected to office, there is also a corollary increase in policy making that emphasizes quality of life and reflects the priorities of families, women, and ethnic and racial minorities.

In addition, women able to see government as a tool to help serve underrepresented or minority groups. Women's meaningful participation in politics affects both the range of policy issues that are considered and the types of solutions that are proposed. Research indicates that a legislator's gender has a distinct impact on policy priorities. While women lawmakers are not a homogenous group with the same perspectives and interests, they do tend to see "women's issues" those that directly affect women either for biological or social reasons more broadly as social issues, possibly as a result of the role that women have traditionally played as mothers and caregivers in their communities (O'Connor and K., 2008).

According to the study of Phillips (1995), active participation of women's in politics positively affects communities, legislatures, political parties and citizens' lives and helps democracy deliver improvements to citizens' lives. Women have distinct interest to relation to child-bearing (for any foreseeable future, an exclusively female affair) and as society is currently constituted they also have particular interests arising from their exposure to sexual harassment and violence, their

unequal position in the division of paid and unpaid labor and their exclusion from most arenas of economic or political power.

Twenty-five percent of women lawmakers in the U.S. cite women from the opposition party as key supporters of their top legislation, while only 17 percent of male lawmakers name similar support. Fourteen percent of women legislators in the U.S. named healthcare as a top priority issue, versus only six percent of male legislators who viewed health care as a top concern (CAWP, 1991). Consistent emphasis on healthcare by women legislators is mirrored around the world (Schwindt, 2006).

Wangnerud's (2006) in his study of gender differences in priorities among Swedish parliamentarians covers a period of almost 20 years. The focus is on the number of male and female politicians who mention social policy, family policy, care for the elderly, or health care as a campaign issue or an area of personal interest. The items included in the study can be seen as abroad way of conceptualizing priorities classified as women's interests, since policies in these areas have a special bearing on the everyday life of women. The empirical analysis shows that in 1985, 75% of female members of parliament addressed discuses of social policy, family policy care for the elderly, or health care in their election campaigns.

The study of Powley (2003), 56 percent of the seats in the Rwandan parliament in 2008, women have been responsible for forming the first cross-party caucus to work on controversial issues such as land rights and food security. They have also formed the only tripartite partnership among civil society and executive and legislative bodies to coordinate responsive legislation and ensure basic services are delivered. Research indicates that the gender of legislators clearly affects their policy priorities (Moccia and Anthony, 2006).

In an the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) poll of members of parliament conducted between 2006 and 2008, which compiled the views of parliamentarians from 110 countries, women self identified as being the most active in women's issues, gender equality, social and community matters and family-related matters.

Reingold (2000) has stated that female legislators are much more likely to make laws beneficial to female's interest. The fact that women's career and promotion are facilitated with each other is

widely noticed too. Finally, active women political activities have undoubtedly succeeded in creating a more open political environment for women (Chappell, 2002).

2.3. Historical Overview of Women's Political Participation and Ethiopian parliament

The study of Belete (2001) has indicated that in Ethiopian history there were a few prominent women played a crucial role in high land court politics for more than half of a century. In his article he presented several biographical descriptions of the women and their active involvement in the court politics. Similarly, Heran (2002) has acknowledged that there were women who played important political and leadership role in Ethiopia, only a few are visible in the existent literature. Women have played important roles mostly by wielding proxy power through birth and marriage. In 1982 the popular article the *Elite Women of Bagemdir* was published (Donald, 1982) strongly stress that women have been shockingly neglected in Ethiopian social and historical studies.

Another factor that seems to have played a major role in the lack of development of the field of women's history has been, until recently, the absence of institutions that direct and encourage research by students and scholars on women and gender issue (Belete, 2001). Gemma (2013) has acknowledged that Ethiopia women's place in the public political sphere may be marginal but it is always present and has increased which changing political system. His paper shows the contribution women have made to public life in Ethiopia is largely hidden. Ethiopia women registered notable achievement in public life through active involvement in anti-struggle of Ethiopia people as well as in the struggle to advance democracy and bring about equality.

Women played a significant role in the fight against Italian colonial ventures on two occasions, first during 1885-96 and later during the invasion and occupation of 1935-41. Early in the second half of the twentieth century, Ethiopian women played a key role in the student activism that was influenced by the global struggle of women liberation. Both in its timing and in substance, the activism of Ethiopian women closely parallel to the activism of women all over the world (Gennt, 2014).

Several biographical accounts accredited that Empress Taitu was the most well-known political figure in contemporary Ethiopian politics. Empress Taitu was the chief advisor to Emperor with particular influence in the area of foreign relations. Taitu hold was the chief advisor to the emperor

with particular influence in the area of foreign relations. Taitu holds high profile in history for patriotism and uncompromisingly pursuing Ethiopian's independence. Taitu was not only a foreign policy architect but also a war General. Taitu played a critical role during Ethiopia's war to resist the invasion of Italy in 1896, when Ethiopia became the first African nation to defeat a European colonial power (Meaza, 2009).

According to the study of Meaza (2009), Taitu was a chief political broker who facilitated various political marriages in order to consolidate the power of the central government. Despite her vigorous and sometimes radical role in Emperor Menilek's political court, Taitu's aspiration to assume power upon her husband's illness and eventual death (1908-1913) remained elusive. Another women political figure during this period was Emperor Menilk's daughter Zawditu Menilek who was married to Taitu's nephew Ras Gugsa Wele. Zewditu (1916-1930) was the first woman to be crowned empress in his own right (Zewde, 2006). Although women's formal participation in the highest leadership positions was formally closed, it is documented women played critical roles in times of war and peace as community organizers and activists (Meaza, 2009).

Notable there were numbers of person that played a critical role during the second Italian invasions (1935-40) including Zenebech Woldeyes and Shewargeged Gedle. These two women surpassed the traditional role of support providers and served as full-fledged combatants. Zenebech continued to fight until Ethiopia's victory and independence, in spite of her husband's death on the same battle field (WAO, 1993). In the period of attempted modernization of Ethiopia (1931-1960 few women had the opportunity to access modern education. Despite their limited numbers, women became agents and symbols of change through independent mobilization and taking up political roles, including serving in the parliaments (Meaza, 2009).

The history of modern parliament system in Ethiopia goes to the reign of Haile Selasse and the introduction of first modern Constitution of Ethiopia in 1931 in which a bicameral parliament (the Upper House or Chamber of Senate and the Lower House or Chamber of Deputies) came into being. But in both houses the number of female representatives was null (Alemu, 2007). Sinedu was among the first women to have access to modern education, studying not only in Ethiopia but abroad. Sinedu attended post-secondary school education in Switzerland for five years. Upon returning home, she became an educator and director of the first girl's school (Menen Girls Schools

(1937-1949). Sinedu was also Vice -Chairperson of the Ethiopia Women's Welfare Association (Meaza, 2009).

In relation to this, Gennet (2014), in her study pointed out that studying abroad, her involvement in the war and her life in exile as well as imprisonment in Italy shaping her personality, conviction and beliefs that the visibility of women can be enhanced through education. Furthermore, her father, Kentiba Gebru, a remarkable man for his age who encouraged all his daughters to be educated abroad, had a big influence in her life and the friendship and solidarity of Sinedu with the well-known member of the Suffragette Movement, Silvia Pankhurst, had also sharpened her view on the equality of women as both believed that they could change the men's world. Among other things she was known for promoting girls 'education and for encouraging women to participate in politics and decision making roles.

Sinedu became a role model in the political arena when she decided to run for a parliament seat in 1957. Upon her elections to the upper house of parliament, Sinedu set even higher goals and run for the presidency of the house. She succeeded in obtaining a vice presidency position. Her election was made possible by the 1955 constitutional amendment that entitled all citizens to vote and elected their representatives with the view to reforming the system of absolute monarchy (IES, 1991).

During the struggle against the imperial regime and the quest for the institution of democratic and justice system, particularly, in the era of Ethiopian Students Movement (ESM) female students got the opportunity to take part in different vibrant and significant political groups in political struggle to overthrow the monarchy. In the 1970's women took part in the political and armed struggle side by side with their male counterparts. Quite a lot of evidence has shown that, the high number of women prisoners in the various urban and rural town of the country including Addis Ababa (Jalale, 2005).

During the rule of the Drgue that March 8 or the International Women's Day was observed for the first time. Not only that, it was during this time that Ethiopia has ratified the International Convention on women called Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1982(Jalale, 2005).

The 1987 PDRE constitution guaranteed the equality of all Ethiopians irrespective of gender, nationality, color, religion and class and thus the rights of women to vote and to be elected were fully guaranteed (Fantaye, 2005). The study of Alemu (2007) has confirmed that the Socialist Revolution, “a green light” emerged for the equality and freedom of women. The researcher also elucidated that the second half of the 1980’s and the beginning of 1990’s, women’s political participation was characterized by their involvement in parties that struggle against the Drgue such as Eritrean People’s Liberation Front and Tigery Peoples Liberation Front. This Liberation Front’s had a large number of women in the various fronts Women’s role in the struggle extended from engaging in political activism up to holding leadership positions (Tadelech, 2000).

The research work of Jalale (2005) has also emphasized that women’s involvement to overthrow the Drgue was a big step taken in terms of changing the traditional perception regarding women’s capacity and in bringing about social and political change. In the year 1991 the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a rebel group took political power from the military regime through a military struggle and transformed the country’s. This political system redefined and identity based on ethnicity.

After EPRDE took power, Ethiopia is divided into different states and based on ethnic identity. The EPRDF itself is established coalition parties which formed EPRDF. The ethnic based parties which formed EPRDF are Amhara National Democratic Movement which represents the ethnic identity of Amhara. Oromo People’s Democratic Organization which represents the ethnic identity of Oromo. Tigray People’s Liberation Front which represents ethnic identity of Tigrae. The Southern Ethiopian People’s Democratic Front, which represents several groups located in the Southern part of the location (Teshome, 2009).

This ethnic based government of Ethiopia has adopted constitution in the year 1995 which confirmed the number of political change brought by EPRDF. The constitution defined the countries structure on ethnicity to nine regional and two federally administrated states. The nine ethnic based regions are Tigrai, Afar, Amhara, Oromo, Somali, Benshangul, Southern people and Haraiari. The two cities which are demonstrated by Federal State are Addis Ababa and Dirredawa (HPR, 1994).

The constitution which defined regional based ethnicity also established a bicameral parliament the House of People's representative and the House of Federation. The House of People's Representative is the lower house with 547 members directly elected for five years. The House of Federation 108 representative of the ethnic groups, on the other hand is elected by each regional state parliament (EPRDF, 1995).

Therefore, the current political structures promote ethnic based identity politics which is divergent from the previous political structures which used to promote the single identity politics under the umbrella of Ethiopianism (Joireman, 1997). After the coming to power of the EPRDF in 1991 a number of ethnic-based political parties mushroomed in Ethiopia. The EPRDF, as an ethnic-based party coalition, encouraged the formation of political parties along ethnic lines and tacitly discouraged non-ethnic parties or other pan- Ethiopian parties (Political Parties Registration Amendment Proclamation, 1994).

Therefore, in 1994, the EPRDF government issued a proclamation regarding the role and the status of political parties in federal Ethiopia. The proclamation announced that in order to function legally all political parties and organizations have to be registered. According to Political Parties Registration Proclamation as amended by Proclamation (No. 82/1994), Ethiopians above the age of 18 years have the right to establish a political party by drawing up a political programme and drafting internal regulations. In a representative democracy political parties promote vital competition on different policy issues and play essential roles by offering ideological alternatives. They also give channels for all citizens and particularly women's participation in government decision-making processes and they are significant conduits and interpreters of information about government (Wondwosen, 2009).

On the other hand, there is a majority irregularity between EPRDF's democracy, constitutionalism, symbolic multi-party parliamentary elections and its practice under the EPRDF administration. As a result, from 1995 to 2004, regardless of the mushrooming of political parties in the country, the freedom of opposition parties to operate had been so circumscribed that none of them even had the slightest chance of competing with the EPRDF (Abdall, Michael and Joran, 2005).

In the 2005 parliamentary election, however, for the first time, the ruling party opened the political space in the country allowing opposition parties to freely campaign and compete for political

power. In this election opposition parties openly challenged the incumbent party and scored high electoral results (Lidetu, 2005). In 2005 Ethiopians were go to the polls to elect a new parliament and regional councils. This report draws attention to human rights issues in these elections. An important question for Ethiopians and the international community is whether the conduct and outcome of the elections will be a turning-point for improvement of human rights in the country (Amnesty, 2005).

The UNDP is coordinating internationally-funded election assistance projects which are currently taking place. They include capacity development for the NEBE, and civic and voter education (US\$1.6 million) by 24 Ethiopian NGOs, such as the Inter Africa Group, the Ethiopian Human Rights Council and the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association, which will reach possibly 10% of voters, mainly in the urban areas. There is also training for election observers and political party agents; training of judges and prosecutors for electoral dispute cases; support for the media to promote objective and wide coverage of the elections; improving the participation of women; and holding public debates (Amnesty, 2005).

In addition, the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) launched a Women's Manifesto to give due importance during the elections to critical issues of concern to women in Ethiopia. The Manifesto, addressed to all political parties, includes issues of land rights for rural women; access to employment, education and health (including HIV/AIDS issues); women's participation in politics and public decision-making; and women's human and legal rights. Special attention is given to campaigning against violence against women in the home, workplace and in other areas, rape and harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), bride-abduction and child-marriage. If successful, this campaigning could lead to greater representation of women in the federal parliament and regional and city councils, and more vigorous action on women's rights. Amnesty International supports this campaigning, in line with its global "Stop Violence against Women" campaign (Amnesty, 2005).

Alarmed by the election results and the success of the opposition parties, the incumbent party flexed its military muscle to squash the opposition electoral victories. After crushing the pro-democracy movement that engulfed the country by killing, arresting and intimidating many opposition leaders and their supporters, the government deliberately narrowed the political space. The 2005 post-election was characterized by mass killing, arresting the majority numbers of

opposition party's members and leaders of the opposition parties' .In cause of post-election quarrel between EPRDF and opposition political parties' majority of young people, urban women and visible women political leaders were arrested (Ibid, 2005).

A study which is conducted by Cherer (2010) have also examined , Birtukan Midekesa was the first woman opposition political party leader, a standing politician in Ethiopia entered in party political system in the year 2005 and she became a vice president of CUD(Coalition for Unity and Democracy) which was one of the popular parties during the election of 2005. After the election of 2005 she was jailed along with other politicians and supporters of the party in November, 7, 2005. And Birtukan and other political leaders were accused and found guilty by the court of law for causing the post-election crisis which caused death and injury on many people as well as destruction of property in the country.

Similarly, the study of Meaza (2009) has stated that Birtukan Mideksa, a prominent woman lawyer, who was also a well-known judge, was recruited by the CUD and swiftly assumed a leadership role when she was appointed as Vice-president of CUD. Birtukan was one of the 131 opposition and civil society leaders imprisoned in November 2006 and facing trial for genocide and treason following the controversy over the May 2005 election. Almaz Seifu is another important leader from one of the opposition parties. A number of the Oromo People's Congress (OPCO), she represented the party effectively in various forums until she disappeared from public life after the May 2005 election for reasons that are not apparent.

Consequently, the political participation and representation of women were affected by this symbolic democratic system of EPRDF. The post-2005 election crisis in Ethiopia resulted in loss of life and imprisonment of citizens and political leaders' .It is unfortunate that is not yet an engrained part of Ethiopian political culture to contend with differences within a framework of clear rules and institutional arrangements .In a situation where it becomes difficult to resolve conflicts peacefully, women bear the brunt of the problems. It is even unfortunate that negative experiences keep women away from engaging in politics and public life (Meaza, 2009). And it leads to invisibility of women in Ethiopia politics. At present, almost all opposition parties are unable to conduct their activities even if they are legally registered parties.

For all practical purposes, as Chege et al (2007) has noted contemporary Ethiopia can be accurately described as a one party dominated state. Thus, the current ruling EPRDF has conducted five formal elections in a little more than 25 years quite an achievement when compared with the track record of its two predecessors, namely, the Imperial regime and the Derg. However, the electoral landscape has been dominated by a single party, and little or no headway has been achieved in instituting multi-party competitive politics because the ruling party has always been the winner in all the elections, often with a landslide. Simply put, Ethiopia is effectively a one-party state today, as it was when the EPRDF came to power in the early 1990s (Meheret and Tsedey, 2017).

In 1954 the first, and at that time only, woman MP in Ethiopia, the late Honorable Mrs. Sinedu Gebru, announced to Parliament, ‘You will see one day, after some years, there will be so many women in Parliament!’ and it turns out she was right. In the last 20 years the proportion of women MPs has increased from 2% to nearly 40%. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%) in Ethiopia was 38.80 as of 2017. Its highest value over the past 20 years was 38.80 in 2017, while its lowest value was 2.00 in 1997 (Meheret and Tsedey, 2017).

2.4. Political Participation of Women and Their Voice in politics: Relating theory with the practice

2.4.1. Critical Mass Theory

The critical mass theory is primarily applied to situations where women have not reached 30% in decision-making bodies. The argument is that it is unrealistic to expect major changes until women’s representation has reached a critical mass because a small number of women in politics tend to be tokens. Originally the term critical mass was borrowed from nuclear physics, where it refers to the quantity needed to start a chain reaction, an irreversible turning point, a take-off into a new process or situation. By analogy, it has been said that a qualitative shift will take place when women exceed a proportion of 30% in an organization. In this way, the move from a small to a large minority is significant. Thus, the numbers or rather percentages count (Dahlerup, 1988).

The critical mass theory is mainly used to cover two different situations. Firstly, it is being used by female politicians who are defending themselves against the critique primarily brought forward by the women’s movements and some feminists that women politicians do not make enough of a difference once elected. Secondly, advocates of enhancing women’s representation have

frequently used the critical mass argument. It is said that political parties should nominate not just the obligatory lone woman but at least a critical mass of women, because the voters demand it or in order to ensure that the elected women are not just a token few.

In her research on women leaders in government in New Zealand (Drage, 1997) points to the influence of a critical mass of women in decision-making positions in government and legislative bodies in that country. She maintains that these women provide transformative leadership by redefining political priorities, placing new items on the agenda and providing new perspectives on mainstream issues. The 2000s decade has witnessed the critical mass argument being used among advocates of the introduction of electoral gender quotas in order to affect a rapid increase in the number of female politicians (Dahlerup, 2005).

The assumption is that once a 'critical mass' of elected women is reached, it will lead to changes in political behavior, institutions, and public policy that will radically transform legislatures. This idea has gained increasing currency as women have improved their proportion of representation in legislative bodies all over the world, particularly in the advanced industrial democracies (IPU, 2000). Kittilson (2001), analysis of how change occurs in women's legislative representation levels in advanced industrial democracies provides some support for this point of view, with women in party leadership roles and the adoption of quotas/targets for women candidates being significant factors.

The concept of the critical mass was first brought into the study of U.S. politics by St. Germain (1989) who argued, based on her study of the Arizona state legislature, that once women reached 30 percent of the legislature, they were more inclined to push 'women's issues.' But probably the most influential work on the critical mass in political science is Thomas (1994), who focuses on the effects of different proportions of women on legislative style, procedures, and public policy in twelve U.S. state legislatures. She finds some impact of more women on style, policy priorities, and policy outcomes, especially bills concerning women, children, and the family, but not on legislative procedures. In legislatures with over 30 percent women, they were more likely both to champion and marshal such legislation to passage.

2.4.2. Pluralist Political Theory

Pluralist political theory is one of a philosophical perspective in international political study. Pluralism as its name implies sees many type of entities instead of one single type (dominant) actor in world politics while other political theories particularly. Pluralists believe on only one significant all power actors on the world arena of politics. Pluralist contrary to the concern of other traditional political theorist of “High politics” of war, security, and military power see the issues of “low politics”, such as the economy, environment and human welfare including the welfare of women in international politics.

The study of Amico (1994) have asserted that the inclusion of women may be important to create a good explanation of world politics and suggest that women as people who exhibit characteristics of ‘identified with others’ and ‘empathetic’ may be are the people whom the world politics need in order to negotiate, cooperate and compromise. For him, women can be the rulers and peace makers. For, pluralist adding different interest group in world politics is important to ensure women’s political participation and their particular effects on politics. Accordingly, in order to escalating the agenda of world politics the “low politics”, such as environment and human rights should be included and enables to find ways in which women participate in the world politics.

Amico (1994), has affirmed that the experience of women at the margin of political life have given them perspectives on social issues that provide valid insights into world politics. For him, this conception considers feminists contribution of adding women to study world politics and international relation.

According to pluralist women should make there are voice heard, they should be network, get organized, form or join organization, get heard by and promoted in international organizations and their perspectives will add a new insight in the view of world politics. Pluralist’s perspective could bring women into the study of world politics and include the analysis of ‘gender’ as difference’ view point of political theory (Amico, 1994).

2.4.3. Feminist political theory

Feminist political thinking is an area of thinking that is in part focused on understanding exclusion of half the human races is in general either perpetuated or dismissed as a trivial oversight; the inequalities that may exist between men and women are deemed practically unimportant and

theoretically uninteresting. Feminist political philosophy is a branch of both feminist philosophy and political philosophy. As a branch of feminist philosophy, it serves as a form of critique or a hermeneutics of suspicion (Ricoeur, 1970).

That is, it serves as a way of opening up or looking at the political world as it is usually understood and uncovering ways in which women and their current and historical concerns are poorly depicted, represented, and addressed. Feminist political theory, however, sees women and their situation as central to political analysis; it asks why it is that in virtually all known societies' men appear to have power over women, and how this can be changed. Feminist political philosophy serves as a field for developing new ideals, practices, and justifications for how political institutions and practices should be organized and reconstructed. Its primary concern is to protect and enhance women's political interest and political autonomy, being the freedom to being the freedom to help decide the direction of the political community.

This approach was invigorated with the publication of John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* (Rawls, 1971) and subsequently his *Political Liberalism* (Rawls, 1993). Okin and Eva Kittay (1999) have used, Rawls's work productively to extend his theory to attend to women's concerns and their political preferences. Furthermore, feminist political theory have argued that the central political question is women's lived concerns and women should involve on national policy and their voice should heard by those who make the policies and laws that affect their life (Pateman, 1983).

Chapter –Three

3. Research Methodology

In this chapter the methodology for collecting data is presented along with justifications of the choices made. This is done so that the researcher can obtain the necessary empirical data based on the specific objectives of the study and the literature review. This section dealt with the research design, research area, and methods of data collection, sampling techniques, selection criteria and sources of data. Additionally, ethical issues and considerations and method of data analysis in this study are discussed.

3.1. Research Design

This section of the study discusses the research design, data sources, research site (location of the study), and sample and data collection techniques. The research followed a qualitative method to bring out genuine political participation, experiences of women and their own voices.

According to Dejene (2011) qualitative research approach involves the collection of information and data via interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and oral history and so on and its analysis and less concerned with numbers and accurate measurement and more concerned with the depth of data. For , Lawrence Neuman (2006) qualitative approach is preferred to collect data about human life realities, experiences, behavior, emotion and feeling, organizational function, social movement, cultural phenomena and their interaction with nature. In-depth study was conducted with the aim of driving first hand and reliable data.

3.2. The Study Area

This study was conducted in the House of People's Representatives (HPR) which is the highest political organ of Ethiopia according to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's Constitution. The researcher selected the House of People's Representatives because of the fact that it has the ultimate power of legislation in all matters assigned by the constitution to the Federal Jurisdiction (FDRE,1995). Besides this, the House can be a representative of parliaments and parliamentarians across regional states and federal government is the other reason of the investigator to undertake the study in this particular area.

3.3. Population Size and Sampling Technique

The study populations of this research study were members of the HPR numbered and political party which occupied seats in the House. Currently, HPR seats were occupied by the ruling party or Ethiopian People's Revolution Democratic Front (EPRDF). Empirical data from various sources were collected through in-depth face-to-face key informant's interviews and focus group discussion. The interview conducted was designed to collect insight from both men and women in parliament to what extent do women participate and have voice within the parliament. In order to ensure that a diverse range of views are included on the question of women's political participation divergent groups of people were participated in this study. The researcher used multistage sample and random sampling technique in identifying and selecting appropriate members of HPR and

sample informants from each sample of ethnic based parties which formed EPRDF. In addition, in order to explore the experiences of women in the Ethiopian parliament, snow ball sampling techniques were used.

The researcher employed purposive sampling techniques to select the semi-structured interviewed participants. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which researcher relies on his or her own judgment when choosing members of a population to participate in the study (Black, 2010). In another words, David and Sutton (2011) define purposive sampling as non-probability sampling in which the researcher selects the units to be observed on the basis of their own judgment based on a participant's capacity to provide useful information.

In the same way, Babbie and Mouton (2004) add that it is appropriate for the researcher to select the sample on the basis of their own knowledge of the population and the nature of the research's goals. To take into account the distinctive background of parliamentarians and capture their diverse experiences, the informants were selected purposively based on the subsequent selection criteria.

Secondly, using purposive sampling technique, the researcher selected key informants based on their power position in the House of People's Representative and basis of their knowledge on the subject matter.

Accordingly, out of 547 of HPR, 4 ethnic political parties of EPRDF were selected. Namely, Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO), Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Front (SEPDF). Then, 6 member of HPR (2 Male and 4 Female), from each party selected were selected randomly as a respondents. The rational of selecting male parliamentarians as a respondent is to generate data which leads to comparative analysis. Furthermore, this study used both Probability and Non probability sampling methods. In addition, six informants (3 men and 3 women) were participated in group discussion. 10 key informants (3 men and 7 women) from different standing committee of the parliament such as Women and children Affairs Standing Committee, Capacity building Affairs Standing Committee and Legal and Administrative Affairs Standing Committee and other were selected purposively to interview.

3.3.1. Brief background of the research participants

Total number of research participants is forty. Twenty-five of the participants were women parliamentarians and 15 men parliamentarians from the four EPRDF member parties. Concerning informants' age, educational conditions, marital status and terms of elected in the parliament, most of the informants have served in the parliament for three times. Eight of the women informants are serving parliament for the first term and were younger than other participants. Majority of the informants are between the ages of 35-55. The research reviewed the response from forty members of the parliament. Among them majority of the informants were women. Among them half of the women parliamentarians are 40 years old. And almost all of women parliamentarians have attained higher level of education. Twenty-five numbers of women informants were married.

3.3.2. Profile about the Informants

No	Gender	Age	Educational attainments	Occupational Background	Terms of Serving	Current position
1.	Female	35-55	15=BA Degree 10=MA Degree	10=Teachers 8=Civil Service 6=NGOs	8=for 1 st term 3=for 2 nd term 5=for 3 rd term 4=for 4 th term	2=Ministers 2=Deputy Ministers 2=Senior Position in Parliament 7=Chairperson the committee

					5=for term	5 th	4=Deputy- chairperson 8=members of Caucus
2.	Male	35- 55	7=BA Degree 5=MA Degree 2=PhD Candidates	5=Teachers 7=Civil Service 3=Local Administrations	3=for term 3=for term 5=for term 2=for term 2=for term	1 st 2 nd 3 rd 4 th 5 th	2=Ministers 4= Deputy Ministers 4= Chairperson of Committee 5=Members of Caucus

Table-1 Profile about the Informants

Ten of the informants are appointed in the highest Minister and Deputy Minister's level. Four of them are women informants titled as Minister and Deputy Minister's level of position and in addition eleven of women informants are in the arrangement of chairperson and deputy chairperson of different standing committee and four men informants are in the core rank of the standing committee and eight women informants are helping caucus of the parliament and five informants of men are supporting members of women parliamentarians caucus and two women informants are in the spots of house of speaker and deputy speakers of the house respectively. The interviews were face to face and lasted between 15-30 minutes. The average interview time was 20 minutes. Six informants (three men and three women) were participated in group discussion and freely express their ideas and discuss within the group. Focus group discussion allows 30-60 minutes and the average group discussions were 45 minutes. The interview location varied from one informant to the other, majority of the interviewees performed appointments within the compound of Ethiopian parliament.

3.4. Method and Source of Data

The research were used both primary and secondary data sources. To undertake the research reports from National Electoral Boards of Ethiopia and HPR, books, international journal, websites, scholarly, HPR evaluation reports, books, thesis, journals and different development

project documents were reviewed. The interview basically contains unstructured questions for all interviewees. Unstructured questions are used to allow the respondents freely unpack their views and to help reveal personal views. Open ended questions that provided informants with an opportunity to describe and explain their experience in politics. The interview guidelines were available in English and later translated in to Amharic in order to give informants with an opportunity to explain their views freely.

3.4.1. Primary Source

- 1. Semi-structured and Unstructured Interview:** Interview in general is often used to obtain an in depth insight in to the topic investigated and is more of essential to probe in to data related to emotions, experiences, feelings, sensitive issues. Particularly, semi structured interview will exclusively be used among the three types of interview in order to know the perception and related issues associated with their identity. The interview basically contains unstructured and structured questions for all interviewees. Unstructured questions are used to allow the respondents freely unpack their views and to help reveal personal views on socio-economic and cultural factor. The qualitative information about their experiences in parliament collected through open-ended questions. And also closed ended questions were used to control and confine the participant's responses.

According to Walliman (2006), this tool contains some elements both from structured and unstructured interviews with standardized and open format questions. Furthermore, Denscombe (2003) elaborated that semi structured interview involves a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be asked. It is more of flexible and the interviewee can develop an idea and speak in a broad manner on the issue raised by the interviewer. Phone conversation and an in depth interview were deployed.

- 2. Focus Group Discussion:** It is a discussion guided by the moderator according to the prepared interview guidelines. Focus group discussion is frequently used as a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of social issues about their perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, opinion or ideas (Krueger, 1998). In focus group discussion participants are free to talk with other group members; unlike other research methods it encourages discussions with other participants. The method aims to obtain data from a purposely-

selected group of individuals rather than from a statistically representative sample of a broader population (Ibid).

This tool is also known as group interview in a way that the researcher lacks the opportunity to pose questions for individuals rather he/ she introduces or gives a certain topic for the group together with a specified time to discuss up on the topic, challenge one another's idea and then reach on a consensus. Here the researcher may acts as a moderator. This method involves bringing 6-12 individuals, make them to form a group and give them a certain topic to discuss within the group. The purpose of this method is in order to find out new data, explore the ways in which the participants interact with each other and influence each other's expressed ideas and finally came up with a core data which is obviously cannot be gained with one-to-one interview material. This tool is valuable to qualitative research as it illustrates and explores inter subjective dynamics of thought, speech and understanding of people.

3. Key informant interview

Key informant interviews involve interviewing people who have particularly informed perspectives on an aspect of a situation being studied. Key informant interviews are qualitative, in-depth interviews to people selected for their first-hand knowledge about a topic of interest (USAID, 1996). The interviews are loosely structured, relying on a list of issues to be discussed. Key informant interviews resemble a conversation among acquaintances, allowing a free flow of ideas and information (Ibid).

USAID (1996) lists a number of situations in which key informant interviews can be useful. These include situations in which decision-making can be achieved through qualitative and descriptive information (Ibid). Furthermore, it is used when it is important to gain an understanding of the perspectives, behavior and motivations of clients.

3.5. Secondary Source

Secondary data were collected from different political party documents, reports from National Electoral Boards of Ethiopia and HPR, books, international journal, websites, scholarly articles and brochures were major inputs for this study.

3.6. Data Analyzing

Data analysis is the central step in qualitative research methodology. Whatever the data is, there is analysis that will formulate the outcomes of the research. (Flick, 2013). Data collected through semi-structured, unstructured, and focus group discussion were analyzed by using descriptive content analysis. The analysis of qualitative research notes begins in the field, at the time of observation, interviewing, or both, as the researcher identifies problems and concepts that appear likely to help in understanding the problem. Data were collected, stored and processed using synonym and anonym. Data collected from all informants were categorized in different codes and ideas are set together according to the appropriate theme and similar ideas were grouped together. In addition to data gathered from primary source (semi- structural, unstructured, focus group discussion) were analyzed and secondary data were also reviewed.

At the beginning of the data analysis, qualitative interviews which were audio-recorded from the interviewees were then transcribed into Amharic and translated to English. After the interviews were translated, a primary cycle of coding was conducted by assigning words and brief phrases to the concepts being described in the transcripts. Next, themes were identified in line with the study objectives. Following this, respondents' responses from the open-ended research questions were included together with the interviews themes. Subsequently, each interview was prepared into verbatim quotes to amplify the voices of the women's and deepen understanding during data presentation.

3.7. Ethical Consideration

As this research involves human participants, it is necessary that ethical principles such as individual consent, right to confidentiality, anonymity and right to privacy be adhered to. The International Research Network on women's political participation stipulates the prime importance of confidentiality and safety; the need to ensure the research does not cause the participant to undergo further harm (Ibid).

In order to maintain both the safety of the researcher and respondents the following ethical consideration will be taken. Individual Consent: before each interview is administered participants will be informed orally about the purpose of the research thesis, their ethical rights and protections including their right to stop the interview and the voluntary nature of their participation (Ibid).

Confidentiality: It will be explained to the participants that the information given by informants and their identities would be kept confidential (Frontes, 2004). Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve confidentiality and the participant anonymity (Ibid). This includes assigning code names/numbers for the participants and conducting interviews in a safe and confidential private setting.

Finally the participants' right to privacy will be maintained by conducting the interviews in a one to one basis with the researcher and one participant at a time due to the sensitive nature of the matter.

Chapter-Four

4. Empirical findings and Analysis

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the collected data. The data has been gathered using in depth interview, key informant interview, and focus group discussion, moreover; important documents has been presented, analyzed and interpreted in order to meet the research's objective and question. The analysis of the qualitative data focuses on describing and narrating women parliamentarians' political experience with special emphasis on women's political participation and their voice within political realm. This analysis will also give insight on the significance of women political participation. Besides, the effects of HPR intervention pertaining to their power, voice and bargaining position is also explored. Descriptive analysis has been utilized to analyze these data in contemplation of themes that are obtained from responses. Above all, the researcher would bring out the voice of her subjects on their own terms and context.

4.1. Gender Equality in Ethiopian politics

According to Gennet (2014), women have been discriminated against participation in political discourse. Historically, Ethiopian women have been excluded from politics and power as women were regarded as incompetence to make political decision. Even women themselves don't considered politics as something complex that they comprehend nor have the competence to deal with. The socialization in an ideology that marginalizes women, they too shy away and distance themselves from political participation.

In relation to this, a key woman informant said

“In the past, women in Ethiopia have been considered as unimportant for the structures of state and the legitimacy of political agendas does not include their concerns. It proves that women were underrepresented in politics and their priorities were not considered as relevant to the male dictated environment. In the 1970's I was very young and my dad was well-known politician by the time and I couldn't hear and have seen visible elected women at the time. This indicates that women in the past were absent in leadership and decision making positions. Thanks to EPRDF things are at this time changing and women became elected official and representatives of the people.”

The study of Everina (2010) has confirmed that women's participation and representation in Ethiopian politics is improving through time. The numerical growth of women's representation from one parliament during the Feudal regime to the present number in the Federal parliament indicates the gradual recognition of the importance of women's political participation in the country.

In supporting the argument made by Everina, both men and women informants have highlighted that these days the number of women in parliament is growing progressively compared to the past decade; in 2010 the number of women parliamentarians were 21.8 while in 2015 election women have taken nearly 40 percent of Ethiopian parliament seats. Informants have noted that at present time there is sufficient ground to pronounce women are able participated in politics compared to the previous time.

Further, the informants have also indicated that as part of its ongoing efforts to increase political participation of women the existing government of Ethiopia has made a number of efforts to address gender inequality in decision making as well as representation. These include adopting or

ratifying relevant international instruments pertaining to gender, designing, national instruments including the Ethiopian constitution, various other policies, establishing gender -quota system and the national machinery for addressing gender issues but the gender gaps are still larger.

The researcher has understood that descriptive representation of women in the parliament is getting higher time to time. The numeric share of women in national parliament is a pointer of women's inclusion in Ethiopian politics. In line with this, the existing government of Ethiopia has taken several measures in order to enhance gender equality in all development packages.

The government made efforts to increase women's representation and participation in national parliament. Consequently, women parliamentarians have gained 212 seats in the national parliament of Ethiopia.

Both men and women FGD discussants have expressed that political participation of women goes with wide-ranging development outlines. They stated that the larger number of women presence in national parliament would allow new concerns to be decorated on the political schema and new priorities to be put into practice through the adoption and implementation of gender responsive policies and laws. The inclusion of women's perspectives is a precondition for social equality and contributes to the wellbeing of the society. However, two of the FGD discussants argued that increasing the number of women in parliament solely does not assure that the concerns and issues women are looking for addressed.

The informants added that meaningful political participation of women encompass increasing women capacity and creating conducive political environment which will intern facilitate them to participate in decision making and impact the process. Similarly, most of the informants have asserted that advancing gender equality also need knowledge of the parliament apparatus to ensure that women are actively participating in discussions and debates on issues that would affect the lives of majority women.

This can be realized through mass interventions, awareness creation and trainings that integrate a gender perspective for both men and women parliamentarians as well as the community at large. Furthermore, they stress that gender specific measures such as gender director, gender focal points, membership and holding the spots of committee, gender mainstreaming, gender machinery and gender budgeting, should also be incorporated in all structure of the political system.

On the other hand, three key women informants differently pointed out that despite the government commitment towards gender equality and numeric representation of women in national parliament, women have not been adequately participated in decision making process and women are mostly underrepresented in the most important political issues. For instance, women are well represented in soft political issues such as Women and Children Affairs, Capacity building Affairs, Legal, Justice and Administrative Affairs, Social Affairs, Human and Democratic Rights Affairs, Human Resource Development and Good Governance Affairs, Agriculture Affairs and Transport Affairs.

Whereas women parliamentarians typically are underrepresented in hard political issues such as Infrastructural Affairs, Budget and Finance Affairs, Science and Communications and Technology Affairs, Culture, Tourism and Media Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security Affairs, Urban Development and Construction Affairs, Rural Development Affairs and Trade Affairs. They have concluded that generally it is difficult to say that women in Ethiopian parliament are effectively participated in political process though it is also hard to deny the change brought in terms of number meaning that they are given a seat within the house which is the base for their significant and practical engagement.

Contrary to this, some of the FGD discussants explicated that currently women in parliament have access to decision making and efficiently participated in the power structure. Keeping this in mind they have recommended that in order to ensure gender equality in abroad manner two things has to be done. The first is promoting women to the higher positions like for example they need to hold positions of power in parliament including senior arrangement such as speaker of the house and deputy speakers. The second opportunity for women to pursue gender equality is to call for their engagement in committee works as chairperson of the committee as well as active member of the committees.

All standing committees are considered as the resilience of the parliament. They also argued that if women hold such positions, it would be easy for them to influence policy direction that actually impact the majority women's life thus can be a voice for half of humanity. In addition, it ensures a more representative composition, if women present in these leadership positions. They can make their presence are felt and voice are heard. The fact is that nowadays compared to men parliamentarians very few women legislatures in Ethiopian parliament realize the leading positions and chairperson of the committee in the parliament ladder.

The finding tells us that the commitment to ensure the equal participation of women and men in politics requires that both men and women parliamentarians are efficiently participated in the floor and should promote balanced participation in the house. Making the parliament a place where men and women can freely and equally discussing in the issues that matter the most to them would show the genuine composition of modern parliamentary system. The presence of larger number of women does not mean the issues of women are truly represented and well-articulated in the parliament. Substantive change will result when both parties are equal and effectively involved in all development programs and outlines.

4.2. Win- Win Situation within the Parliament

A study of (Palmieria, 2012) has stated that promoting gender equality also requires familiarity with existing parliamentary mechanisms how to participate effectively in debates, ask questions of ministers or use “call attention” notices, petitions or grievance debates. This can be achieved through induction or orientation training that incorporates a gender perspective, for both new and incumbent parliamentarians.

In supporting to this, all informants have witnessed that a lot of procedural and structural changes within the parliament may perhaps help promote gender equality in politics. Among structural changes, appointment of women in senior position of the parliament, the establishment of different committee and its compositions on the bases of gender equality are helping in building up a more gender insightful parliament. In relation with this, currently two women are appointed as speaker and deputy of the house respectively and seven women are chairperson and sixteen women are deputy chairperson of different standing committees.

Informants strongly have recommended that women should be the central actor in promoting gender equality in the parliament. In addition, the contribution of men parliamentarians for gender equality should be constant and above all, parliament as institutions has it is own role and responsibilities in ensuring gender equality. It is also discussed that there are good observable changes that are promising though they are not quite enough. Therefore, women themselves also need to stand and struggle for the happenings that take place at the ground level beyond the works done by other concerned offices and bodies. Moreover, Representative women should struggle, speak their voice loud and work to enhance for the overall existence of the needy women

In supporting this, a key woman informant said,

“I can say that, in our parliament compared to previous time, gender equality has already guaranteed at the principle as well as in practice. I didn’t mean that women have full access equality in parliament. There is no question a lot has to be done in order to ensure complete participation of women. I think at this instant as women parliamentarians are on the right track and time in endorsing gender equivalence. At the very beginning, the idea of men involvement will intend in ensuring gender equality and it is very important apparatus that would advance the idea of solidarity among women and men. This solidarity will change social attitudes and increase consensus within the parliament that women can no longer be excluded from the political sphere.

In addition, all informants have agreed that a dramatic increase from 0.5 percent representation in 1954 to 38.8 percent in 2015 illustrates the positive result of commitment to address gender equality in the parliament. It is also notable that the constitution, gender quota and electoral system as well as change of the political culture provided a golden opportunity for women to influence the process and make their voice heard.

Further, almost all of the informants have recognized that the government of Ethiopia has taken a numbers of steps to ensure gender equality at the national parliament. The government allows different enabling mechanisms such as capacity building, training, exchanging programs, scholarship and research grant for members of women parliament. Policies enacted maternity leave and the policy of establishing day care is also brought as a result of their voice which ensures gender equality in politics.

4.3. Numeric Representation of Women in Parliament

Tonnessen (2011) has stated that in Ethiopia, the women share of parliament grew from 2 percent in 1995 to 38.8 percent in 2015 (+36.8) (IPU, 2015). Currently, out of 547 seats of the House of Peoples Representatives of Ethiopia, 212 seats are occupied by women. Therefore, during the last two decades, the number of women in the Ethiopian lower houses has shown considerable change. The country could also attain the Beijing platform 1995 goal of 30 percent women in decision-making. However, despite this change Ethiopian women still lack the chance and experience of participating in public decision-making life including parliament’s substantive representation of women.

Similarly, the study of Eden (2017) has emphasized that the claim that women are half the sky is more than a cliché when it comes to real political representation and rendering true women agency. Ethiopia has embarked on the recognition of women empowerment and representation and indeed has achieved substantial changes in light of the statistical share of women in lower parliamentary houses. Although this is a gesture much praise among academics, however, in light of its sustainability and what their presence in these houses constitutes and the real power of representation and women agency there is a lot not yet achieved.

A key woman informant supported the argument that has made by two scholars,

“I was elected as Member of Parliament since 2005 and after that I am the member of the parliament. In the fifth term election the members of women elected were greater than before in number. Frankly speaking, in spite of increasing in numbers we hold a symbolic representation in this parliament. We are not in the position of truly representing the questions of half of the society for whom we were elected. A large numbers of women parliamentarians afraid of speaking the topic that affect the lives of women. For instance in the case of state emergency, the bill comes up and there was a vote and instead of talking the issues of women in relation to this particular case most of us kept remain silence or we as women parliamentarians were talk as little as likely.”

Likewise, some of women informants were saying that the country make improvement in increasing presence of women in national parliament. However, they believe they are not adequately participated in all political issues as they are representing majority of women. They feel that in men dominated place it is hard to participate in political discussion and debate on gender issues. Very few women can speak out loud and debate about women issues in parliament. Majority of women remained silent on political matter.

Informants pointed out that even if they have equal potential with their male counter, most women are often lack confidence. They believed that the idea of “women are home taker and men are bread winner” still has affected their participation in any political process. Further, they argued that even there is more women presence in parliament all women may not speak with one voice in maximizing the benefits of women. The fact that they come from different areas of the country they have different social backgrounds and political experiences. They have different political priorities and interests.

The finding has revealed that the existing government of Ethiopia has adopted different strategy to enlarge women representation in national parliament. And the number of women in Ethiopian national parliament has increasing time to time. On the other hand informants have argued that even though the number of women is higher compared to the past times, the actual women's participation is not strong enough to guarantee gender equality. The issue of gender equality in parliament would perhaps be inadequately addressed.

4.3.1. Women's Representation in Ethiopia House of People's Representatives

No	Year of National Election	Number of Seats Occupied by FMPs	Percent of FMPs
1	1995	15	2.7%
2	2000	42	7.8%
3	2005	117	21.4%
4	2010	118	28.2%
5	2015	212	38.8%

Table - Women's Representation in Ethiopia House of People's Representatives

Source: HPR Annual Report, 2010(2018).

In the contrary, feminist has argued that the scale in which women representation in parliament has much more meaning than representing the mere interest of women. Similarly, Sower and Marian (2000) has claimed that it is true and important that mounting the numbers of women in parliament, it may not be necessarily true that the mere fact that there are more women in parliament can represents women's interest better.

In supporting the above argument both men and women informants have said that increasing the number of women in national parliament has its own positive connotations that would leads them to present the concerns of half of the society. And they would propose innovative solutions that will benefits women and other marginalized sections of the society.

Ojulu and Melesse (2014) in their article have differently argued that proportional (descriptive) representation systems offer greater opportunities of gaining political access for women. For

instance, gender quotas are good policy tool to achieving equitable representation of women in the policy-making positions, serving as a tool for consolidating strong female representation. They facilitate the process of change for women's political inclusion in the political arena. They can increase female leadership; influence policy outcomes, and reduce gender discrimination. Thus, increasing the number of women in national parliament and implementation of gender quotas in the political and public service offices do increase female leadership in both political and executive/public offices.

In relations to the above argument, a key woman informant have said,

“I served as member of parliament for last ten years. And starting from the forth term election more women became members of the parliament and in fifth term of the election impressive changes have been attained in their representation. It is not being easy to secure 212 seats in patriarchal institution. We fought a lot to change the status quo. Now we have occupied most seats and we have raised large number of questions in the parliament. We are very strategic in order to promote legislation that will benefit women and children and seriously look the legislation from gender perspective. We are effectively participated in parliament and our voices are heard well than before. We are actively involved and contributed to gender responsive and inclusive agenda.”

Informants were asked about numeric representation of women in the Ethiopian parliament. All informants have confirmed that the number of women parliamentarians has increased time to time and greater than before and their participation is higher than before. When there are a large number of women in legislative body would help for presenting several issues and finding a way out for the marginalized particularly women, children, disables and elderly people.

Experience has shown that in Ethiopian parliament women make a significant difference in various political issues and have a positive influence in brining and sponsoring women and children issues in the parliament and led to gender sensitive decision making. Though, a lot needs to done to boost the effectiveness of women parliamentarians in order to transform the institution of parliament and have an effect on the policy.

Greater numbers of men informants irrespective of their age, educational background and terms of serving the parliament have supported the importance of women's political participation. Furthermore, the informants have acknowledged that women legislatures are always asked the

executive branches of government to introduce women-friendly policies and strategies in their executive work.

They strongly work in following up and evaluating the reports made by minister's offices. Moreover, they have also cross-check how these offices incorporate and well address women issues in their day to day actions. Furthermore, they believed that the existing women's representation and participation in national parliament implicates as a single marker of gender equality in Ethiopian politics.

4.3. Substantive Representation of Women in Parliament

According to Lovenduski and Karam (2005), once women enter parliament, their struggle is far from over. In parliament, women enter a male domain. Parliaments were established, organized and dominated by men, acting in their own interest and establishing procedures for their own convenience. There was no deliberate conspiracy to exclude women. It was, in most cases, not even an issue. Most long-established parliaments were a product of political processes that were male-dominated or exclusively male. Subsequent legislatures are the most part of the world, molded on these established assemblies.

A key woman informant interview indicated that;

“There is no suspicion that parliament is a palace where male takes breaths .I can take a very simple instance, let alone substantive illustration. Numerically, our parliament is dominated by men. At this time, we have gained nearly 40 percent seats, while men occupied almost 62 percent of the parliament seats. This shows how our dwelling is dominated by men. Further, out of 23 standing committee 7 women are appointed as chairperson and 16 women were also appointed as deputy. The position of Speaker and deputy speaker often considered as the position of men, women often do not have those positions. Now, with so many struggles we possess both senior positions. In percent, they hold over 56 percent most important committee so called “hard political chairs” and the rest approximately 44 percent held by women and women confined in the soft political sitting room. Even though, now things has changed compared to the last 15 years. But, still in terms of substantive representation most of the parliament activities, agenda and procedures are male biased. The floor of debate is always busy by men parliamentarians. Sometimes it seems the whole field of the parliament is in their hands. It is very challenging for women parliamentarians change the rules of the game. ”

On the other hand, half of the women informants have said that even though, Ethiopia is a highly patriarchal and conservative society, mannish traditions and domination is very less in Ethiopian national parliament.

In supporting this, a key woman informant has said;

“I don’t think our parliament is now masculine and this is not because we had a large number of seats and strong voice in parliament. The speakers of the house were men. Most of standing committee was headed by men. However, the setting of the parliament was very interesting. Personally, I did not have the feeling that the parliament was a place where dominated by men. For instance, our deputy speaker was a woman and she was a woman of multiple experience and exposure. And she was very sociable and supportive. In addition, in committee where now I am working is headed by two women. And the working environment is interesting as before and now in the first time, because our new prime minster is coming, there was a woman standing for speakers of the house position and she was elected by the whole parliamentarians, now we have the first woman speaker of the house in the history of our country. Our speaker is so young, thoughtful, and too friendly woman and she have so many experiences and the atmosphere of the parliament is interesting as usual.”

Contrary to this, informants were asked to identify about the existing parliament system in Ethiopia. Some men and women informants provided their insights that men are still dominating in the national parliament. The Ethiopian assembly still maintains the tradition of male superiority, women parliamentarians feel that it is natural and always men privileges to occupy the first floor and women members should be obedient to their rule.

Further, both men and women informants have agreed that the parliament have been built up by masculine center of the social order and with the women far above the ground. In male dominated parliament it is difficult for women to speak about their political concerns and priorities. The presence of this circumstance hinders women from expressing themselves and frightened of presenting their agenda.

Similarly, key male informants also agreed that increasing the number of women in politics is important, but this does not mean they have real authority. In male dominated parliament women are always subject to the rules of male biased and men always take such circumstance for granted.

For instance, while both men and women are working together in same committee, mostly men take the leading position and they have a potential to convince the audiences, whereas women are mostly very soft and smooth in presenting issues thus their probability of being heard is low.

Further, very few male key informants argued that women's representation and participation has symbolic influence in male dominated parliament. The fact that majority women in Ethiopian parliament remain silent, they continued to be marginalized and excluded from debate and decision making. They highlighted that sometimes their voice may shake and they can stop their conversation in the middle of discussion. Therefore men monopolize debates and decision making on the majority political agenda.

Informants tend to highlight the difficulties and challenges women legislatures may face in presenting their concerns and political priorities. Generally, women are placed at the bottom of the parliament. Furthermore, they have suggested that if women wish to advance gender equality they also need to convince potential male allies unless they wouldn't be successful what you they are aspiring for.

The finding has indicated that even in contemporary democratic era and modern parliamentary system the idea of masculine is prevailing. As a result, women are still dominated by their male counterparts and their voices are muted. Therefore, for them it is difficult to speak out their political concerns and interests in the parliament that is male dominated. The commitment to ensure gender equality in politics requires both men and women parliamentarians efficiently participating and promoting a balanced participation in the house.

A genuine parliamentary system is a place where both men and women can independently and unreservedly discuss in the issues that they are more concerned. Furthermore, the presence of higher number of women necessarily doesn't mean the issues of women are truly represented and well articulated in their legislative work. Substantive change will result when both parties are equally involved and make their presence are felt.

Several accounts have revealed that the actual impact women parliamentarians can make depend on a number of variables that vary from country to country. These include the economic and political context in which the assembly functions, the background, experience and number of the women who are in parliament, and the rules of the parliamentary process. Each of these factors

has a significant bearing on the extent to which women MPs can make a difference once elected. Because these factors vary significantly from country to country, it is difficult to make generalizations that are universally relevant regarding how women MPs can maximize their impact (Lovenduski and Karam, 2005).

In supporting this argument, both men and women informants have highlighted that the level to which women impact depends on the number of women in parliament who are provoked to represent women's issues. Discussion with FGD discussants have indicated that the presence of a larger number of women in parliament would make them eager to take action together and present their concern but should also be assertive at the same time. Despite its shortcomings, most male legislators themselves are convinced that women parliamentarians brought an impressive change in national parliament. Most male informants thought active involvement of women in debate has spread to other sectors of the society. Women parliamentarians have raised and advocated different political issues timely.

Busche (2010) have argued that institutional competence is crucial for the attainment of substantive representation of women in parliament. In supporting this, most informants have argued that numeric representation of women in national parliament is necessary but not adequate circumstance to achieve policy outcomes that favor women and other marginalized sections of the society.

Almost all female parliamentarians have cited that under-representation of women in key political areas as the main challenge to their effective participation and in bringing actual substantive change. They have acknowledged that power is still in the hands of men and women have little power to do so. Similarly, all key women informants have expressed that they did not have sufficient power to influence policies because they occupied less powerful positions. However, informants have asserted that it is difficult to deny the contributions that made by female parliamentarians in the last year fifteen.

Franceschet and Krook (2008) have stated that substantive representation occurs at multiple stages of the legislative process. Women's interests are promoted when legislators introduce women's rights bills; when they seek to mobilize support for these bills when legislators vote for and pass laws that promote women's rights outcomes are influenced not merely by the sex of the

representative but by the gendered power relations that are reflected in the institutional rules, operating procedures, and informal norms of legislative bodies.

In supporting this most informants have explained that effective women's participation in the parliament depended on their perception of the legislative political atmosphere, political process and outcomes inside parliament. Further, they argued that institutional framework of the parliament in one or another way can promote gender inequality within the parliament such circumstance in the long run would affect the participation of women parliamentarians in debates and motions during parliamentary sessions. Furthermore, informants have acknowledged that the fact that women are too few in parliament in comparison to men, they have bothered to pass legislation that is favored of women and children due to their numbers. However, very few women parliamentarians were spoke and debate on the provisions of socio- economic rights of women including access to agricultural land, education, health-care, transport, food and water.

For instance, in the year 2000 there was the adoption of the Revised Family code. The family code reform also gives a chance for women to have direct influence and campaign for specific provisions to increase and protect their political presence. In the year 2005, they were highly lobbying and campaigning for affirmative action, gender based violence and girl's education and harmful traditional practices such as, early marriage and abduction. From the year 2010- 2017 women legislators carried out lobby for the maternal mortality, breast feeding and maternal leave and other reproductive health and rights of women, land ownership certificate and child adoptions, work place anti harassment code of conduct, gender based violence. This positive change gives them strength within short time span. Consequently, the changes seen witnessed a more prominent role women have played within the house.

Women informants' expressed that beyond presenting the issues of women, they also provokes other concerns of the society regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, geographic location and other visible peculiarity. In line with this, despite the shortcoming they have as well confirmed that women legislatures are very successful in pushing and setting all inclusive agenda.

Finding steadily shows that even though limitations are apparent in administrative, legal, and technical matters, a dramatic increase of women representation and inclusion in national parliament have a positive impact on their political advancement. Moreover, the existence of very few

influential and vibrant women parliamentarians brings a substantive change. The presence of such women in the parliament would significantly modify a few priorities of women and sequentially benefiting the whole society.

In supporting this, a key male informant interview indicated that;

“I have been a Member of Parliament since 2000, the number of women elected were very few compared to the current one. What I have observed is the presence of even two women will change the incident and on the other hand the presence of several women will modify the circumstances better than before and they will have a strong voice in the corridors. In our parliament and in my experience women members of parliament will have an assignment to achieve what they are looking for. Even though they are smaller in number, they can bring a significant results. It is not most likely that dramatic change will only be realized when there are a large numbers of women in Ethiopian parliament.”

4.4 Policy Priorities Areas of Women in the Parliament

Women representation has been desired for many reasons. The major one includes, women for being human being they are entitled to participate in every aspect of life that are provided for human being. Since men and women have different experience and identity, it would be better if both of them are represented by men and women respectively. Consequently, this will be an encouragement for the women to be a role model for the rest of women (Delys, 2014).

In relation to this, men informants have confirmed that women have insignificant number in parliament compared to their male counter. However, they make a significant difference in the issues they prioritize and the solution they propose. In addition, they are more active in supporting legislations that benefit women and children and speak loud the issues better than men. Because women felt the issues first hand and they want to see majority of women are benefited from the political system.

Women are also more concerned about social issues, because they want to see fair, stable and balanced social status in the community. Their main concerns are determined and shaped by their personal backgrounds, social involvements and lived experience.

Both men and women informants have agreed that women parliamentarians are very active on social and women issues and they are less involved and participated in male subject constituency

such as national security and defense, research, political development, science, technology, foreign affairs and international relations, war and peace so on. Although there is an increase in the number of women representation in national parliament of Ethiopia, there are still women under-represented in traditionally considered as the spot of men “Hard Political Issues” and they are mostly presented the area which is often considered as “Soft Political Issues”. In supporting this, key male informant said;

“Women are key actors in our parliament. They always give priority to subjects more closely associated to them. They are acutely committed to gender and socially sensitive issues such as gender equality, child care, poverty, maternal leave, reproductive rights, and gender- based violence, education, labor law, and agriculture, food security and land issues. And they coordinate responsive legislations”

Differently, most women informants have illustrated that they don’t feel that they are responsible to represent the concerns and interest of women only. Further, they have stressed that as long as they are being elected by both men and women constituency, they are about representing the interest and priorities of both men and women in politics. In supporting this, two women informants have said that they did not see them self as politicians who is only to represent the interests of the same gender.

Similarly, most of women key informants argued that they have a liability to represent the interests of whole women regardless of their age, color, ethnicity, geographic setting, religion and sexual preference. Few men informants highlighted that women do not only campaign for half of the society. They are also more concerned and contribute to a wide range of humanity encompassing men and women though they have different political preferences and priorities that would shape social, political and economic prospect of the society. Even though the priorities and preferences presented by men and women are different their final target is to reach to the problem of the society as a whole.

On the other hand, some male informants felt that they do have the responsibility to present women issues in their legislative work as they are represented for the whole society. In relation with this, women informants have mentioned that men have often raised debates and discussed on issues such as domestic violence, early marriage, paid work and girls education in their committee work and in their supervisions of executive branches of the government.

The fact that women and men have different life experience has an impact in the priorities they make. In line with this, a key male informant said;

“I have a wife of two beautiful daughter, mother, sisters, aunts, grandmothers, friends and female family member. Our life experiences and exposures are different. I value this difference. Since we come from different walks of life and it would determine our attitudes and political priorities.”

Differently, most male informants have argued that women legislatures hold more reasonable preference on different policy than men. For instance, women parliamentarians support women reproductive health and rights and in the 4th term of representation of Ethiopia parliament, women legislatures have addressed the issues of maternal death rate. In the 5th term of representation, they bring the right of women in rural Ethiopia to be entitled with land registration certificates in their own names. Other issue that was lobbied by women parliament members was the right of women to paid leave from work before and after giving birth. Male informants have acknowledged that women in Ethiopia parliament as well advocate for rural women and the problem they face in their daily life and make sure that they are benefited from economic, political, health and other government packages.

On the other hand, very few women informants have claimed that all women parliamentarians don't present identical issues as they come from different walks of life and have different experiences. However, most women informants have argued that, in spite of their difference women have likely to share common agenda and priorities.

In relation to this, a key woman informant said,

“I believe that in our parliament all women have the same interest and agenda. Even though we come from different social backgrounds, as women we share a number of common interests in one way or another. When it comes to certain issue concerning social affairs, agriculture policy, gender violence, number of women in leadership, education policy and health policy, we stick together in favor of policy dealing with women issues and bring different perspective on the table relating to those issue to make sure that women's voice is heard.”

In depth interviews with some key informants and discussion with FGDs indicated that Ethiopian women parliamentarians have been standing in pushing women issues and passing gender responsive legislations in their legislative work. They have acknowledged that increasing the share

of women in national parliaments would mechanically show the way to improved representation of women's interests on the national agenda. And at the same time it marshal to political empowerment of women and substantives change on women's lives.

4.5. From Domination to Collaboration

According to Kofi Annan Report, "Men are believed to have potential in bringing change in attitude, roles, relationships and access to resources and decision-making. In addition, men are also considered as role models to promote gender equality in the family and society at large."

Similarly, Mose Tiitendero chairperson of the IPU Gender group (2000-2002) has highlighted "We believe that true gender equality between the sexes can only be achieved if both men and women have different roles to play and therefore have an equal stand in society. A men quality should not be fear who seeks equality."

According to this personality, men should be part of development programs, which aims at improving women's political participation and make their voice heard. Their participation helps to increase women's role both in public and private dominions. This will also promote a culture of cooperation and solidarity among men and women. Consequently, it will make our planet more equitable, sustainable and fair for all human races.

A key woman informant interview indicated that;

"In our caucus two approaches are deployed in order to enhance political participation of women and to have strong voice within the parliament. These are engaging men and empowering women through different means. We have male allies in caucus and they are very supportive in the direction of political participation of women. Even though, women are educated members of parliament this does not mean that they are capable of deciding on issues that affect large number of society. Since the power is in the hands of men, it is essential to involve them starting from the inception of the program. A gendered kind of decision making requires sharing power equitably. Therefore, in order to enable both parties equally participate in the parliament decision-making, we need to show men on how the larger number of society will benefit through empowering women. This approach would shift the focus from the power dynamics towards getting benefits. Thus, she said the center of analysis should be society instead of women."

According to Inter Parliament Union reports (2008) “True gender equality can be only result from including the views and experiences of both men and women.”

Most informants have argued that both men and women work in collaboration and bring different point of view in their legislative work to impact wider range of the society. Further, they suggested that it is important to build strong and lively democracy and good governance. Similarly, in depth interview with both men and women informants indicate that they vote in favor of policy related to women’s health, women in leadership, education, agriculture, gender equality, and gender based harassments and violence, poverty and so on. In view of this, to pursue balanced participation in politics, it is critical to accommodate diverse interests of both men and women in the whole development agenda. It would lead to concrete political partnership and solidarity among men and women.

According to Sharl, Christopher and Aligal (2012) article on men’s perception of women’s right and changing gender relations, it was articulated, “Intervening men and boys promote more gender equitable and democratic gender relations.”

In consideration of this, key informants and all FGD discussants have said that understanding gender as a social manufacture is very crucial to attain joint decision-making demand for equal participation of men and women in politics. Otherwise, empowerment programs that focus on women only and men only program will limit the bargaining and negotiation power of women. Furthermore, informants see it from the perception of masculinity and said “in our country being a man is perceived as champion of the power, taking political responsibility seriously and influencing policy and its outcomes.

Therefore, men should work hand in hand with women parliamentarians as equal partners for women’s rights. Most men informants felt that they had a responsibility to represent women interests and concerns, as long as they were elected by and for both men and women. They feel that they are being active in sponsoring women issues such as gender equality, gender based violence, girl’s education, maternal leave and family related issues. They conclude that male engagement will enable them to be supportive of the initiation so that they could reflect on women agendas.

In same manner, most women informants have confirmed that very few men parliamentarians prominently have raised the issues of women in their committee work as well as in their supervision to the executive branches of the government. They have also added that most men parliamentarians believe in gender equality and they have positive attitude towards women political representation and participation. Most of time they are very supportive in promoting legislation that has immediate impact on the family and societies.

4.6. Collective Voice and Bargaining Power of Women Parliamentarians

According to Domingo, Holmes, O’Neil, Jones, Bird, Larson, Marshall and Valters (2015) article on women’s voice, leadership and decision making, it was articulated “collective voice of women in leadership and decision making position is understood as elements of women’s empowerment.”

Furthermore, they argued that women’s voice as a site of contestation that shaped by the dynamics of power and groups of women collectively is better equipped to wield influence than others. At the same time, women from different walks of life have formed alliances around shared interests, and these broader coalitions have been critical to substantive processes of political change, such as challenging gender inequality.

Women’s collective voice, when strategically oriented and perceived to be broad-based, is instrumental to their ability to negotiate transformative change. The viability and sustainability of collective feminist voice depends on women’s mobilization capabilities and resources for strategic action and coalition building. It also depends on there being institutional structures and political opportunities, including the political space for associational life, to enable voice to become influence

In relations to this, a key woman informant said;

“Today, women parliamentarians bring together women of different generation a broadly distinct social backgrounds and relatively miscellaneous political fervor. We come from a locale that is unlike and that is blessing too. It seem to we take it for granted and we came together and form some sort of allies with the purpose of challenge the rules of the game. As a rule we boldly stand and support each other in order to have strong voice. Our objectives are creating a safe space where female parliament

members come together and discuss about diverse issues that matter to us through different platforms and creating gender friendly environment. In addition, to advance solidarity, sisterhood and the idea of “I am my sister’s keeper” among us.

Likewise, in depth interview informants also mentioned that they aspire to see empowered women who can stand up for their rights as well as for the rights of other women. Collective voice is an inspired approach, since it simultaneously addresses inequality and confirms the ability of women in legislative branch of the government. It is true that women parliamentarians are making a great effort in addressing gender inequality and the country’s multiple development priorities in line with constitution and other existing national frameworks.

The establishment of caucus served as apparatus for their political solidarity as well as the ability to exert collective power in influencing entrenched legal and social norms that marginalize majority women. Moreover, Caucus provides a golden opportunity for women’s collective bargaining power to influence economic policy on women’s right such as access to land ownership. One of the very first initiatives taken by the solidarity’s of women in parliament was to amend the issue of land ownership which was successful experience of their collective voice.

While there are observable and indisputable changes, few informants have explicated that collective voices of women in politics and bargaining in the house remains mostly limited but at the same time they give recognitions to changes in recent times in the parliament.

Women collective voice and bargaining power have been over and over again found to be central to change rule of the game and simultaneously crucial for women’s voice and influence policies and legislations. Further, the informants have asserted that networking and solidarity among women would reduce social segregations and enlarge collective action helped women in building up their confidence and improve public awareness about women’s issues.

Both men and women informants have agreed that dealing with differences and fighting for one aimed goal has become a challenge for women as they are more concerned about private matters than public matters that needs collaboration of all women as they all share similar problem since they are mostly attached with the domestic sphere by the norm.

The fact that women parliamentarians are liable for their power holding at the house of people's representative at the same time paves a way for them to have influencing power as they are qualified and educated. However, they haven't been able to use it as they could and bring about transformative social change since the civil society proclamation prohibits them from having the needed connection and linkage with other partners that are dedicated to work for common issue.

The informants recommended that advancing gender equality agendas involves contesting and redefining the political settlement. It encompasses adequate openness, accountability and legitimacy of political system for women's political participation and it can be a channel for progressive change in gender equality. Further, they have suggested that building strong network with diverse interests group and organizing strategic lobby and campaign at local and national level are vital to women's ability to maximize the opportunities and exposures. Increasing women's voice in society will ultimately help sustain a local commitment in order to people have access to health, education and economic development.

Despite the fact that there is slight paradox in the collective voice of women and their bargaining power they seize within the house, this research found out that at present, women have more voice and influence within the country political realm. With the voice they possess, they work firmly in looking into different policies from gender perspective and get into discussions so that revisions in the future can come up with better gender sensitive objectives, strategies and implementing mechanisms.

4.7. Women's Leadership Position in Ethiopian Parliament

According to the reports of IUP (2008), in ensuring gender equality two opportunities should be given to them. The first is promoting women to positions of seniority. The second means is promoting their participation in committee work.

In supporting this depth interview with key informants and discussion with FGDs have indicated that historically, Ethiopian women parliamentarians have been found to hold fewer standing committee poses, and where they have been appointed, they are mostly allocated portfolios with 'feminine' personality and soft policy areas and reputation. This brand of power circulations imply that women have infrequently been considered as part of the nomination team for standing committees and senior power positions. Moreover, where they have been viewed, women have

been consigned to the some of the powerful positions in the parliament. At the same time, women parliamentarians have also been increasingly nominated to manish and hard policy areas. Currently, in Ethiopian parliament women hold over 50 percent of the most senior position in parliament including the spot of Speaker. Engagingly, women hold approximately 20 percent of deputy Speaker positions.

Likewise, a key woman informant said;

“The Speaker is the chief office holder of a parliament. He or she is the highest representative or spokesperson of the assembly room. We have two women in the senior position. Both hold the arrangement of the speaker and deputy speaker of the house. These two positions were in the hands of male parliamentarians. Now women own these positions. Our new speaker is elected with the coming of our new prime minster. She is the first young female speaker in Ethiopian parliament. Our deputy was appointed eight years ago. Both them have been a role model for other women. Above all, they fight back in order to increase political participation of women and have been advocating and influencing for women agenda setting. We are glad to have such dynamic, thoughtful and friendly women politicians.”

All informants have agreed that women hold some of senior positions in Ethiopian parliament. Especially, the new female speaker is considered as the youngest qualified person to the job and this will in turn make women more feasible candidates for those leadership positions. The informants have also acknowledged that women leaders are seen as strong role models, particularly by other women. Their experience, however, is not without some level of impenetrability. They can be subject to more challenges and oppositions and sometimes command less respect as explained by women parliamentarians themselves.

According to almost all informants, the chair of a parliamentary committee is generally responsible for presiding over its business and conduct. Knowledge of the standing orders or internal rules applicable to committees is useful and it is therefore common to appoint chairs that have served at least one parliamentary term. The chair may have some influence as to the subject matters inquired by a committee although some will take on board the views and wishes of all members. According

to house of people's representative annual publication, women constitute approximately 44 percent of committee chairs of the parliaments. As in the case of deputy chairs, women hold slightly more 22 percent of the deputy chair positions in the parliament.

According to the HPR (2018) annual report, there are 23 Standing committees. These are:

- ✓ Infrastructural Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Higher Education Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Budget and Finance Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Science and Communications and Technology Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Culture, Tourism and Media Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Women and Children Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Natural resource and Environmental Protection Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Foreign Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Defense and Security Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Urban Development and Construction Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Rural Development Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Trade Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Transport Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Industry Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Capacity building Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Legal , Justice and Administrative Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Social Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Human and Democratic Rights Standing Committee
- ✓ Human Resource Development and Good Governance Standing Committee
- ✓ Agriculture Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Public Account Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Public Enterprise Affairs Standing Committee
- ✓ Pastoralist's Affairs Standing Committee

Source: HPR Annual Report (2018).

All of the informants appreciate the appointment of women in different standing committees; they examine that women are insufficient in numbers. Women parliamentarians are very important to all portfolios in order to impact on the social, economic and political foundation of the nation. A concerted effort is needed to integrate women in all leadership positions. They have the way and needed assets to impact certainly on the advancement of their nation.

Discussion with FGDs tells us women are less compared to men in higher levels of decision-making positions in Ethiopian parliament. The number of women serving as the head of different standing committees in the parliament is still low. They are also continued to be under-represented in deputy positions of the committee.

They argued that among 23 standing committees, women only hold 7 chairs. The rest of the chairs are in the hands of men parliamentarians. The presence of 7 women heads in the committee barely marks progress compared to 1995. However, progress has been slow in structure and power and type of decision-making.

Informants have highlighted that in Ethiopia parliament, a quota mandate requiring that women hold no less than 30 percent of a leadership post is required across the parliament. This is in part attributable to the high number of women in the country's parliament, but there is also an unofficial policy of gender balance in the allocation of leadership and committee responsibilities. Where there is a male committee chair, for instance, there is usually a female deputy chair and vice-versa. Four out of the 7 chairs of standing committees and 9 out of the 16 assembly rooms of deputies are held by women.

Discussion with focus group participants has pointed out that women members of parliament mostly lead committees that deal with women and children affairs, social affairs, human and democratic rights, human resource development and good governance, agriculture, natural resource and environmental protection, urban development and construction, rural development and budget and finance affairs.

According to the responses of the informants, these have been classified as "soft" portfolio areas such as women and children affairs standing committee, social affairs, education, human and democratic rights and capacity building affairs and others have been classified as soft political areas.

In contrast to the “hard” areas of foreign affairs, defense and security, trade and economy, which mostly and tend to be led by men parliamentarians’.

Similarly, key male informants have agreed women are mostly represented in soft political areas, whereas men are highly represented in a committee that is considered as hard political issues. Likewise, key women informants asserted that women are over represented on soft political issues and less involved on hard political issues.

All informants have confirmed that women are underrepresented in hard areas of the politics such as defense and national security, foreign affairs, and they are confided in the soft political affairs. On the other hand, very few both men and women informants have agreed that women have not been completely absent as chairs and deputy of finance and budget and foreign affairs committees. However, very few women are the committees of defense and dealing with the issue.

Both men and women informants have recommended that women at least have impact on legislation concerning hard political areas. They have acknowledged that women are always absent or less participated debate on the issues such as defense, foreign affairs, budget and finance portfolio.

A key woman informant has mentioned that;

“I was the first woman parliamentary chairperson for the finance and budget affair standing which was considered a traditionally male area. There is also a woman who was the chairperson of natural resource and environmental protection affairs which are also considered as mostly male district.”

The chairperson of women and children affairs standing committee and chairperson of caucus have affirmed that the committee is actively involved in supervision of the executive branch of government. And the committee supervises and reviews the reports that come from 27 ministers. On the other hand, the committee was blamed for not effectively follow up the executions of those sectors of the government. According to the chairperson, within the last ten years there are evident substantive changes attained as a result of intensive commitment of the committee.

To mention some for example issues related with the family law of the country. Picking and bringing MAPUTO Protocol (Africa Protocol). This protocol mainly promotes polygamy which is contradicting the constitution as well the country's social context. The committee with other concerned bodies made a review and evaluates the protocol and kept it to be reserved.

This remarkable amendment virtually shows that how this committee is very busy of underground operation on contemporary international political issues and public diplomacies beyond gender related concerns. Though there are the above mentioned works and evident changes seen but some still argue that the changes are not fair enough as compared to other male dominated areas as it lacks formal structure which in turn hinders strong leadership.

On the other side, both men and women informants have argued that the committee has done a lot which needs to be acknowledged and changes seen as a result should not be denied by any means. For example with regard to the earlier tradition of land ownership system men headed house hold was the bread winner excluding women headed house hold but recently as a result of this committee serious intervention and campaign both men and women started to share equal ownership. So women started to escape from "feminization of poverty", feed their household and contributed to a wide range of the society.

4.8. Best Experience of Parliament Women in Caucus

According to the dictionary Cambridge and Legal definition caucus is defined as a closed meeting of a group of persons belonging to the same political party or faction usually to select candidates or to decide on the policy. Or it is defined as a conference of members of a legislative body who belong to a particular party or affiliation. Interview with caucus members have indicated that caucus is an Ethiopian parliamentarian elected women's association which took most of its foundational ideas from neighboring country Uganda.

According to the informants' response the women parliamentarians Caucus was established during the second term of national election of Ethiopia in 2000. All women informants have said that Caucus is one of the Ethiopian parliament structure mainly run by elected women by creating partnership with a few men member of the parliament as an assistant. The objective of Caucus was

to create strong network among women parliamentarians and to build women capacity and to maximize women collective voice.

According to the responses of the informants we can understand that Caucus enables women to question their concerns and priorities in the country. It also targets to create solidarity among elected women as they came from different walks of life and background with different concerns and priorities to be addressed. Therefore, they will get collective voice bringing different perspectives that needs to be heard with regard to policies that will affect half of the society. Discussion with FGD discussants have stated that Caucus can be mentioned as one of the few associations that are influential in the country. Further, they argued that as any organization caucus has its own challenges and success stories that can be used as a cornerstone for further achievements.

Both men and women informants agreed that caucus has played a dominant role in the reservation of the country from being signatory of the Maputo protocol. The association has deeply looked into the provisions of the protocol and has made its influence for Ethiopia to made some reservations as the provisions supported polygamy which is against the socio-moral values, the family law of the land and as well as the constitution. Furthermore, the association has also made its own efforts to have the land proclamation to be understanding of women and to have grant women the power to own a land certificate make decisions on her own.

In this regard, female headed households, single mothers and widows have become beneficial. And now both men and women can get certifications and ownership rights together or individually if needed. According to the informants the other major success story is they worked to extend the maternal leave from three months to four months enabling them feed their born baby without any cut in their monthly salary. Added to this, caucus has also been pushing for the extension of maternal leave up to four months (for civil servants) which has now been accepted and being implemented in governmental offices.

Moreover, they also worked to reduce maternal death by influencing the health policy made women access door to door fetus information then made them give birth in health centers. Interview with members of Caucus have highlighted that Caucus form linkage with universities found in different corners of the country targeting on quality of education and increasing the number of women joining higher education institutions.

Stretching its work, it launches solution associated with gender based violence and harassment with the motive that there should be created a safe place for young girl to stay at and above all excel in their academics.

Above all, the women parliamentarians association or Caucus also succeeded as it encourages and in fact incorporates men to contribute and made them suggest for women's problem as a result of this gender issue becomes common agenda. So generally it is an association that creates conducive ground for women to be advantageous in all aspects of life.

All in all, the association has been immensely working on capacity building and empowerment of women so that they can further challenge legislations, policies, directives and strategies of government to better address gender issues and to come up with a society that live under the principles of gender equality.

Having done all this does not mean that the association is problem free (doesn't have challenges) or it also doesn't mean that it has reached to the level that it was supposed to reach. To mention some of its challenges or critics, all informants from interview have responded that even though this women that are parliament elected are educated and have been granted a decision making power to some extent, they fail to speak louder to the voiceless women living under deep poverty in rural sides of the country.

They argued that especially as compared to other countries Caucus and , it can be said that caucus has not contributed much(not as expected) to have address the deep rooted poverty, injustice, discrimination, and violence that many of the Ethiopian women encounter in their day today life. Furthermore, the informants has further indicated that, caucus has made a good job in maintaining the solidarity and has become stronger and bold but on the contrary, their capacity and level of decision making power has not reached to the level where it was aimed to reach. This has become an obstacle and also entrenched the establishment of other stronger associations who better stood for women.

Most of the challenges of the women parliamentarians Caucus are in line with lack of unity and solidarity as many of the members are from different backgrounds based on experience, knowledge, skills, culture, ethnicity, gender Sensitivity(level of understanding about gender issues and patriarchy) and as well as political ideology and party affiliation.

4.9. Factors that affect Women’s political participation and Their Voice in Politics

In Ethiopia too, though recently there has been radical change in their number, the gender parity is not yet achieved. Low representation of women in national parliaments could be due, among other things, to socio-cultural traditions and beliefs, women’s place in the family and society, women’s social and economic status, type of electoral systems in different countries and women’s double burden of work and family responsibilities (ESPS, 2008).

Ojulu and Melesse (2014) have stated that, political participation of women in the Ethiopian context, for a woman to hold a key position in politics, economics and administrations a difficult fulfillment. As a patriarchal society, the attitude of the majority towards women holding a high position, the way society and workplaces are structured, and the gender divisions of labor all pose a serious challenge. Women have a marginal position in accessing and succeeding in their education.

Divergent responses were presented by male and female informants. All informants share that double burden, socio-cultural attitudes, lack of education, lack of supports from their family are discussed as factors that limit women’s political opportunities and their leadership role in politics.

4.9.1 Double Burden

Everina (210) in the study stated that;

“The burden of female politicians had triple dimensions. The major challenges associated with burden of child bearing and raising children in their family responsibility which embedded in the nature of women. The other is linked with the social, professional dimension which share by all professional women including women politicians. Third, the dimension which is peculiar to women politicians that makes them responsible to hold public power on their shoulder.”

Informants were asked about their main challenges that affect their political participation. All women informants have cited that, dual burdens find it more difficult to balance family

responsibility and political responsibilities. These triple responsibilities hold back them and eventually, affects their political participation.

In relation to this, a key woman informant said;

“Women have a double responsibility. First of all, we have a political responsibility to represent people who elected us. At the same time, we have another responsibility that is looking for children, taking care of families and we are expected to obey social responsibilities as well. For us it is hard to balance and perform well both political responsibility and family or social responsibility.”

4.9.2. Socio- Cultural Attitudes

Discussion with FGD discussants has stated that the socio- cultural framework in Ethiopia is still profoundly patriarchal. There is a perception that women belongs to private sphere, whereas public sphere such as political districts is for men and that is less opportunity for women to be a politicians. They have added that cultural attitude that considered women are not capable enough to the political system and state affairs.

Further, they argue that this cultural mind-set towards women affect the political environment and forms of women’s political participation and have impact on their aspiration to the political power. This cultural mind-set also has impact on how women perceive themselves will affecting their level of confidence. Interview with focus group also indicated that, the Ethiopia electoral system is one the major determinate factor that will affect the political participation of women.

All women informants have agreed that it is difficult for women effectively participated and have strong voice in male dominated parliament. They argued that it is also difficult to raise their concerns and to establish partnership with their men counter. For them male dominated parliament and political environment are a potential challenge for their political participation.

Other men and women informants stated that, women’s participation in politics is mainly influenced by positions of women towards to politics, outlooks of family and above all, the mind-sets of the society. Women could play very effective role in politics, however, society did not object to women’s participation in politics because the political landscape of the country is very nationalistic. Today, many Ethiopia women feel insecure to participate in such political situation

and it is also one determinate factor that affects their representation, participation and impact in political process.

4.9.3. Education

Informants have agreed that low level education make it difficult women have the political capabilities that would allow them to participate in political process and decision making. Further, they argued that many women lack basic political capabilities and remained excluded from leadership positions. And there is a limited political space to advance women intellect. Most of the time men have access to higher education and they are trained in distinguished educational institutions and participate in different forums, debates, conference and other social gathering, whereas women always miss such exposure and opportunities due that they lack certain experiences and excellence.

They strongly suggest that empowering women goes in hand to in hand with over all development programs and through education, exchange programs, access to information, training women to participate in different social network and institution which can expand their political knowledge, emotional intelligence and resilience. Furthermore, they claimed that women lack of confidence and resilience to participate in national parliament and make sure their voice hard. Discussion with FGD discussants have cited that less media attentions, inadequate access to education, insufficient access to training, low access to decision making and capacity are considered as major factor that affect political participation women.

4.9.4. Institutional and Political Landscape of the Country

Political environment and institutional constrains have impeded women's access to higher position and political participation. This system indirectly discriminates gender equality in politics. Most of the informants have argued that if women are underrepresented in higher position of leadership, it difficult to incorporate their interest, concerns and make their voice heard. Further, they argued that the other chief factor that determines political participation of women and their voice in politics is coupled with patriarchal domination that makes unable to exert pressure politics in the course they foresee.

On the other hand, men and women informants stated that women's participation in politics is mainly influenced by positions of women towards to politics, outlooks of family and above all, the

mind-sets of the society. Women could play very effective role in politics, however, society did not object to women's participation in politics because the political landscape of the country is very nationalistic. Discussion with FGD's has recommended that it is essential to promote political participation of women in divergent social, political and economic programs. They have asserted that women often have to fight racism, tribalism and demonstrate their capacity for ingenuity, comprehension of the issues and the persistence of the conflict and break down stereotype.

All women parliamentarians have mentioned that problems women face in political participation including lack of experience in the election process, lack of the consideration of gender issues in the election process, shortage of finance, as well as ignorance and lack of information on the part of women voters.

All informants recognize lack of support system and solidarity among members of women parliaments. Most of women informants have the same opinion about women parliaments' members does not have strong networking system among themselves. And women also lack experience of openly speaking in front of their male counterparts are major problems that affect political participation of women. Consequently, for a long time women were under-represented in the leadership of the parties as well as in groups of elected representatives, and found it difficult to make their voices heard.

Furthermore, they have added that this duty should be conceded by designing and adopting public policies that help to transform the society and recognizing the plurality of cultures and ethnic groups.

4.9.5 Lack of Independent organizations

Despite the existence of divergent women's organizations and other civil society fighting for the goal of increased representation. Evidences have revealed that there is insignificant links between civil society and political parties towards this common goal. Most informants have agreed that networking has significant potential to support increased representation of women in parliament, both in qualitative as well as in quantities, if they and their member organization working together to synergize their efforts.

The discussion with focus group discussants and depth interview with key informants highlighted that other most important obstacle that affects political participation of women associated with the new civil society proclamation and the provisions of this proclamation highly affect the work of independent NGOs specifically those dealing with human rights including women rights and empowerment.

According to them, the Ethiopian civil societies are the most stakeholders in the development of Ethiopia. The new Ethiopian proclamation to the establishment of NGOs is becoming the new challenge for the NGOs because everything is bounded by laws of the government. The new proclamation affects the existence of NGOs that involved in the women's political empowerment and capacity such as EWLA and other divergent organizations at jeopardy.

Chapter- Five

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

In this chapter conclusion has been drawn on the basis of the findings and recommendations that are considered as vital to assess women's political participation and their voice in politics. The central objective of this study is assessing women's political participation and voice in politics in the case of Ethiopian Parliament. In order to achieve this, the research has deployed four basic research questions.

1. Are women parliamentarians holding senior leadership spots and are they putting a significant difference in multitude of political issues?
2. What are the political experiences of women parliamentarians in terms of advancing women's interest in legislation and policy making?
3. In what policy areas do women parliamentarians prioritize their legislative work?
4. What are the direct and indirect barriers that impede on political participation of women and their voice in politics?

The research followed a qualitative method of researching to provide genuine political participation and experiences of women. Empirical data from various sources have been collected through in-depth face-to-face key informant interviews and focus group discussion.

The interview conducted has been designed to collect insight from both men and women in parliament so as to understand the extent to which women participate and have their voice within the parliament. In order to understand the existing political participation of women in parliament, informants has been selected by using random, purposive, multistage, and snow ball techniques of sampling. Data have been collected using structured interview, depth interview, key informant interview and focus group discussion. Accordingly, it has been presented, analyzed and interpreted in order to meet the research's objective and question.

Based on the analysis of the data available, the major findings of the study are as following:

- ✓ There has been a dramatic increase in representation of women that is from 0.5 percent in 1954 to 38.8 percent in 2015 which further illustrates the encouraging result of commitment to address gender equality in the parliament.
- ✓ The government of Ethiopia has made a number of efforts to address gender inequality in politics and representation.
- ✓ Informants have witnessed that bounty procedural and structural change in the parliament has produced promotion of gender equality in politics. Among structural changes, appointments of women in senior position of the parliament ladder and the establishment of different committee can be mentioned and when it comes to compositions on the bases of gender equality which are helping to build up a more gender insightful parliament surroundings.
- ✓ Men are still dominating and the Ethiopian national parliament still maintains the tradition of male superiority.
- ✓ The extent to which women impact is depend on the number of women in parliament who are motivated to represent women’s issues and concerns. Women legislatures generally, more active in supporting legislations that would benefit women and children.
- ✓ Both men and women have shares common issues and bring different point of view in their legislative work to impact wider range of the society.
- ✓ Women hold senior positions in Ethiopian parliament. In addition, women constitute approximately 44 percent of committee chairs of the parliaments.
- ✓ Women are often under represented traditional considered as male dominated areas “Hard Political Issues” and mostly they are confined in the “Soft Political Issues”.
- ✓ Caucus is an Ethiopian parliamentarian elected women’s association which took most of its foundational ideas from neighboring country Uganda. Caucus can be mentioned as one of the few associations that are influential in the national parliament.
- ✓ Cultural mind-set towards women affects the environment and forms of women’s political participation and has impact on women’s aspiration to the political power.

The above finding shows that there is a connection between the increase of in parliament and women’s ability to influence the direction of policy making. On the other hand, the finding reveled that there are several factors that determine active political participation of women and their voice

in politics. However, there is general consensus that women parliamentarians have become a voice for women's right advocacy and make a significant difference in bringing gender friendly agenda.

It has also been illustrious that the large number of women's presence in parliament does not warrant gender sensitive results. On one hand, there are women who boldly stand in order to change the rules of the game.

In wide-ranging, women parliamentarians have lifted up the concerns and priorities women, children and other disadvantage segments of the society. On the other hand, women parliamentarians are considered as ineffective in ensuring political, economic and social status of poor women.

However, small numbers of women maintained to be change agents and playing a dynamic role in shaping political landscape of the country. Women parliamentarians should be prearranging with other women in order to build their potentials to have strong voice and influence. Solidarity and alliance among women parliamentarians can contribute to maintain gender friendly agenda's and enable women to exert the collective power needed to shift gender norms.

5.2. Recommendations

The researcher valued the voice and subjective opinions about their political participation with their own interpretation and language. As per the perspective of women parliamentarians, recommendations that are regarded to be of necessity for improving the political participation of women and make their voice are heard in the course of politics. These include:

- ✓ Government should make gender a core agenda in the design and implementation of socio-economic, cultural and political development programs. Integrate effectively the principle of gender equality in to all national policies and development programs.
- ✓ Government should promote a political culture within women's groups and train women how to effectively participate at various level and form of political alliances and coalitions across the party.
- ✓ Government should bring local lead solution: It is important to focus on the obstacles to women's capacity for influence and decision- making in different political, social and economic roles and the opportunities to achieve concrete outcomes in gender equality

gains. The presence and willingness of local reform champions is therefore critical, as are adaptive programmers that allow them to work politically and flexibly.

- ✓ Government should recognize women's diversity and supporting them to define and organize around their priorities and interests. Women often focus on practical concerns initially, but their attention can shift over time to more strategic objectives that seek to change the underlying causes of women's marginalization.
- ✓ NGOs and Women Associations should adopt holistic approach of supporting women's autonomous organizations, known to be important for more transformative agenda setting, while also helping women to exert greater influence in mainstream policy forums where key decisions are made. Therefore, autonomous organizations are required to push the state to expand it's accomplish. The presences feminist organization is more critical to outcomes than women parliament.
- ✓ Parliament should establish joint venture and solidarity among men and women legislature's women should work in mainstreaming gender perspective in their legislative work such as through different standing committees and women's parliamentarians' caucus. It will promote balanced participation in politics both men and women. Male champions of women's political participation, especially those hold who are in power positions are vital to the creation of a more inclusive gender equal political environment.
- ✓ Young girl's participation should grow completely out of their participation on social networking and divergent youth initiatives. It would give them have some level safe space in which to exercise voice and leadership.
- ✓ Women parliamentarians should work with multiple stakeholders and invest in long-term relationships with partners. Fostering both professional and grassroots women's organizations, and long-term relationships between them, is needed to ensure poor women's everyday needs and concerns inform national advocacy by elite women and to connect community action to broader socio-political movements.
- ✓ Women parliamentarians need to build networks with decision-makers and other stakeholders in a strong position to advance women's empowerment, such as core government ministries, universities, and the private sector
- ✓ Women parliamentarians need to work both within and from outside the state to achieve substantive change.

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APPENDEX-1

1. Interview Guidelines for House of People’s Representative

Part1- Background Information about Informants

Sex----- Age----- Marital status -----

1. Are you a member of House of People’s Representative?
2. What is your occupation prior to parliament?
3. What is your highest level of education?
4. How many terms have you been in the parliament?
5. Which political party do you represent?
6. What is your current professional occupation?
7. Is political participation of women applied based on the principle of gender equality?
8. What is your view regarding the political participation of women and their voice?
9. Do you think that women’s political participation is enhanced?
10. Do you think women are effectively participating and their voices are heard in politics?
11. Do you think women issues are appropriately discourse by female parliament members?
12. Do female Parliament members represent and prioritize the interest of the whole society?
13. To what extent do female parliament members efficiently participate in hard and soft political issues?
14. How many female parliament members are strongly involved in different standing committees of the Parliament?
15. How do you see the role of female parliament members in initiating polices and legislations to ensure that will benefit women and children?
16. What are the major responsible factors that impede women’s political participation and diminish their voice in politics?
17. Has women Parliament membership led to responsiveness and inclusive decision making?

18. Does political participation of women have a profound positive impact in different policies and legislations?

APPENDIX-2

2. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guidelines for House of People's Representative

1. Do female parliament members have a distinct impact on policy priorities that help women presence in politics?
2. How do you see women parliament members embrace priorities dealing with issues of women, and children and the family?
3. Are women parliamentarians able to promote legislation benefiting the whole society?
4. Are there any measures to guarantee women's access to positions of leadership in the parliament?
5. Is there a parliamentary women's caucus, how does it work? How is it organized?
6. Have men parliamentarians been involved in initiating legislation on gender equality? What factors commonly motivate men to address these issues?
7. How regularly do women take the floor during parliamentary debates on gender equality?
8. Are women parliament members more collaborative than male parliament members?
9. What are factors that affect women's political participation and their voice in politics?

APPENDIX-3

3. Interview Guidelines for key Informants

1. How is women's political participation perceived in parliament?
2. Are there measures taken to enhance women's participation in politics?
3. Is gender equality understood as concern of men and their responsibility?
4. Is the current level of women's representation in parliament satisfactory?
5. Has the growing presence of women in parliament resulted in new priorities and issues being addressed in parliament?
6. What policy areas do women and men prioritize in their legislative work?

7. Do you think female parliament members have an effect regarding to the legislations of diplomacy, military, foreign affairs and economic?
8. What percentage of leadership positions are held by women? What positions of leadership do women occupy in parliament?
9. In which committees are women mostly represented? In which committees are women underrepresented or absent?
10. Are there any measures to guarantee women's access to positions of leadership in the parliament?
11. What are the most significant laws that parliament has adopted in the past ten to five years to advance gender equality?
12. Do committees analyze laws from a gender perspective, so as to measure their differing impacts on men and women?
13. What are the formal and informal obstacles that affect a greater participation of women in parliament?
14. Is there a parliamentary women's caucus, how does it work? How is it organized?
15. Have men parliamentarians been involved in initiating legislation on gender equality? What factors commonly motivate men to address these issues?
16. How regularly do women take the floor during parliamentary debates on gender equality?
17. How often do men parliamentarians raise their constituents' concerns on gender equality issues?
18. Has the presence of women parliament members increased access to the legislator for economically disadvantage groups?

