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**COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

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**Challenges and Opportunities of Female Professional  
Workers in the Building Construction Industry: Case  
Study on Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

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**June, 2024**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

# **Challenges and Opportunities of Female Professional Workers in the Building Construction Industry: Case Study on Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

A Thesis Presented to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Gender Studies

By: Tsige Babiye Yehualashet

December, 2024

**DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, declare that this research project entitled “Challenges and Opportunities of Female Professional Workers in the Building Construction Industry: Case Study on Addis Ababa, Ethiopia” is my original work and has not been presented for any degree in any other University and that all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Declared by: Tsige Babiye

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## **STATEMENT OF CERTEFICATION**

This is to certify that **Tsige Babiyeh Yehualashet** has done a study on the topic “Challenges and Opportunities of Female Professional Workers in the Building Construction Industry: Case Study on Addis Ababa, Ethiopia” under my supervision. This work is original and suitable for the submission in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of degree of Masters in Gender Study.

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by **Tsige Babiye Yehualashet** entitled Challenges and Opportunities of Female Professional Workers in the Building Construction Industry: Case Study on Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; which is submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters in Gender Study. Complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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## Acronyms

Beijing Platform for Action .....	BPA
Convention on Elimination of all form of Discrimination Against Women .....	CEDAW
Current Population Survey .....	CPS
Employee Resource Groups .....	ERG
Ethiopian News Agency.....	ENA
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia .....	FDRE
Gender and Development approach .....	GAD
Gross domestic product .....	GDP
International Labour Organization .....	ILO
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.....	MLSA
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs .....	MLSA
Statistical Package for the Social Sciences .....	SPSS
The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women .....	CEDAW
United Nation .....	UN
Women in Development .....	WID

## Abstract

This study assesses the opportunities and challenges faced by female professional workers in the building construction industry within Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Despite global advances in gender equality, the construction sector remains predominantly male-dominated, particularly in developing regions where cultural norms and systemic barriers limit women's participation. This research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys (170 female professional) with qualitative interviews (7 female professional) to gather comprehensive data, including Engineering, Architecture, Surveyor, and Project management. Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize the survey data for the quantitative analysis and thematic analysis will be applied to the qualitative analysis. Key findings reveal significant challenges, including gender biases, cultural norms, workplace harassment, limited access to training and professional development opportunities and unequal treatment compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, the study highlights the lack of supportive networks and mentorship programs that further hinder women's career advancement. However, the research also identifies emerging opportunities, such as government initiatives promoting gender equality, an increasing awareness of the benefits of diversity within the workforce, emotional support, verbal encouragement and a growing demand for skilled labor in the construction sector. The insights gained from this study underscore the need for targeted interventions to address the identified barriers and leverage the available opportunities, ultimately promoting a more inclusive and equitable construction industry in Addis Ababa. The findings aim to inform policymakers, industry leaders, and educational institutions about effective strategies to enhance women's participation and empowerment in the construction workforce, contributing to broader societal progress in gender equality.

**Keywords:** Construction Sectors, Challenges, Opportunities, Female Professional Workers, Gender

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **1.1. Background of the research:**

The construction sector is a significant component of the economy in many nations and is often viewed as a catalyst for economic expansion, particularly in developing countries. Typically, the construction industry contributes around 11% to the gross domestic product (GDP) in most developing countries (Giang and Pheng, 2010). In Ethiopia, for instance, the contribution from the construction sector rose to 501.49 billion ETB in 2022, up from 468.44 billion ETB in 2021. As reported by the (Agency, 2024) , the industry has achieved a remarkable milestone in 2024, contributing an impressive 21% to the country's GDP.

The sector employs a large number of people (Amaratunga, 2006). However, in many countries jobs in this sector are done by men (adejumo, 2013) while women perform unskilled jobs that attract low wages (wells, 1990). The construction industry is not only a male-dominated profession (Fagbenle, Ogunde and Owolabi, 2011; Watt, 2007b; Charles, 2003), but it is also believed that the profession is for men (Raijkumar, Swaathi, and Sivaranjani, 2016; ILO, 2001). This is because construction work demands physical labor, hard work, and strain (Clough, Sears, and Sears, 2005).

The importance of gender balance in the workplace has garnered significant attention over the past few decades. However, women remain under-represented in male-dominated fields and senior management positions (CEDA, 2013; Worrall et al., 2008). Gender inequality is still a major problem in Ethiopia and should be a top priority for development. Women have a very poor social, economic, and political status. They thus play inferior positions in all spheres of society, including political, social, cultural, and economic ones, and have restricted access to social services.

Ethiopian women have traditionally had few options for formal employment and were mostly responsible for household chores. Social pressures and cultural standards made it difficult for women to pursue higher education and careers. But due to socialist policies that supported gender equality, there was a notable change in the 1970s and 1980s, with a greater focus on women's education and employment. Traditional roles persisted despite these advancements, particularly in rural regions. Rapid urbanization and the expansion of the construction industry in

the 1990s, when the Ethiopian economy began to liberalize, gave women access to some low-skilled employment opportunities. However, males continued to hold the majority of specialized and leadership roles. The government recognized the vital contributions made by women in a variety of industries, including construction, and took major action to advance gender equality in the early 2000s. Infrastructure improvements and a surge in international investment led to Addis Ababa's significant growth. In addition to generating new employment prospects, this urban transformation brought attention to the ongoing gender gaps in the workforce.

According to the Current Population Survey (CPS) data, in 2023, the number of women employed in the construction industry inched up to around 1.3 million. Women now represent 10.8% of the construction workforce, an increase from 9.3% in 2002. In South Africa, women make up just over 10% of the construction workforce. Currently, women make up 10.8% of the construction workforce. In Ethiopia's construction industry, women account for only 11.9% of the workforce (UN Women, 2022). As of 2023, Sub-Saharan Africa has made notable strides in closing its gender gap, achieving a closure rate of 68.2%. This statistic indicates that, on average, women in the region still face about 32% fewer opportunities compared to their male counterparts. However, there is significant variation among countries. Namibia, South Africa, and Rwanda have emerged as leaders in this area, each reaching an index of around 0.8, which reflects an average gender gap of roughly 20%. In contrast, Ethiopia has an index of 0.71 (Saifaddin Galal, 2023). Ethiopia, gender inequality remains a development agenda, as the social, economic, and political status of women is very low in the country.

The unadjusted or raw gender pay gap in Ethiopia is 30.3% when considered at the hourly level and 35.1% when considered at the monthly level. This can be attributed to various factors, including women's disproportionate responsibilities for unpaid care work, discriminatory practices prevalent in the labour market and individual preferences. This average pay gap hides significant heterogeneity caused by various characteristics. The unadjusted gender pay gap also varies by sector and occupation. Women are generally paid less in more feminized sectors, i.e. sectors where they constitute a large or the majority share of employment. For example, women are paid 15.6% less than men in agriculture, 15.3% less in the trade sector and 54.8% less when employed in households as domestic service workers. 98.5% in craft and trade occupations to as low as 6.8% in technical professional occupations. By formality status, the raw gender pay gap

also varies, being larger in the informal sector 49.3% than in the formal sector 33% (UN Women, 2022).

Women encounter numerous challenges, including widespread gender stereotypes, harsh job settings, limited access to education and training and insufficient networking opportunities. These hurdles not only dissuade women from entering the sector, but also have an impact on their career advancement once they are there. Despite these obstacles, there are increasing opportunities spurred by government measures encouraging gender equality, increased industry understanding of the benefits of diversity, and the formation of supportive networks for women. Increased female participation may be made possible by the growing demand for skilled workers in the growing construction industry. Many cultural, social, and economic factors influence the participation of women professionals in the building construction industry. Ongoing efforts to improve gender equity and promote women's participation in construction are laying the groundwork for a more inclusive future, despite the major challenges they face. To successfully address present issues and take advantage of potential for female employees in the sector, it is imperative to comprehend this background.

Women's involvement and success in the field can be greatly impacted by focused initiatives, such as expanding educational opportunities, advocating for friendly workplace regulations, and creating mentorship programs. As more women join the job as professional building construction workers, Ethiopia's construction sector is gradually changing. This change not only promotes gender equality but also makes a substantial contribution to the economic growth of the nation. Ethiopian women's participation in the building construction industry offers a huge chance for both economic growth and social reform.

This review emphasizes the need for more research to fill existing gaps, particularly studies that focus on the local environment, assess the success of gender-focused policies, and investigate women's intersectional experiences in construction. Such research is critical for informing policy decisions and fostering a fairer workplace for female construction professionals.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem:**

Despite tremendous progress in gender equality across sectors, the construction industry remains primarily male-dominated, particularly in areas such as Addis Ababa, where cultural norms and

industrial practices continue to impede female participation. In Addis Ababa, women make up a modest percentage of the workforce in professional professions in the building construction business. This underrepresentation raises serious concerns about the systemic barriers that female professionals confront, as well as the prospects for career growth.

There is a glaring disparity in women's representation and career progression in this field. Numerous obstacles prevent many female professionals from advancing in their jobs and participating fully in the workforce. These challenges include limited possibilities, entrenched gender biases, societal expectations, and unequal treatment when compared to their male counterparts. Despite performing comparable work on construction sites, such as carrying heavy weights, women earn less than males. Studies by George and Chukwuedozie (2014) and Yusuf (2014) have confirmed that women face significant wage disparities, particularly in casual or unorganized labor. Women often face vulnerable situations that hinder their career progression. The recruitment process in the construction industry is said to be biased against female workers. Overall, the terms and conditions within the industry are generally poor, regardless of gender. Fielden et al's study (2001) revealed that the industry fails to provide fair wages, pensions, and other benefits, particularly at the craft level.

Existing research identifies gender stereotypes, workplace harassment, and restricted access to training and mentorship as significant hurdles to women's participation in construction. However, there is a scarcity of localized, empirical research that tackles the specific issues and opportunities that female professionals confront in Addis Ababa. There have been few studies conducted on women in the construction industry. For example, Patric Cerna's Assessment and Effectiveness Analysis of the Workers in the Construction Project in Debre Birhan and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (Patric, 2017) examined the situation in Ethiopia and reported that women face a whole range of discrimination while undertaking a career in the construction industry. These barriers include negative perceptions of women's capabilities (Chun, Arditı and Balci, 2009); difficulty in finding a balance between personal goals and professional goals (quality of work life, family/work-life balance) (Hatipkarasulu and Roff, 2011); slow career progression (English and LeJeune, 2012); lack of recognition and encouragement from supervisors, asked to do repetitive minor tasks, undervalued and low potential for career advancement (Loosemore and Waters, 2004); discrepancies between women's perceived societal roles and the image of the

construction industry, the unfair judgment of training needs, misjudged on performance compared with male counterparts, being restricted to clerical/administration roles (Dainty and Lingard, 2006).

Despite various governmental initiatives aimed at strengthening women in all aspects of the construction industry, there is still a paucity of female representation at both the managerial and professional levels of employment. Women continue to suffer discrimination, gender inequity, and hurdles in advancing their careers. As a result, many women quit the construction business earlier than planned, missing out on their full potential and contributing to the sector's skill gap.

This study seeks to fill gaps in the literature on the experiences of female professional workers in the building construction business in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Previous studies have emphasized the barriers that women face in the construction industry. However, several of these past studies are more than a decade old, underscoring the importance of ongoing research to provide an up-to-date picture of the condition of female professionals in the business. Old study may not accurately reflect current socioeconomic circumstances and their influence on women in the construction industry. Furthermore, socioeconomic situations differ by area, highlighting the importance of conducting a location-specific study to better understand the unique problems that female workers in Addis Ababa encounter.

This study aims to fill these gaps by investigating the multifaceted issues faced by female professional workers in Addis Ababa's building construction industry, giving a complete and up-to-date analysis of their challenges as well as chances for empowerment and progress.

### **1.3. Objectives of the research:**

#### **1.3.1. General Objective:**

To assess the challenges and opportunities faced by female professional workers in the building construction industry in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

#### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives:**

- To examine the systemic barriers hindering the participation and career progression of female professionals in Addis Ababa's building construction industry.

- To assess the impact of workplace policies and practices on female professionals' job satisfaction and retention in the construction sector.
- To explore the opportunities available for female professionals to advance their careers in the construction industry.
- To propose evidence-based strategies for improving gender inclusivity and empowerment of female professionals in Addis Ababa's construction sector.

#### **1.4. Research Questions:**

1. What are the key systemic barriers that limit female professionals' entry and advancement in Addis Ababa's building construction industry?
2. How do workplace policies and practices affect female professionals' career growth and job satisfaction in the construction sector?
3. What opportunities exist to enhance female professionals' participation and career success in the construction industry?
4. What strategies can policymakers, employers, and educational institutions implement to promote gender inclusivity and empower female professionals in construction?

#### **1.5. Significance of the research:**

This study is important because it highlights professional responsibilities and career options for women in the construction sector, hence increasing awareness among many stakeholders. The results will give policymakers, business leaders, and advocacy organizations important information that will help them create focused interventions and policies that support diversity, gender equality, a more equal workplace, and the recruitment of more women into construction and related professions.

Additionally, by offering a current examination of the situation of women in the Ethiopian construction industry, this study closes a significant research gap. Its goal is to provide the government, professional associations, and stakeholders in the construction industry with evidence-based tactics and suggestions that will empower women in the industry and increase gender diversity. Additionally, by providing current, site-specific insights into the intricacies of gender dynamics in the construction industry, the research will enhance the body of existing literature.

This contribution not only advances scholarly discussion but also backs realistic strategies for creating a welcoming atmosphere for women in the construction industry. The results will provide a solid basis for future research, stimulating additional examination into gender issues in the construction sector and generating follow-up studies that expand on current work.

### **1.6. Scope of Research:**

The scope of this research on "Assessment on Opportunities and Challenges of Female Professional Workers in the Building Construction Industry in Addis Ababa" includes the following key components:

1. **Geographical Focus:** The study will concentrate on Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as a significant area of urban development and construction activities.
2. **Target Population:** The research will focus on female professional workers in various roles within the building construction industry, including but not limited to Engineers, Architects, Project managers, Site Engineers, Office Engineers, Quantity surveyors, Surveyors...
3. **Data Collection Methods:** The research will employ a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. This will include surveys and interviews with female professionals.
4. **Outcomes:** The research aims to provide actionable insights and recommendations to enhance the role of female professionals in the construction industry, promoting gender equity and inclusive practices.

**1.7 Limitation of the research:**

The researches primarily focus on professional roles while neglecting the experience of women in non-professional positions, which could provide a more holistic view of gender dynamics in the industry.

The research solely focus on some area of Addis Ababa may overlook the experiences of female workers in different cities, which could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenge and opportunities.

The study focused exclusively on the building construction industry, leaving out studies of soil, water, and irrigation resource management as well as other construction subsectors including road and water work construction.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITRATURE REVIEW

#### **2.1. Overview of The history of Construction in Ethiopia:**

In the past history of Ethiopia, the construction industry was not considered as an independent sector of the national economy. It was rather considered as incapable of generating national wealth. As a result, no comprehensive strategy for its development was considered. This, in turn, has led to the undesirable features of the current construction sector. These features include lack of clear developmental objectives for the industry; inadequate co-ordination of planning between the industry and infrastructure programs in the various sectors of the economy heavy dependence on foreign resources such as materials, equipment and expertise representation of the role players in the construction sector by inadequate and ineffective organizations inadequate numbers of suitably qualified and experienced personnel at all levels that include engineers, technicians, mechanics, operators and foremen, etc. inadequate relevant local construction regulations and standards, and inadequate consideration given to the use of local resources (including community participation in labor-based works).

Ethiopia witnessed a decline in the performance of almost all sectors of the economy during the various periods of government prior to 1991. The post-world war period in Ethiopia registered significant changes from the time of Emperor Haile Selasie (1941-1974) to that of the Derg (1974-1991) culminating in the events of 1991 which resulted in the formation of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (hereinafter TGE). Even though various market based economic reforms have been introduced to the various industries of the country, including the construction industry, since the downfall of the Derg regime in 1992, the domestic construction industry has still faced several hindering factors in its development.

In the New Economic Policy statement issued in 1992, the TGE made clear its intention to transform the stagnant command economy inherited from its predecessors into a functioning market-based economy. This transformation is sought to be achieved through an Agricultural Development Led-Industrialization (hereinafter ADLI) strategy for the country which is

supported by similar strategies in education, health and transport sectors. However, even if the country is well endowed with natural resources with 60% of its total land area estimated to be potentially arable, its road density is amongst the lowest in Africa nations and other developing countries. Furthermore, the existing road network has deteriorated to the extent that only eleven percent of paved roads and nineteen percent of gravel roads are in good condition, making it the worst in comparison with other developing countries. It is evident from the above that the success of the ADLI strategy and the consequent economic recovery and development of the country is highly dependent on the restoration of the country's road infrastructure.

With the above considerations in mind, the construction industry is being given special focus in the policies of the country. The construction industry is one of the three sectors of the economy identified by the Ethiopia Government for special consideration to foster the country's economic development. However, the general state of the domestic construction industry in Ethiopia is still characterized by inadequate capital base, old and limited numbers of equipment, low levels of equipment availability and utilization, deficiencies in technical, managerial, financial and entrepreneurial skills, limited experience and participation of the private sectors in construction and consultation works, and insufficient and ineffective use of labor-based road construction and maintenance technology.

The construction industry in Ethiopia is a sector that opens the door for the growth of many additional industries. Building works require high input. For instance, they require different metal products, clay works, and cement and cement products, etc. As such, the growth of these industries will surely follow the growth of the construction industry. Similarly, when the construction and renovation of housing increase, the demand for household furniture increased; thereby, indirectly, opening the door for the growth of the furniture industry. All in all, the construction industry is a sector that can entertain big micro companies, that is widely labor based. All these being taken into consideration, the industry policy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has sought to pay special attention to the construction industry of the country.

## **2.2. Overview on the Role of Women in Construction:**

The construction industry has traditionally been dominated by men, with women encountering significant impediments to entry and promotion. The history of women in construction reveals a complex and shifting relationship with the industry. From early informal contributions to considerable participation during wartime, women's responsibilities have frequently been changed by societal conventions and economic situations. While progress has been made, additional efforts are needed to address the systemic barriers that continue to impede gender equity in construction. This literature review investigates the role of women in construction both globally and within the specific context of Ethiopia, focusing on the opportunities and challenges they face.

The Industrial Revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries marked a significant turning point for women in construction. As factories and urban centres expanded, women began to enter the workforce in greater numbers. Many took up jobs in textiles and manufacturing, but some also found work in construction-related occupations like bricklaying and carpentry, particularly during wartime when labor was scarce. Despite their contributions, women were frequently assigned to lower-paying, less skilled positions.

During World Wars I and II, women joined the construction workforce in unprecedented numbers. With men away fighting, women filled roles in factories and construction sites, taking on jobs such as welders, carpenters, and laborers. During this time, the iconic figure known as "Rosie the Riveter" emerged to represent women's contributions to the war effort. This period demonstrated women's abilities in traditionally male-dominated roles, but after the wars, many women were pushed out of these positions as men returned home. During the postwar period, societal expectations began to shift again.

Traditional gender norms returned around the middle of the 20th century, and women were frequently urged to concentrate on household duties. But the feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s brought equal opportunity and women's rights—including in the workplace—back

into the public eye. Future generations of women were able to pursue careers in construction and other fields because of these movements.

By the late 20th century, women began to gain more visibility in construction. The passage of legislation related to gender equality, such as the Equal Pay Act (1963) and Title IX (1972) in the United States helped to dismantle some barriers to entry. Women's representation in professional jobs expanded as a result of their greater pursuit of higher education in engineering, architecture, and construction management. Women's participation in the construction sector as professionals, tradesmen, and leaders has gradually increased in the twenty-first century. There are now groups and programs dedicated to advancing women in construction, with an emphasis on networking, training, and mentoring. But issues like workplace harassment, gender bias, and underrepresentation in leadership roles still exist. Stereotypes about gender make it extremely difficult for women to enter the construction industry. Women are often perceived as less capable than men in technical roles, leading to discrimination in hiring and promotion (Kenny & Ruddock, 2020).

Africa's construction scene underwent substantial alterations throughout the colonial era. European powers established organized industries and construction methods, frequently marginalizing women's traditional duties. Although women continued to support their communities through informal building activities, they were often barred from formal work prospects in the construction industry, while males were hired in labor-intensive roles. Many African countries sought to repair and upgrade their infrastructures after gaining independence in the middle of the 20th century. Around this period, several women started working in construction, especially in cities, frequently assuming positions in skilled, technical, and administrative trades. Systemic obstacles, such as cultural norms and limited educational opportunities, meanwhile, persisted in limiting their involvement. Women's empowerment movements emerged throughout Africa in the second part of the 20th century; promoting gender equality in various fields, including construction. These movements brought attention to the necessity of women's participation in infrastructure and economic development initiatives. Governments and non-governmental organizations started to realize how crucial it was to include women in building in order to improve sustainability and community development. Ethiopian women's involvement in construction has been influenced by sociopolitical and cultural

traditions. Ethiopian women have always helped build and maintain their homes, but their contributions to construction have not received much official recognition.

- **Traditional Roles:** Women in rural areas frequently helped to build dwellings out of traditional materials like mud and straw. Their contributions were critical to family and communal housing, but were rarely recognized or valued in official records.
- **Impact of Education and Policy:** In the late 20th century, formal education and vocational training led to an increase in Ethiopian women pursuing jobs in building. Government programs aimed at fostering gender equality, notably in the 2000s, contributed to increased female participation in technical and professional roles.
- **Current Trends:** Ethiopian women are increasingly working in construction nowadays, serving as project managers, engineers, and architects. But they still have to deal with issues like gender bias, a lack of mentorship, and limited access to funding for construction-related business projects.

Research indicates that the construction industry has traditionally been male-dominated, with women often relegated to support roles rather than professional positions (Dainty et al., 2000). This trend is evident in many developing countries, including Ethiopia, where cultural and societal norms dictate gender roles and expectations (Ofori, 2001). Cultural norms that prioritize domestic responsibilities for women further exacerbate these challenges, as highlighted by research from Abebe (2017), which emphasizes the societal pressures that discourage women from pursuing careers in construction.

Women make up around 10-15% of the global construction workforce, with variances by location and country. In some locations, such as North America and Europe, representation may be slightly higher. In the United States, women account for approximately 9-10% of the construction workforce. Women in construction management jobs constitute around 30% of managerial positions. According to the European Union, women make up approximately 11% of the construction workforce, with higher representation in Sweden and Finland. Women hold around 25% of managerial positions in the construction industry. Women make up approximately 10% of the construction workforce in nations such as Japan and South Korea.

However, attempts in nations such as India have had varying degrees of success, with women accounting for approximately 20-30% of the workforce in urban construction projects.

Globally, women hold about **30%** of managerial positions in construction, but this percentage is often lower in Africa, with many women occupying non-managerial roles. A report from the African Development Bank indicates that women in engineering and technical fields remain underrepresented, with women comprising only **20%** of engineering graduates in many African countries. Estimates suggest that women constitute about 10-15% of the formal construction workforce in Ethiopia, with lower percentages in technical and managerial positions. Women make up approximately 30% of students in engineering and architecture programs in Ethiopian universities. However, the transition from education to employment in the construction sector remains challenging.

Research indicates that gender representation in decision-making roles significantly enhances promotion opportunities for women within organizations and extends the tenure of female leaders, regardless of the firm's performance (Cook & Glass, 2014). Furthermore, a lack of assimilation and transition processes inside the construction might undermine gender balance. Without these processes, women and minorities may be excluded from vital social support systems and networking opportunities, which are crucial for building a sense of belonging, security, and self-esteem, and therefore decreasing anxiety. These psychological factors are vital for quick and effective integration (Levin, 2010). In male-dominated sectors like mining and construction, networks play a critical role in career development and advancement, as traditional word-of-mouth hiring practices remain prevalent (French & Strachan, 2015).

In African cultures, leadership has traditionally been seen as a male role and deemed incompatible with the virtues of femininity (Kasomo, 2012). Spouses frequently discouraged and impeded their wives' pursuit of leadership roles. Women were discouraged from participating in provincial administration due to their responsibilities to children and families, which limited their prospects for salaried jobs. Men tended to control a larger percentage of the family's financial resources and received more support from the community, further disadvantaging women.

## **2.3. International and National Instruments (Policy Landscape):**

### **2.3.1. International instruments:**

Ethiopia has ratified and endorsed the following international and regional instruments to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

- **Convention on Elimination of all form of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** (Sep, 1981):

Ethiopia ratified CEDAW in 1981 to eliminate discrimination against women. By ratifying the convention, Ethiopia recognizes discrimination and inequality, the need for state action, commitment to do and not to do certain things and willing to be held accountable at the national and international level.

- **Beijing Platform for Action (BPA)** (African Centre for Gender, 2014):

The platform recognizes the equality of women and men is necessary for social justice and to achieve development and peace. It established 12 critical areas of concern that need to be addressed to achieve political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security among all people. These areas as they relate to women and poverty, education, health, violence, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision making, mechanisms for women's advancement, women's human rights, mass media, the environment and the girl child.

- **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals:**(September 2015)

This is a global framework for achieving sustainable development in the economic, social and environmental dimensions having a stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. In addition, there are gender equality targets in other goals and a more consistent call for sex-disaggregation of data across many indicators.

- **The gender agenda in Agenda 2063 :** (2015)

This agenda planned by 2063, all forms of violence and discrimination (social, economic, political) against women and girls would have been eliminated and they would fully enjoy all their human rights; the African of 2063 would see fully empowered women with equal access and opportunity in all spheres of life; over 90% of rural women would have access to productive assets, including land, credit, inputs, and financial services; the Africa of 2063 would see attainment of full gender parity including to see women occupy 50% of managerial positions in government.

- **The African Charter on Human and People's Rights:** (06/1998)

The African Charter on Human and People's Rights is intended to promote and protect human rights and basic freedoms in African continent. Article 2 of the charter enshrines the principles of non-discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic grounds, colour, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, both or other status.

### **2.3.2. National Instruments (Policy Landscape):**

The government of Ethiopia has been implementing the following national instruments regarding women's gender equality, wage differential, maternity leaves and empowerment.

➤ **The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**

The Constitution of Ethiopia defines and pays special attention to women in a bid to enable them to compete and participate in social, economic and political life on an equality basis with men (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution (FDRE) Article 35 (4). Article 6 of the constitution grants equal citizenship rights to both men and women; Article 7 states whatever is stated in the constitution applies to both sexes; Article 25 equality before the law and equal and effective protection by the law regardless of grounds such as sex.

➤ **The National policy on women**

The national policy on women, formulated in 1993, encourages equal participation of women in the political, social and economic spheres of life in the country. It also laid the foundation for the establishment of women's machineries at all levels: federal, regional and sub-regional.

The national Gender Policy frame work and the constitution are meant to provide a frame work which all government structure and development partners can use tackle women's' in their general or specific activities.

It is also an opportunity to have not only legislative support, policy frame work but also institutional arrangements that enables the mainstreaming of gender concerns in all programs and activities as it was recommended by the Beijing platform for action for the advancement of women.

➤ **Federal Civil Servants Proclamations**

The Federal Civil Servants Proclamation No. 1064/2010 ensures women's constitutional right to affirmative action concerning recruitment, promotion, transfer, deployment, education and training and provision of a working environment free from sexual violence.

Maternity leave increases from 90 days to a total of 120 days with pay. Moreover, pregnant women who encounter a miscarriage pregnancy are also entitled to post-confinement maternity leave if the miscarriage is conferred by a medical certificate. This proclamation also states that any government institution shall establish a nursery where female civil servants can breastfeed and take care of their babies.

➤ **Labour Proclamation NO.1156-2019 (Article 87-89):**

The laws protect women from activities inclusive of work necessitating the use of scaffolding as halting of vehicles at roadblocks, cutting and felling forest trees, supervision of boilers, recharging of batteries, welding, clearing of sewage tunnels and pipes. Jobs requiring long periods of standing up and jobs involving extreme temperatures are listed as being works that fall in this category to determine jobs hazards to the health or the reproductive function of women (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA) 1997).

The proclamation consisted of

- Wages
- Hours of work, weekly rest and public holidays
- Leave: In this part, you'll learn about annual leave, special leaves
- Working conditions of women and young workers
- Occupational safety and health and working environment

This provides you with information such as preventive measures, occupational injuries which are further divided into the subsections of liability and the degree of disablement. Another note is the benefits in the case of employment injuries which are also subdivided into the general incentives, the medical services, and the various kinds of cash benefits.

## **2.4. Challenges and Opportunities of Female Professional Workers in Building Construction Industry**

### **2.4.1. Challenges Facing Women in Building and Construction Industry:**

The construction industry continues to be one of the most gender-segregated in the world, with several barriers to entry and advancement for women. The barriers to admission for women in the construction sector are diverse, including cultural, institutional, and occupational challenges. Additionally, it has been noted that addressing these challenges may not only reduce gender barriers in the industry but also alleviate industry-wide issues such as the shortage of skilled labour in a growing construction sector (Bigelow et al., 2018; Moore and Gloeckner, 2007).

#### **i. Women inequality:**

Gender equality is a fundamental human right (Ghailani, 2009). The Constitution of Ethiopia defines and pays special attention to women to enable them to compete and participate in social, economic, and political life on the same level as men (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution (FDRE) Article 35 (4)).

The under-representation of women in male-dominated industries is a result of systemic problems that existing policies have mostly failed to address, making it difficult to achieve gender equality at work. It is interesting to note that there is a consistent pattern when we examine the roles and responsibilities of men and women in this sector.

#### **ii. Wage differential and discrimination:**

Due to the prevalence of wage disparities in labor markets across the globe, a substantial amount of literature has been produced that explores their origins and evolution. To address the pay gap, it is essential to know the factors that influence salaries. Furthermore, it's critical to understand the reasons behind notable salary inequalities between groups, especially in cases when they are not due to variations in productivity or investment in human capital. This inexplicable element is frequently called discrimination. Sex discrimination occurs when a person is denied employment opportunities or the ability to participate in certain activities based on their biological sex (Albertyn, 2003). According to Nkuna (2010), there are two types of sex discrimination: direct and indirect. Nkuna (2010) provides examples of direct sex discrimination, such as promoting a

less qualified and experienced man over a more qualified and experienced woman. Another example is demoting a woman who returns to work after taking maternity leave.

Ridgeway (2001) defines indirect sex discrimination as policies and practices that disproportionately disadvantage one gender, despite appearing to be applied equally to both genders. For example, benefits based on length of service may work against women who have taken time off from work to raise children.

**iii. Harassment and Abuse:**

Sexual harassment in the workplace refers to unwelcome sexual advances or verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature that is explicitly or implicitly linked to favourable employment decisions. It can also include actions that create an offensive, hostile, or abusive work environment or that unjustly interfere with an individual's ability to execute their job. According to Bagilhole, Dainty, and Neale (2002), women in this industry may encounter various forms of sexual harassment, such as explicit requests for intimacy, sexual remarks, and non-verbal actions like sexual assault, touching, and suggestive posturing.

In a comparison of existing literature, women face a whole range of discrimination while undertaking a career in the construction industry. The predominant barrier is related to the perception of sexual harassment. They also face misjudged on performance compared with their male counterparts, being restricted to clerical/administration roles (Dainty and Lingard, 2006).

**iv. Life-work balance:**

Martinez et al (2007) have proven that the main reason women are underrepresented in leading positions, both in academia and the workplace is due to maternity and childcare. This is because many women's professional careers lack continuity due to family roles and responsibilities, including maternity. Women often drop out of their positions after a certain stage in their careers. This phenomenon is less common in men, likely because society generally accepts that women should step aside to take care of the family while men stay focused on work. Although there are rare cases where the opposite occurs, society does not typically view this as a normal choice (Rosabeth Moss Kanter, 1977/2008).

Not only are women disproportionately affected when it comes to childcare, but this situation is worsened by the lack of suitable mechanisms that allow women to effectively balance their careers and family responsibilities. It is argued that these barriers seem to be universally experienced among women who have families or have the intention of starting a family, regardless of the job role or profession (Moore, 2006). The construction industry is known for its high demand in work hours, making it difficult to meet the demands of their positions and find enough time to enjoy their lives outside of work (Amaratunga, et al., 2006).

**v. Recruitment practice:**

Although Ethiopia's economy has grown remarkably, gender inequality still exists in the labor sector, particularly among female graduates. Employers worry that quotas may favor employing women based on their gender rather than their technical skills. They also fear that there may be discord among employees and that the skills and capacities of female employees may be questioned. In the construction industry, the recruitment process is reportedly biased against women. The terms and conditions within the industry are generally poor, regardless of gender. According to Dainty et al (2000), male managers often engage in discriminatory recruitment practices that discourage women from applying for positions with contracting organizations. Additionally, construction organizations are said to foster a culture that allows for informal recruitment practices such as unstructured interviews, discriminatory selection criteria and sexist attitudes (Fielden et al, 2000).

**vi. Image and Environment of the construction industry:**

The construction industry is often depicted as promoting adversarial business relationships, poor working practices, environmental insensitivity, and a reputation for underperformance (Construction Industry Board, 1996). Research shows that this negative image has discouraged women from entering the industry. The prevailing perception of construction is that it is a male-dominated field that requires physical strength and the ability to tolerate outdoor conditions, inclement weather, and profanity (Agapiou, 2002). It is primarily this perception that has led to a lack of interest from women. Research conducted by Gale (1994) found that male school students are five times more likely than their female counterparts to consider a career in the construction industry.

The unpredictable nature of the construction industry has also contributed to high levels of unemployment. The terms and conditions of employment, such as working outdoors during the cold winter months and in dirty conditions, have been identified as factors that make the industry unattractive, particularly to women (Fielden et al., 2001).

Dainty, Neale and Bagilhole (2000) also found that for women to survive in the male-dominated industry, women have three choices: (1) act like men, (2) lower their goals and assume secondary positions, or (3) surrender and move to work elsewhere. In addition, it was difficult for women to reach high-level positions for two main reasons: (1) men's intentional social isolation, and (2) men downplaying women's contributions to maintain their positions in the male-dominated industry (Dainty, Neale and Bagilhole, 2000).

➤ **Limited Access to Education and Training:**

Accessing vocational training programs, which are essential for skill development and career advancement in the construction industry, was difficult for many female employees.

**2.4.2. Opportunities for Professional Women workers in Building and Construction Industry:**

Opportunity factors in this study are the personal qualities and abilities that are perceived to be important in leading to women's career success in the construction industry. Helping women acquire these success factors will facilitate their career success in construction.

➤ **Government Policies and Initiatives:**

The Ethiopian government has initiated policies aimed at promoting gender equality in various sectors, including construction. These programs have the potential to boost women's involvement in the sector and foster more welcoming conditions.

➤ **Education and Advocacy:**

Raising awareness of the value of women in construction can result in more funding for initiatives and educational programs that inspire young women to work in the industry. Advocacy groups can play a crucial role in promoting gender equity and supporting female professionals.

➤ **Role Models and Success Stories:**

The emergence of successful female leaders and professionals in the construction sector has begun to challenge stereotypes and inspire younger generations of women to pursue careers in this field.

➤ **Changing Industry Dynamics:**

In Ethiopia, there was a growing movement in the late 2010s to advocate for women's rights and gender equality, which resulted in increased support for female construction professionals. As the construction industry evolves, there is a growing recognition of the value of diverse perspectives. Companies that encourage gender diversity may experience increased innovation, productivity, and problem-solving capability.

➤ **Globalization and International Influence:**

Exposure to international norms and practices can have an impact on the local building sector. Global organizations frequently stress diversity and inclusion, which can lead to new partnerships and collaborations that benefit female professionals. The global discussion of gender equality and women's empowerment has influenced local practices, supporting more inclusive hiring procedures and working environments.

Findings by Moore (2006) and Fernando, Amaratunga and Haigh (2014) show that the ability to work with people, dedication, adaptability, leadership, and integrity/honesty is positively influencing women's career success. In particular, Mathieu, Sowa and Niles (1993) found that women who participate in a 'non-traditional' occupation demonstrate the highest level of career self-efficacy. Moore (2006) confirmed this and found that the primary source of confidence was derived from within themselves, secondly the influence of people they worked with (mentors), and finally, additional education to give more confidence in their roles. Role models, mentors, or significant others have been identified in research as the most valuable resource in a woman's career development and profession (Moore, 2006; Fernando, Amaratunga and Haigh, 2014; Ericksen and Schultheiss, 2009). Role models are beneficial for individuals to learn from by being present and assisting with emotional support and verbal encouragement. In particular, mentors, defined as typically senior people in an organization, help junior individuals navigate psychological and career-related issues.

## 2.5. Theoretical Literature Review

### a) **Role Congruity Theory:**

Role Congruity Theory provides an important lens for understanding the issues that female professional workers experience in the building construction business, particularly in Addis Ababa. This hypothesis proposes that cultural expectations of gender roles produce a bias against women in leadership positions. When women adopt traits commonly associated with male leadership—such as assertiveness, ambition, and independence they are often evaluated negatively compared to their male counterparts, who are expected to exhibit these traits (Reis & Grady, 2017).

In the construction industry, which is traditionally male-dominated, women who seek leadership roles may find themselves in conflict with societal norms. Research indicates that while women in leadership positions exhibit competencies similar to their male peers, their assertive behaviors can be perceived as unfeminine, leading to a backlash (Helgesen, 2011). This backlash can manifest in various forms, such as social isolation, negative performance evaluations, and decreased opportunities for advancement.

In Addis Ababa, where the construction sector is expanding rapidly, the integration of women into leadership roles may be hindered by these biases. The prevailing stereotypes about gender and leadership may limit women's access to managerial positions, despite their qualifications and potential. Additionally, the expectations of female leaders to adopt more collaborative or nurturing styles, rather than assertive ones, further complicate their ability to thrive in a competitive environment (Sagan, 2013). This suggests that addressing societal perceptions of gender roles is essential to unlocking opportunities for women in the construction industry.

### b) **Gendered Organization Theory:**

Gendered Organization Theory focuses on how organizational structures and cultures perpetuate gender inequalities. In the context of Addis Ababa's construction industry, this theory highlights the systemic barriers that female workers face within predominantly male-led organizations. Moss Kanter (1977) argues that organizational behaviors are shaped by their structures rather

than by the individual characteristics of employees. This perspective is essential in understanding how the building construction industry may reinforce traditional gender norms.

Organizations in the construction sector often reflect and perpetuate historical gender roles that favor men. For instance, leadership positions are typically held by men, creating an environment where female employees may feel marginalized or undervalued. Britton (2000) emphasizes that organizations are not neutral; they actively maintain gendered norms that can disadvantage women, regardless of the actual gender composition of the workforce. This means that even as more women enter the workforce, they may still encounter organizational cultures that prioritize masculine traits and behaviors.

Furthermore, gendered organizations operate through established rituals, rules, and expectations that often overlook or devalue qualities typically associated with women, such as collaboration and care (Acker, 2007). In Addis Ababa, the construction industry's organizational culture may discourage women from asserting their leadership potential, thereby limiting their professional growth. Understanding these systemic barriers is crucial for developing strategies to promote gender equity within the industry.

c) **Gender and Development Approach (GAD):**

The Gender and Development approach (GAD) provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the roles and responsibilities of women within the construction industry in Addis Ababa. This approach evolved from earlier models, such as Women in Development (WID), which primarily focused on women's roles in development but often failed to address the underlying gender inequalities that persist in various sectors.

GAD emphasizes the need for a holistic understanding of gender relations and recognizes that both women and men must be actively involved in development processes (Oshewolo, 2011). In the building construction industry, this approach is particularly relevant, as it encourages an examination of the socio-economic and cultural factors that influence women's participation and advancement. By employing gender analysis, stakeholders can identify barriers to women's involvement and develop targeted interventions to address these challenges.

In Addis Ababa, where economic growth is tied to infrastructure development, the GAD approach can help illuminate the specific needs and concerns of female construction workers. This perspective shifts the focus from merely including women in projects to understanding their roles as integral to the development process. As Lindsey, Holmes, and McCall (2013) argue, improving women's status is not solely a women's issue; it requires the engagement of both genders to create sustainable solutions.

Moreover, the GAD approach recognizes the impact of male dominance and entrenched gender stereotypes on women's participation in development projects. By addressing these issues, the construction industry in Addis Ababa can create a more inclusive environment that empowers female workers and enhances their contributions to economic growth.

#### **d) Social Constructionism:**

According to social constructionism, social interactions and processes shape reality. Social expectations and cultural standards that specify what roles are suitable for men and women have an impact on Addis Ababa's building sector. These conventions are frequently challenged by women entering the construction business, which can result in both acceptance and resistance within the sector. Gaining knowledge about how these social constructions influence experiences might help one better understand the obstacles women faces and the methods they use to get over them.

### **2.6. Conceptual Framework:**

#### **1. Contextual Factors:**

##### **1.1. Cultural Norms and Gender Roles:**

- **Description:** Societal expectations and traditional gender roles significantly impact women's participation in the construction industry.
- **Impact:** These norms often dictate the perceived appropriateness of women in technical and leadership roles, influencing both individual career choices and organizational hiring practices.

### 1.2. **Economic Environment:**

- **Description:** The economic landscape of Addis Ababa, characterized by rapid urbanization and infrastructure development, creates a demand for skilled labor.
- **Impact:** Economic growth can lead to increased job opportunities for women but may also perpetuate existing inequalities if not addressed with gender-sensitive policies.

## 2. **Challenges Faced by Female Workers:**

### 2.1. **Gender Stereotypes:**

- **Description:** Stereotypes regarding women's capabilities in technical fields can lead to discrimination in hiring and promotion.
- **Impact:** These stereotypes contribute to a lack of confidence among female workers and reinforce male-dominated workplace cultures.

### 2.2. **Workplace Environment:**

- **Description:** The construction site is often perceived as a male-centric space, leading to challenges such as harassment and lack of support.
- **Impact:** A hostile work environment can result in high turnover rates and deter women from pursuing long-term careers in construction.

### 2.3. **Access to Education and Training:**

- **Description:** Limited access to technical education and vocational training programs hinders women's skill development.
- **Impact:** The skills gap restricts women's entry into higher-level positions and perpetuates their marginalization in the industry.

### 2.4. **Networking and Professional Development:**

- **Description:** The absence of robust networks and mentorship opportunities for women in construction limits their professional growth.

- **Impact:** Without access to mentorship and networking, women may struggle to navigate career advancement and overcome industry-specific challenges.

### 3. **Opportunities for Female Workers:**

#### 3.1. **Government Initiatives and Policies:**

- **Description:** Government policies aimed at promoting gender equality in the workforce can create a more supportive environment for women in construction.
- **Impact:** Effective implementation of these policies can result in increased hiring, retention, and advancement of female professionals.

#### 3.2. **Industry Awareness and Advocacy:**

- **Description:** Growing recognition of the benefits of diversity in the workplace encourages companies to adopt inclusive practices.
- **Impact:** Increased advocacy for women's rights in the workplace can lead to structural changes within organizations, fostering a more equitable environment.

#### 3.3. **Support Networks and Mentorship Programs:**

- **Description:** The establishment of networks and mentorship programs specifically for women in construction can provide essential support and resources.
- **Impact:** These initiatives can enhance women's confidence, skill development, and career progression, promoting a more diverse workforce.

#### 3.4. **Economic Demand for Skilled Labor:**

- **Description:** The expanding construction sector creates a demand for skilled workers, presenting opportunities for women to enter various roles.
- **Impact:** As the industry grows, there is potential for increased female representation in both technical and leadership positions.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### **3.1. Introduction:**

Fellows and Liu (1997) define research methodology as the set of logical thought processes and procedures applied to a scientific investigation. It describes the procedures that must be followed in order to guarantee precise research data gathering and analysis. The research technique for the study is presented in this chapter. In-depth discussions of the research design, selection criteria, study population, geographic location, and durability, sampling techniques, data gathering methods, data sources, and data analysis methodology are covered.

The aim of this study is to assess the challenges and opportunities faced by female professional workers in the building construction industry within Addis Ababa. This will be accomplished by using a thorough data collection process that combines qualitative and quantitative techniques to provide a comprehensive picture of the problems at hand.

#### **3.2. Description of the study area:**

Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, is ideally located in the center of the nation, at latitude 9°2'N and longitude 38°45'E. The highest point, Entoto Hill in the north, is 3,200 meters above sea level, with an average elevation of 2,400 meters. Eleven sub-cities and 116 woredas, the city's smallest administrative divisions, make up the city.

Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, has experienced significant economic growth in recent years, contributing to changes in the employment landscape. The city serves as a hub for various economic activities, including trade, services, and manufacturing, which have created a range of job opportunities. Despite the economic growth, unemployment remains a pressing issue. According to recent reports, the unemployment rate in Addis Ababa fluctuates, with estimates around 17-20% for urban youth. Gender disparities in employment are significant in Addis Ababa. Women face considerable challenges in entering and advancing within the workforce,

particularly in sectors such as construction. According to 2023 data from City Administration of Addis Ababa Design and Construction Bureau in Ethiopia, there are 1,780 licensed building contractors operating from grade one to grade five, with 1,223 of these contractors located in Addis Ababa. Within these construction firms in Addis Ababa, a total of 3,507 professional employees are engaged, with 3,283 being males while 224 being females.

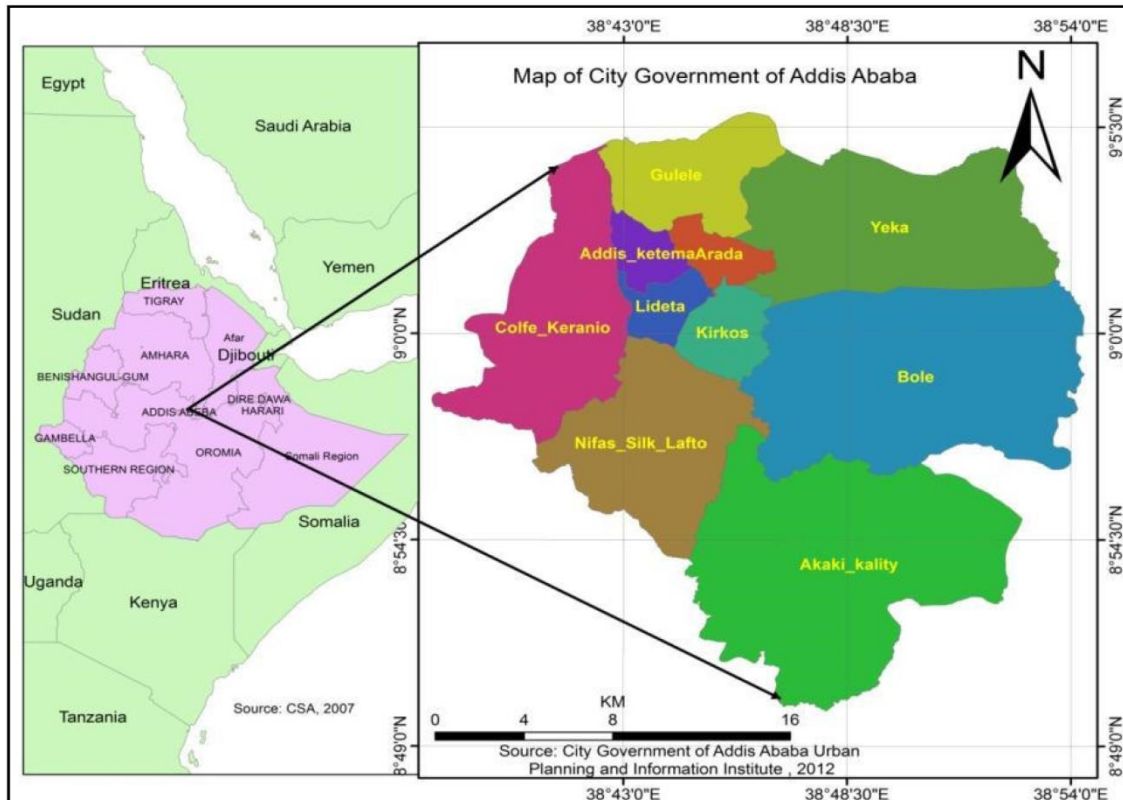


Figure 1: Map of Addis Ababa

### 3.3. Research Design:

According to Creswell (2009), there are three primary research approaches: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. This research design presents a mixed methods strategy aimed at exploring the opportunities and challenges encountered by female professionals in the building construction sector. A sequential explanatory mixed method framework will be utilized, beginning with the collection and analysis of quantitative data, followed by qualitative methods to further elucidate the quantitative findings. Structured surveys will be used to collect quantitative data regarding the challenges and opportunities experienced by women, as well as

their career progression. In addition, semi-structured interviews will yield qualitative insights into the specific obstacles and opportunities that women face within the industry. This combined approach will enable the identification of patterns, correlations, and trends, thereby providing a thorough understanding of the complexities related to gender dynamics in the construction industry in Addis Ababa.

### **3.3.1. Target Population:**

The target population includes female professionals employed in various capacities within the construction industry in Addis Ababa. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Women Engineers
- Women Architects
- Women Project managers
- Women Site supervisors
- Women Quantity surveyors

### **3.3.2. Sampling Method:**

#### **3.3.2.1. Quantitative Component:**

**Sample Size:** A sample size of 170 female professionals are targeted for the survey.

**Industry Representation:** Companies should be actively involved in the construction sector, encompassing various subfields such as general contracting, engineering, architecture, and project management. Here's an overview of the companies chosen:

- **Ovid Construction:** A Grade 1 contractor with a strong presence in Lemi Kura sub-city. Known for their expertise in large-scale projects. 42 employees have been taken from 2 different sites.
- **Sunshine Construction:** Another Grade 1 contractor, based in Bole sub-city. Renowned for their quality and timely delivery. 50 employees have been taken from 4 different sites.
- **Eagle Hills:** A Grade 1 contractor operating in Kirkos sub-city. Often involved in high-profile, prestigious projects. 12 employees have been taken.

- **Abay Alemnew:** A Grade 2 building contractor located in Nifas Silk sub-city. They bring a focus on smaller-scale projects and local expertise. 18 employees have been taken from 2 different sites.
- **Defence Construction Enterprise (DCA):** A Grade 1 contractor with a strong reputation for large-scale infrastructure projects. 48 employees have been taken from 2 different sites.

**Sampling Technique:** Stratified random sampling employs the selection of a random sample from within subgroups of the population to ensure representation across different professional roles and levels of experience. The strata are defined based on job titles, years of experience, and educational background.

#### 3.3.2.2. **Qualitative Component:**

- **Sample Size:** In-depth interviews are conducted with seven (7) professional females with different experience they have. The distribution of the population and sample is based on the kind of organizations the respondents belong to.
  - ✓ 2 Employees less than 5 years' experience
  - ✓ 2 Employees between 6-10 years' experience
  - ✓ 2 Employees between 11-20 years' experience
  - ✓ 1 Employee More than 20 years' experience

**Sampling Technique:** Purposive sampling is used to select participants who can provide rich, relevant insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by women in the industry.

Respondents are categorized by their roles and expertise levels, specifically targeting organizations and individuals that operate within Grade 1 to Grade 5 levels of the construction sector.

- **Size of Organization:** A mix of small, medium, and large enterprises to capture a range of experiences and practices.

### 3.4. Data Collection Methods:

#### 3.4.1. Quantitative Data Collection:

- **Survey Instrument:** A structured questionnaire is developed, containing both closed and open-ended questions.

Key areas of focus include:

- Demographic information (age, education, job title, years of experience)
- Perceptions of gender stereotypes in the workplace
- Experiences of harassment or discrimination
- Access to training and professional development opportunities
- Awareness of government policies and support initiatives
- Career advancement experiences
- **Administration:** The survey will be administered in-person to ensure reliability and accessibility. And also it will be conducted at construction sites, Organizations, industry events, and professional gatherings.

#### 3.4.2. Qualitative Data Collection:

- **Interview Protocol:** Semi-structured interviews are conducted to gather in-depth insights into participants' experiences. The interviews cover:
  - Personal narratives regarding challenges faced in the workplace
  - Perceptions of company culture and support
  - Experiences with mentorship and networking
  - Suggestions for improving gender equality in the industry
- **Interview Process:** Interviews are conducted in a comfortable and private setting, face-to-face. Each interview is recorded (with participant consent) and transcribed for analysis.

### 3.5. Data Analysis:

#### 3.5.1. Quantitative Analysis:

- **Statistical Analysis:** Descriptive statistics are used to summarize the survey data, including frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is employed to assess relationships between variables. Additionally, inferential statistics is utilized to draw conclusions and make inferences about the larger population based on the sample data.

#### 3.5.2. Qualitative Analysis:

- **Thematic Analysis:** Thematic analysis is applied to the interview transcripts to identify common themes and patterns related to the challenges and opportunities faced by female professionals. This process involves:
  - Coding the data to categorize responses
  - Interpreting the findings in relation to the research questions

### 3.6. Reliability and Validity of data:

Reliability refers to how consistently an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. According to Engel & Schutt (2012), reliability means that a measurement procedure produces consistent scores when the phenomenon being measured remains unchanged and is less affected by random error or chance variation compared to being unreliable. In other words, reliability refers to the stability, dependability, and predictability of a measuring instrument to ensure that it consistently measures what it is intended to measure. In this study, trial studies were conducted in the research area to assess the reliability of the topic (Engel & Schutt, 2012). Additionally, to ensure the face validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was reviewed in the research area. Pretesting is an activity that aids in identifying any weaknesses in the design, such as errors or restrictions, and enables the researcher to make any necessary modifications before beginning the survey. To assess the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study will be conducted on 15 respondents.

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach Alpha will be calculated using SPSS, and the score will range between 0.70 to 1. The alpha value will range from a maximum of 1.0 for a perfect score to a minimum of zero. A good measure of the alpha should be 0.70 or higher (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008) According to (Thanasegaran, (2009), exhibiting a coefficient of alpha between 0.80 and 0.96 will be considered to have very good reliability, between 0.70 and 0.80 will be considered to have good reliability, and an alpha value between 0.60 and 0.70 will indicate fair reliability. When the coefficient of alpha is below 0.60, the scale will have poor reliability. The Cronbach alpha calculation result for this study items is presented in the table below.

<b>Reliability test</b>	
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>
Work Culture	0.748
Mentorship	0.841
Equal Pay	0.711
Work life balance	0.721
Representation in leadership	0.710
Gender discrimination	0.863
Job satisfaction	0.731

### 3.7. Ethical Considerations:

In this study, ethical considerations were of utmost importance, with the researcher providing a clear and concise explanation to all research participants about the purpose, objectives, procedures, timeframe, risks, and benefits of the study.

- **Informed Consent:** Prior to participation, all respondents will be provided with information about the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights as participants. Written informed consent will be obtained.
- **Confidentiality:** Participants' identities will be kept confidential, and data will be anonymized in the reporting of findings.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Participation in the study will be entirely voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time without consequences

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 1.1. Introduction:

This section presents an analysis of the challenges and opportunities faced by female professional workers in the building construction industry in Addis Ababa. The findings are based on qualitative interviews, surveys, and field observations conducted among female professionals in various roles within the industry.

The company operates in the building construction industry, which demands a high level of technical expertise and adherence to safety standards. As such, the work environment includes both office and field settings, where professionals interact closely with project teams, clients, and stakeholders. Regular training and development programs are implemented to ensure that employees stay updated with industry trends and practices. Safety is a paramount concern, and the company emphasizes compliance with health and safety regulations. Worksites are equipped with necessary safety gear, and regular safety briefings are conducted to minimize risks.

#### **Demographic characteristics of the respondents:**

These demographic characteristics provide a comprehensive overview of the company's workforce, highlighting its diverse and dynamic nature.

Variable	Response	Frequency	Percent
Age group	20-25	20	11.8
	26-30	58	34.1
	31-40	48	28.2
	41-50	28	16.5
	50- 60 years	16	9.4
<b>Average</b>		<b>34.89</b>	
Education level	BSc	95	55.9
	Masters	37	21.8
	Doctorate	4	2.4

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	Other	34	20
<b>Total</b>		170	
Position	Site Engineer	47	27.6
	Office Engineer	56	32.9
	Quantity Surveyor	32	18.8
	Safety Engineer	28	16.5
	Project Manager	7	4.1
<b>Total</b>		170	
Years of experience in building construction industry	Less than 5 years	61	35.9
	6-10 years	39	22.9
	11-20 years	59	34.7
	More than 20 years	11	6.5
<b>Average</b>		<b>9.41</b>	
Marital Status	Single	82	48.2
	Married	77	45.3
	Divorced	6	3.5
	Widowed	5	2.9
<b>Total</b>		170	
Do you have children	Yes	69	40.6
	No	101	59.4
<b>Total</b>		170	

*Table 1: Demographic Information of the Participants*

- **Age Distribution:**

The majority of respondents fall within the age range of 26-30 years (34.1%), followed by those aged 31-40 (28.2%). This indicates a relatively young workforce, with 46% under the age of 30.

- **Educational Background:**

A significant portion of respondents holds Bachelor degree (55.9%), while 21.8% have a master's degree. This suggests a well-educated workforce in the company.

- **Job Positions:**

The most common positions are Office Engineer (32.9%) and Site Engineer (27.6%), reflecting a balance between fieldwork and office responsibilities.

- **Experience Levels:**

A notable 35.9% of respondents have less than 5 years of experience, while 34.7% have between 11 to 20 years. This indicates a mix of both novice and experienced professionals in the company.

- **Marital Status:**

Almost half of the respondents are single (48.2%), with a substantial percentage being married (45.3%).

- **Parental Status:**

A slight majority (59.4%) of respondents do not have children, which may influence their availability and flexibility in the workplace.

## 1.2. Challenges female professional workers face in the construction sector:

### I. Gender equality and under representation related:

The data presented in the tables highlights several critical challenges faced by female professionals in the construction sector, emphasizing issues of representation, opportunity, and participation.

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Do you think women are underrepresented in construction sector?	Yes	127	74.7
	No	43	25.3
Do you think there are equal opportunities for women in the building construction industry?	Yes	37	21.8
	No	133	78.2
Do you think there are equal opportunities for women in the building construction industry?	Yes	37	21.8
	No	133	78.2
Do you think women can easily participate in all types of construction sector?	Yes	38	22.4
	No	132	77.6

*Table 2: Gender Equality and Representation Related Challenges*

- **Underrepresentation in the construction sector:**

A significant majority of respondents (74.7%) believe that women are underrepresented in the construction industry. This perception underscores a systemic issue where female professionals are not only fewer in number but also face barriers that prevent them from entering or advancing in this field. The high percentage indicates a consensus on the visibility and acknowledgment of this challenge, suggesting that efforts to improve gender balance in the industry are urgently needed.

- **Perception of equal opportunities:**

The data reveals a stark contrast in opinions regarding equal opportunities for women in construction. A substantial 78.2% of respondents feel that equal opportunities do not exist for women in the building construction industry. This sentiment reflects a broader concern about workplace equality and suggests that systemic barriers—such as hiring practices, promotion policies, and workplace culture—may disproportionately hinder women's career advancement. The minority (21.8%) who believe that equal opportunities are present may represent a more optimistic view, but their numbers indicate that this perspective is not widely shared.

- **Participation in all types of construction roles:**

Regarding women's ability to participate in all types of construction roles, a significant majority (77.6%) of respondents believe that women cannot easily participate across the sector. This perception highlights several challenges:

- i. **Cultural and Societal Norms:** The construction industry is often viewed as a male-dominated field, leading to stereotypes that women may not be as capable or suited for certain roles. This cultural bias can discourage women from pursuing careers in construction or limit their opportunities within the industry.
- ii. **Workplace Environment:** The construction site environment can be unwelcoming or even hostile for women, further restricting their participation. Factors such as inadequate

facilities (e.g., restrooms), lack of support networks, and potential harassment contribute to a workplace that may feel unsafe or uncomfortable for female workers.

- iii. **Career Advancement:** Women may find it challenging to advance in their careers due to biases in promotion practices, mentorship availability, and networking opportunities. The perception that they cannot easily participate in all roles suggests that they may be steered into specific, often less prestigious, positions.

Based on the interviews conducted with women professionals in the building construction sector in Addis Ababa, a thematic analysis reveals that there is underrepresentation of women in the companies but there has been a gradual increase in the percentage of women in the workforce indicating a positive trend toward gender diversity. Women are increasingly moving into roles traditionally held by men, such as project management and engineering, although the representation in field positions remains low.

## **II. Support and Development related challenges:**

The data presented offers a comprehensive look at the challenges female professionals face within the construction industry, particularly regarding support, perceptions of capability, organizational policies, and opportunities for skill development.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
How would you rate the level of support for female professionals seeking career guidance and mentorship in your workplace?	Very poor	22	12.9
	Poor	68	40
	Neutral	49	28.8
	Good	21	12.4
	Very good	10	5.9
Have you ever felt underestimated or faced challenges due to stereotypes about physical capabilities in the construction industry?	Yes	124	72.9
	No	46	27.1
Are there specific policies or practices in place in your organization to promote gender equality?	Yes	40	23.5
	No	130	76.5
Do the company promote the development of women in the	Yes	30	17.6

construction industry to enable them acquire marketable skills?	No	140	82.4
Do you think that on-job trainings and skill learning opportunities are equally available for men and women workers?	Yes	21	12.4
	No	149	87.6

*Table 3: Support and Development Related Challenges*

**i. Support for Career Guidance and Mentorship:**

The ratings of support for female professionals seeking career guidance and mentorship reveal concerning trends:

- **Very Poor:** 12.9%
- **Poor:** 40%
- **Neutral:** 28.8%
- **Good:** 12.4%
- **Very Good:** 5.9%

A combined total of 52.9% of respondents rated the support as either poor or very poor, indicating a significant lack of mentorship and guidance available to women in the construction sector. This absence of support can severely limit career progression, as mentorship is crucial for professional development, networking, and navigating challenges in a male-dominated field. The neutral responses (28.8%) may reflect ambivalence or a lack of awareness about available resources, suggesting that improvement in mentorship visibility and accessibility is needed.

**ii. Stereotyping and Underestimation:**

The data shows that a substantial 72.9% of female professionals have felt underestimated or faced challenges due to stereotypes about their physical capabilities. This indicates a prevalent issue of gender bias in the industry, where women may be viewed as less competent due to preconceived notions about their physical strength and abilities. Such stereotypes can lead to

diminished confidence among female workers and may discourage them from pursuing certain roles or responsibilities within the industry.

### **iii. Organizational Policies for Gender Equality:**

The findings regarding organizational policies to promote gender equality are stark:

- **Yes:** 23.5%
- **No:** 76.5%

Only 23.5% of respondents indicated that their organizations have specific policies or practices in place to promote gender equality. This lack of formalized support reflects systemic barriers within the industry, where gender equality is not prioritized. Without clear policies, the likelihood of fostering an inclusive workplace diminishes, further entrenching the challenges faced by female professionals.

According to my interview and observation most of the companies didn't have company policies regarding gender mainstreaming but Recruitment policy: Encourage present minority and female employees. And also Women Empowerment policy: Practical job opportunities and equal pay, contributing to gender inclusivity in construction and management roles.

### **iv. Development of Women and Skill Acquisition:**

When asked whether companies promote the development of women to acquire marketable skills, the data reveals:

- **Yes:** 17.6%
- **No:** 82.4%

A staggering 82.4% of respondents indicated that their organizations do not actively promote skill development for women. This lack of investment in women's professional growth not only hinders their career advancement but also perpetuates gender disparities in the construction workforce. The absence of targeted training and development initiatives leaves women at a

disadvantage compared to their male counterparts, who may have greater access to skill-building opportunities.

**v. Availability of On-the-Job Training:**

Regarding perceptions of equality in on-the-job training and skill learning opportunities:

- **Yes:** 12.4%
- **No:** 87.6%

An overwhelming 87.6% of respondents believe that on-the-job training opportunities are not equally available to men and women. This significant discrepancy highlights a critical barrier to women's participation and advancement within the construction industry. If female workers are systematically excluded from training opportunities, their capacity to perform and excel in their roles will be severely limited.

**III. Harassment and Abuse related challenges:**

The data provides significant insights into the prevalence and impact of harassment and abuse faced by female professionals in the construction industry. It highlights the various forms of harassment, the demographics of perpetrators, reporting behaviors, and the responses of witnesses.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Verbal harassment (Insulting, Whistling, Making Kissing sounds or Disdain)	Yes	115	67.6
	No	55	32.4
Non-Verbal harassment (Elevator eye, blocking path, Winking or Making Sexual gesture)	Yes	63	37.1
	No	107	62.9
Physical harassment (Massaging, Kissing, Touching or Standing Close)	Yes	56	32.9
	No	114	67.1
Who was the perpetrator(s) of the harassment or abuse?	Colleague(s)	22	39.29
	Supervisor(s)	13	23.21

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	Client(s)	19	33.93
	Other	2	3.57
Did you report the incident(s) to anyone?	Yes	11	19.64
	No	45	80.36
Have you ever witnessed harassment or abuse happening to a female colleague in the building construction industry?	Yes	59	34.7
	No	111	65.3
If yes, did you take any action to support your colleague?	Yes	6	10.17
	No	53	89.83

*Table 4: Harassment and Abuse Related Challenges*

- Prevalence of Harassment Types:

- 1) Verbal Harassment

- **Yes:** 67.6%

- **No:** 32.4%

A considerable majority (67.6%) of respondents reported experiencing verbal harassment, which includes behaviors such as insulting, whistling, and making kissing sounds. This high percentage indicates that verbal harassment is a pervasive issue, contributing to a toxic work environment that can undermine women's confidence and hinder their professional development.

- 2) Non-Verbal Harassment

- **Yes:** 37.1%

- **No:** 62.9%

Non-verbal harassment, which encompasses behaviors like lewd gestures, blocking paths, and suggestive winking, was reported by 37.1% of respondents. While this figure is lower than verbal harassment, it still indicates a significant occurrence of such behaviors, suggesting that

women often face a range of harassment types that contribute to an uncomfortable workplace atmosphere.

3) Physical Harassment

- **Yes:** 32.9%
- **No:** 67.1%

The data shows that 32.9% of respondents experienced physical harassment, which includes unwanted touching, massaging, or invading personal space. This form of harassment poses a serious risk to women's safety and well-being, further complicating their ability to work effectively in an already challenging environment.

- **Perpetrators of Harassment:**

The data on the perpetrators of harassment reveals the following distribution:

- **Colleague(s):** 39.29%
- **Supervisor(s):** 23.21%
- **Client(s):** 33.93%
- **Other:** 3.57%

The majority of harassment is perpetrated by colleagues (39.29%), followed closely by clients (33.93%). This suggests that a significant portion of harassment occurs within peer interactions. Additionally, the involvement of supervisors (23.21%) raises concerns about power dynamics in the workplace, as it creates a challenging environment for victims who may feel unable to report misconduct due to fear of retaliation or further victimization.

i. Reporting Incidents

- **Yes:** 19.64%
- **No:** 80.36%

A striking 80.36% of respondents did not report incidents of harassment, highlighting a culture of silence and fear. This lack of reporting can be attributed to several factors, including a belief that reporting would be ineffective, fear of retaliation, or a lack of trust in the organization's ability to handle the situation appropriately. The low rate of reporting is concerning, as it perpetuates the cycle of harassment and allows such behavior to continue unchecked.

ii. Witnessing Harassment

- **Yes:** 34.7%
- **No:** 65.3%

Approximately 34.7% of respondents have witnessed harassment or abuse directed at female colleagues. This indicates that harassment is not only a personal issue but also a widespread concern within the workplace culture.

iii. Actions Taken by Witnesses

- **Yes:** 10.17%
- **No:** 89.83%

Of those who witnessed harassment, only 10.17% took action to support their colleague. This low percentage suggests a lack of awareness or preparedness among bystanders to intervene or provide support, possibly stemming from fear of retaliation or uncertainty about how to act.

Based on the interviews conducted with women professionals in the building construction sector in Addis Ababa, a thematic analysis reveals:

- Gender discrimination and sexual harassment were cited as significant obstacles. Interviewees reported experiences of hostility and verbal harassment, which create a hostile work environment.
- Many women felt they were assigned less challenging tasks compared to their male counterparts, despite having similar qualifications.

#### IV. Work Life Balance:

The building construction industry has traditionally been male dominated, posing unique challenges for professional women. This analysis draws on survey data to evaluate workplace culture, focusing on inclusivity, and comfort in expressing ideas, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. The data reveals significant insights into the work culture experienced by women in this sector.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev.
The workplace culture promotes inclusivity and diversity.	Strongly Disagree	2		6	59	103	4.54	0.681
	Neutral	1.2		3.5	34.7	60.6		
I feel comfortable expressing my opinions and ideas in the workplace.	Strongly Disagree	5	3	13	75	74	4.24	0.892
	Disagree	2.9	1.8	7.6	44.1	43.5		
The work environment supports a healthy work-life balance.	Strongly Disagree	4	5	15	69	77	4.24	0.906
	Disagree	2.4	2.9	8.8	40.6	45.3		
Workplace policies and practices contribute to job satisfaction.	Strongly Disagree	2	3	12	65	88	4.38	0.792
	Disagree	1.2	1.8	7.1	38.2	51.8		

*Table 5: Work Life Balance*

#### Key Findings

##### 1. Inclusivity of women and believes gender Diversity in the industry

- **Mean:** 4.54
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.681
- **Summary:** A considerable majority (59% agree, 103 strongly agree) feel that the workplace culture promotes inclusivity and diversity. Only a small percentage (2% strongly disagree) challenges this notion. The low standard deviation

indicates a consensus among respondents that the workplace is generally perceived as inclusive.

## 2. Comfort in Expressing Opinions

- **Mean:** 4.24
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.892
- **Summary:** While most respondents (75% agree, 74% strongly agree) feel comfortable expressing their opinions, there is still a notable minority (5% strongly disagree) who do not. The higher standard deviation suggests more variability in responses, indicating that while many women feel comfortable, a significant number still face barriers in voicing their ideas.

## 3. Support for Work-Life Balance

- **Mean:** 4.24
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.906
- **Summary:** Similar to the previous point, the work environment is perceived to support a healthy work-life balance, with 69% agreeing and 77% strongly agreeing. However, a small percentage (4% strongly disagree) highlights that some women may struggle with achieving work-life balance, reinforcing the variability in experiences expressed in the standard deviation.

## 4. Workplace Policies and Job Satisfaction

- **Mean:** 4.38
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.792
- **Summary:** The majority of respondents (65% agree, 88% strongly agree) believe that workplace policies and practices contribute positively to job satisfaction. Only a small fraction (2% strongly disagree) indicates dissatisfaction with these policies. The standard deviation remains low, suggesting a strong agreement among women about the impact of workplace policies on their job satisfaction.

## Discussion

### Challenges Identified

Despite the overall positive perceptions of workplace culture regarding inclusivity and support, several challenges remain:

- **Expression of Ideas:** The variability in comfort levels when expressing opinions suggests a need for fostering an environment where all voices are heard. Some women may still feel marginalized or hesitant, indicating potential underlying issues such as gender bias or lack of support from peers and management.
- **Work-Life Balance:** The mixed responses regarding work-life balance indicate that while many women experience support, others do not. This disparity may stem from the demanding nature of construction work, which can often lead to long hours and inflexible schedules, impacting women's ability to manage personal responsibilities.
- **Job Satisfaction:** The positive feedback on workplace policies is encouraging; however, the existence of a minority expressing dissatisfaction calls for a closer examination of these policies. It is essential to ensure that they are effectively implemented and accessible to all employees.

Based on the interviews conducted with women professionals in the building construction sector in Addis Ababa, a thematic analysis reveals work-life balance and supportive work environment:

- Many women expressed appreciation for companies that prioritize work-life balance, citing it as a key factor in their job satisfaction.
- Supportive colleagues and a welcoming corporate culture contribute significantly to their sense of belonging.
- Long working hours and inflexible schedules were noted as major family-related challenges, often leading to stress and lower productivity.
- Childcare was highlighted as a critical but often overlooked issue, affecting many women's career trajectories.

## V. Equal Pay:

Equal pay remains a critical issue in the workplace, particularly for professional women in industries such as construction. This analysis examines survey data regarding perceptions of gender-based pay disparity, equal pay practices, and overall satisfaction with compensation. The results provide insights into the challenges women face concerning equal pay and identify areas for improvement.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev.
I feel that there is gender-based pay disparity in the workplace.	Disagree		6	21	81	62	4.17	0.777
	Neutral		3.5	12.4	47.6	36.5		
Equal pay and benefits are provided regardless of gender.	Disagree		3	14	54	99	4.46	0.723
	Neutral		1.8	8.2	31.8	58.2		
Fair compensation contributes to job satisfaction.	Strongly Disagree	1	6	21	48	94	4.34	0.871
	Disagree	0.6	3.5	12.4	28.2	55.3		
I am satisfied with the level of pay and benefits compared to male counterparts.	Strongly Disagree	1	8	13	62	86	4.32	0.853
	Disagree	0.6	4.7	7.6	36.5	50.6		

*Table 6: Equal Pay*

### Key Findings

#### 1. Perception of Gender-Based Pay Disparity

- **Mean:** 4.17
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.777
- **Summary:** A significant portion of respondents (81% agree, 62% strongly agree) feel that there is a gender-based pay disparity in the workplace. The relatively high mean indicates a general concern about pay equity, although the standard deviation suggests some variability in perceptions, meaning not all women may feel equally affected.

#### 2. Provision of Equal Pay and Benefits

- **Mean:** 4.46
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.723
- **Summary:** The majority of respondents (54% agree, 99% strongly agree) believe that equal pay and benefits are provided regardless of gender. This positive sentiment indicates a favorable view of workplace policies regarding compensation. The lower standard deviation reflects a more uniform agreement on this issue, suggesting that most women feel that their workplace practices are equitable.

### 3. Fair Compensation and Job Satisfaction

- **Mean:** 4.34
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.871
- **Summary:** A strong consensus exists that fair compensation contributes to job satisfaction, with 48% agreeing and 94% strongly agreeing. The high mean indicates that women generally recognize the importance of equal pay in enhancing job satisfaction. However, the higher standard deviation signifies a broader range of opinions, suggesting that a minority may feel differently.

### 4. Satisfaction with Pay Compared to Male Counterparts

- **Mean:** 4.32
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.853
- **Summary:** Most respondents (62% agree, 86% strongly agree) express satisfaction with their pay and benefits compared to their male counterparts. This reflects a positive sentiment regarding personal compensation. However, the variability indicated by the standard deviation suggests that some women still feel dissatisfied or perceive inequities.

## Discussion

### Challenges Identified

Despite the overall positive perceptions regarding equal pay, several challenges remain:

- **Perceptions of Pay Disparity:** A notable percentage of women believe there is a gender-based pay disparity, indicating ongoing concerns about equality in compensation. This perception can lead to decreased morale and trust in organizational practices.
- **Variability in Satisfaction:** The variability in satisfaction with pay compared to male counterparts suggests that while many women feel content with their compensation, others may experience dissatisfaction, possibly due to differences in roles, experience, or negotiation outcomes.

### VI. Work Culture:

Professional women in the building construction industry often face unique challenges related to work culture, including stress, work-life balance, and workload management. This analysis utilizes survey data to explore these challenges, focusing on feelings of stress, personal responsibilities, overtime work, and the tendency to bring work home. The findings provide insights into the specific hurdles women encounter in this demanding field.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev.
I often feel stressed due to work.	Strongly Disagree	1	5	25	65	74	4.21	0.844
	Disagree	0.6	2.9	14.7	38.2	43.5		
I often feel overwhelmed with my personal responsibilities.	Strongly Disagree	4	8	18	82	58	4.07	0.92
	Disagree	2.4	4.7	10.6	48.2	34.1		
I work overtime frequently.	Strongly Disagree	2	16	27	72	53	3.93	0.977
	Disagree	1.2	9.4	15.9	42.4	31.2		
I bring work home regularly.	Strongly Disagree	4	11	15	76	64	4.09	0.966
	Disagree	2.4	6.5	8.8	44.7	37.6		

Table 7: Work Culture

## Key Findings

### 1. Stress Due to Work

- **Mean:** 4.21
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.844
- **Summary:** A significant majority of respondents (65% agree, 74% strongly agree) report feeling stressed due to work. The high mean indicates a prevalent issue of work-related stress among women in this sector. The standard deviation suggests that while many experience stress, there is some variability in the intensity of these feelings across individuals.

### 2. Overwhelmed by Personal Responsibilities

- **Mean:** 4.07
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.92
- **Summary:** Many women (82% agree, 58% strongly agree) express feeling overwhelmed by personal responsibilities. This sentiment highlights the struggle to balance work demands with personal life, particularly for women who may carry additional caregiving obligations. The standard deviation indicates a range of experiences, suggesting that while the majority feel overwhelmed, some may manage their responsibilities more effectively.

### 3. Frequency of Overtime Work

- **Mean:** 3.93
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.977
- **Summary:** The survey reveals that many women (72% agree, 53% strongly agree) work overtime frequently. The mean indicates that overtime is a common expectation, and the relatively high standard deviation points to variability in how often women feel compelled to work beyond regular hours. This can exacerbate stress and contribute to feelings of being overwhelmed.

#### 4. Bringing Work Home

- **Mean:** 4.09
- **Standard Deviation:** 0.966
- **Summary:** A significant number of respondents (76% agree, 64% strongly agree) report bringing work home regularly. This practice indicates a blurring of boundaries between professional and personal life, creating additional stress. The standard deviation suggests that while many women struggle with this issue, there are differing levels of impact among individuals.

### Discussion

#### Challenges Identified

The survey results reveal several critical challenges faced by professional women in the building construction industry:

- **Prevalent Work-Related Stress:** The high levels of reported stress indicate that the workplace environment may be demanding and potentially unsupportive, leading to adverse health outcomes and decreased job satisfaction.
- **Balancing Personal and Work Responsibilities:** Many women feel overwhelmed by their personal responsibilities, suggesting that societal expectations regarding caregiving roles may place additional burdens on them, impacting their work performance and mental health.
- **Expectations of Overtime:** The culture of working overtime can create an unsustainable work environment, making it difficult for women to maintain a healthy work-life balance and leading to increased stress.
- **Work-Life Boundary Issues:** Bringing work home regularly exacerbates feelings of stress and can contribute to burnout, particularly for women who may already be managing multiple responsibilities.

Based on the interviews conducted with women professionals in the building construction sector in Addis Ababa, a thematic analysis reveals while the base pay for male and female professional workers is equal, men may have an advantage in career progression due to the potential for higher overtime earnings. This can lead to faster promotions and salary increases for men compared to women who may not work overtime as frequently.

### 1.3. Opportunities available to female workers in the construction sector:

The construction industry has traditionally been male-dominated, yet there is a growing recognition of the importance of female participation. This analysis examines the opportunities for professional development and training available to female workers in this sector, based on survey data regarding their involvement in development initiatives and perceptions of these opportunities.

#### I. Professional Development and Training Opportunities:

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent (%)
Have you participated in professional development initiatives (seminars, workshops, certifications) to enhance your skills and knowledge in the construction industry?	Yes	49	28.8
	No	121	71.2
How beneficial do you find professional development opportunities for your career growth?	Somewhat beneficial	2	4.08
	Beneficial	23	46.94
	Very beneficial	24	48.98
Have you engaged in cross-training programs to develop versatile skill sets in the construction industry?	Yes	44	25.9
	No	126	74.1
How important do you think cross-training programs are for expanding your career opportunities?	Important	16	36.36
	Very important	28	63.64

*Table 8: Professional Development and Training Related Opportunities*

#### Participation in Professional Development Initiatives

Among the respondents, only **28.8%** (49 individuals) reported participating in professional development initiatives such as seminars, workshops, and certifications. In contrast, **71.2%** (121 individuals) indicated they had not engaged in such activities. This disparity highlights a critical gap in professional development opportunities for women in the construction industry.

## Implications

The low participation rate suggests several potential barriers for female workers:

- **Access to Information:** Women may lack awareness of available programs or resources.
- **Workplace Culture:** A predominantly male environment might discourage women from seeking out or being encouraged to participate in such initiatives.
- **Time Constraints:** Balancing work and personal responsibilities may limit the time available for professional development.

Encouraging greater participation in professional development initiatives is essential for enhancing the skills and knowledge of female workers, thereby promoting their career advancement.

## Perceived Benefits of Professional Development

When asked about the perceived benefits of professional development opportunities for career growth:

- **4.08%** (2 individuals) found it "somewhat beneficial."
- **46.94%** (23 individuals) deemed it "beneficial."
- **48.98%** (24 individuals) considered it "very beneficial."

The data indicates that nearly **95%** of respondents recognized some level of benefit from professional development initiatives, with a substantial majority (95.92%) believing these opportunities contribute positively to their career growth. This perception underscores the importance of enhancing and promoting professional development programs tailored specifically for women in construction.

## Engagement in Cross-Training Programs

Participation in cross-training programs, which offer diverse skill sets, was reported at **25.9%** (44 individuals) for those who have engaged, while **74.1%** (126 individuals) have not. This low

engagement rate further reflects the missed opportunities for women to enhance their versatility within the construction sector.

### Importance of Cross-Training

Regarding the importance of cross-training for expanding career opportunities:

- **36.36%** (16 individuals) found it "important."
- **63.64%** (28 individuals) deemed it "very important."

A significant majority of respondents recognize the critical role that cross-training plays in broadening their career prospects. This recognition is crucial, as versatile skill sets are increasingly valued in the construction industry, allowing workers to adapt to various roles and responsibilities.

### Strategies for Improvement

To improve participation in cross-training:

- **Program Development:** Organizations should create structured cross-training programs that are accessible and appealing to female workers.
- **Flexible Scheduling:** Offering training sessions at various times can accommodate different schedules, making it easier for women to participate.
- **Incentives:** Providing incentives, such as certifications or recognition for completing cross-training programs, could motivate participation.

## II. Networking and Support Opportunities:

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Are you a member of any employee resource groups or affinity groups within your organization?	Yes	43	25.3
	No	127	74.7
How valuable do you find the support and networking opportunities provided by these groups?	Valuable	17	39.53
	Very valuable	26	60.47
Have you been recognized or celebrated for your	Yes	20	11.8

achievements and contributions as a female professional in the construction industry?	No	150	88.2
How important is recognition for you in the workplace?	Somewhat important	1	5.00
	Very important	19	95.00

*Table 9: Networking and Support Related Opportunities*

Networking and support mechanisms are crucial for the professional growth of female workers in the construction sector. This analysis examines the survey data related to participation in employee resource groups (ERGs), the perceived value of these groups, the recognition of achievements, and the importance of workplace recognition.

### **Membership in Employee Resource Groups**

The survey indicates that only **25.3%** (43 individuals) of female workers are members of employee resource groups or affinity groups within their organizations, while a significant **74.7%** (127 individuals) are not. This low membership rate suggests that many women may be missing out on valuable networking and support opportunities that could enhance their career development.

### **Implications**

The limited participation in ERGs raises several concerns:

- **Awareness and Accessibility:** There may be a lack of awareness regarding the existence or benefits of these groups.
- **Organizational Culture:** An environment that does not actively promote or encourage participation in ERGs may hinder women's involvement.
- **Perceived Value:** If women do not see clear benefits or support from these groups, they may be less inclined to join.

To foster an inclusive workplace culture, organizations should actively promote the establishment and benefits of ERGs, ensuring that female employees recognize the value of joining.

### **Value of Support and Networking Opportunities**

When asked about the value of support and networking opportunities provided by ERGs:

- **39.53%** (17 individuals) found them "valuable."
- **60.47%** (26 individuals) considered them "very valuable."

This data indicates a strong appreciation for the networking and support opportunities offered by ERGs among those who participate. The fact that nearly **100%** of respondents who are part of these groups find them beneficial suggests that such initiatives can significantly impact women's professional experiences and growth in the construction industry.

### **Recognition of Achievements**

In terms of recognition for their achievements and contributions, only **11.8%** (20 individuals) reported having been recognized, while a striking **88.2%** (150 individuals) indicated they had not received such acknowledgment. This lack of recognition can negatively impact women's motivation and sense of belonging within the industry.

### **Importance of Recognition**

Regarding the importance of recognition in the workplace:

- **5.00%** (1 individual) described it as "somewhat important."
- **95.00%** (19 individuals) deemed it "very important."

The overwhelming majority emphasizes the critical role recognition plays in fostering motivation and career satisfaction. When women feel their contributions are recognized, it can boost their confidence and encourage further professional development.

### **Strategies for Improvement**

To enhance recognition within the workplace:

- **Establish Recognition Programs:** Organizations should create formal recognition programs that celebrate the achievements of female employees regularly.

- **Highlight Success Stories:** Sharing stories of successful women within the organization can inspire others and foster a culture of recognition.
- **Encourage Peer Recognition:** Implementing peer-to-peer recognition initiatives can create a supportive environment where achievements are acknowledged by colleagues.

### III. Leadership and Visibility Opportunities:

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Do you have opportunities to interact with and learn from senior leaders in the industry?	Yes	28	16.5
	No	142	83.5
Have you had opportunities for increased visibility and exposure within the construction industry (e.g., speaking engagements, panel discussions)?	Yes	34	20
	No	136	80
How important is visibility and exposure for your professional growth?	Not important	1	2.94
	Somewhat important	5	14.71
	Important	15	44.12
	Very important	13	38.24

*Table 10: Leadership and Visibility Opportunities*

Leadership and visibility are critical components for the professional development of female workers in the construction sector. This analysis examines survey data regarding opportunities for interaction with senior leaders, visibility and exposure within the industry, and the perceived importance of these factors for career growth.

#### Interaction with Senior Leaders

The survey results indicate that only **16.5%** (28 individuals) of female workers have opportunities to interact with and learn from senior leaders in the construction industry, while a substantial **83.5%** (142 individuals) do not have such opportunities. This significant disparity highlights a major gap in mentorship and guidance that could be crucial for female professionals seeking to advance their careers.

#### Implications

The limited interaction with senior leaders suggests several challenges:

- **Mentorship Deficiencies:** A lack of mentorship opportunities can hinder professional growth and limit the transfer of knowledge and skills.

- **Networking Barriers:** Without access to senior leaders, women may miss out on valuable networking opportunities that could lead to career advancements.
- **Organizational Structure:** The current organizational culture may not prioritize or facilitate interactions between junior and senior staff, particularly for women.

To address this gap, organizations should consider implementing structured mentorship programs that connect female employees with senior leaders, fostering a culture of support and guidance.

### **Opportunities for Visibility and Exposure**

Regarding opportunities for increased visibility and exposure—such as speaking engagements and panel discussions only **20%** (34 individuals) reported having had such opportunities, while **80%** (136 individuals) indicated they had not. This lack of visibility can significantly impact women's ability to establish themselves as leaders in the industry.

### **Importance of Visibility**

When asked about the importance of visibility and exposure for professional growth:

- **2.94%** (1 individual) deemed it "not important."
- **14.71%** (5 individuals) considered it "somewhat important."
- **44.12%** (15 individuals) identified it as "important."
- **38.24%** (13 individuals) rated it as "very important."

A combined **82.36%** of respondents recognize the importance of visibility for their career advancement, indicating a strong desire for greater representation and recognition within the industry.

According to the interview results, professional female workers identified several opportunities for female workers in the building construction sector. One such opportunity is the growing availability of educational and training programs aimed at up skilling employees. These programs offer female workers the chance to advance their technical knowledge and professional competencies. However, there was consensus that these opportunities are underutilized, with low participation rates often attributed to a lack of encouragement or time constraints due to other responsibilities. Mentorship programs were also discussed. While some companies offer mentorship opportunities, these programs are often informal or not specifically designed to meet

the needs of women. The interviewees emphasized that structured and well-implemented mentorship programs could greatly benefit female professionals by offering them guidance and support as they navigate the complexities of the industry.

The interviewees mentioned various initiatives aimed at promoting gender balance, but they noted that these are often more symbolic than impactful. They suggested that action-oriented programs, such as leadership training tailored for women, could make a substantial difference in achieving real progress toward gender equality in the sector. In addition, on the topic of women in leadership, the interviewees unanimously agreed that increasing the representation of women in leadership roles would have a positive impact on the industry. They recommended targeted leadership development programs and a more active approach to promoting female employees. The benefits of having women in leadership were mentioned noting that women tend to bring a more collaborative and detail-oriented approach to projects, which can improve overall team performance and project outcomes.

One of the interviewees mentioned “Working in construction as a woman is incredibly rewarding, but it also presents unique challenges. I've successfully balanced motherhood with my career in this demanding field, and I'm incredibly proud of the support I'm able to provide for my children. However, I firmly believe that significant strides still need to be made to create an even more inclusive and supportive environment for women in construction”. Addressing the challenging issues through mentorship, flexible policies, and increased visibility can help foster a more inclusive environment for women in construction.

### **Gender-sensitive policies in some organizations**

- **Family Leave Policies:** Flexible family leave options that accommodate both maternity and paternity leave encourage shared parental responsibilities and support work-life balance.
- **Anti-Discrimination Policies:** Strong policies against gender-based discrimination and harassment ensure that employees feel safe and respected in their workplace.
- **Career Development Programs:** Initiatives aimed at mentorship and professional development for women can help bridge the gender gap in career advancement.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### 5.1. Conclusions:

The assessment of female professional workers in the building construction industry in Addis Ababa highlights a multifaceted landscape of both challenges and opportunities.

#### Key Findings

##### **Challenges female professional workers face in the construction sector**

1. **Significant Barriers:** Pervasive gender stereotypes, a hostile workplace, and restricted access to education and training are just a few of the significant obstacles that female professionals face. These obstacles make it difficult for them to enter and advance in the field, which leads to a gender disparity that lowers overall productivity and creativity.
2. **Cultural and Structural Influences:** Women's experiences in construction are significantly shaped by ingrained cultural norms and societal expectations concerning gender roles. These factors frequently deter women from seeking jobs in this industry and feed the underrepresentation cycle.

##### **Opportunities available to female workers in the construction sector:**

3. **Emerging Opportunities:** In spite of these obstacles, women in the construction industry have a lot of exciting prospects. Women's engagement can be increased through government programs that support gender equality, raise industry understanding of the importance of diversity, and create support networks that provide pathways for enhancing women's participation.
4. **Growing Need for Diversity:** Addis Ababa's construction industry is expanding quickly, which raises the need for trained workers and gives women a chance to engage and

succeed in a variety of professional professions. Diverse viewpoints are seen as being essential to fostering efficiency and creativity as the sector develops.

Each of these challenges and opportunities has been explained, and it has been explored how these barriers may make it difficult for women to enter and stay in the construction industry. Given these obstacles, it is believed that removing or reducing the majority of them is a crucial first step in attracting and keeping more women in the construction sector. The construction industry itself has not, until recently, formally acknowledged that the under-representation of women is an important issue or promoted any initiatives or research into this area (Fielden et al. 2000).

## 5.2. Recommendations:

### 1. Policy Development

- **Gender-Inclusive Policies:** Government and industry partners should develop and implement policies that support gender equality in hiring, promoting, and retaining employees in the construction industry. .

### 2. Training and Development

- **Skill Development Programs:** Create targeted training programs aimed at enhancing the technical and managerial skills of female workers. Collaborate with vocational training institutions to provide accessible courses.
- **Mentorship Initiatives:** Create mentorship programs that link seasoned female executives with recent hires to provide support and direction.

### 3. Workplace Culture

- **Promote Inclusive Work Environments:** Encourage construction companies to embrace inclusive workplace cultures that value diversity and actively combat discrimination and harassment.

- **Flexible Work Arrangements:** To meet the demands of female employees, especially those who are responsible for providing care, implement family-friendly policies and flexible working hours.

#### 4. Networking and Support Groups

- **Create Professional Networks:** Provide forums, like women's construction associations, for female professionals in the industry to interact, exchange stories, and offer support to one another.
- **Plan Workshops and Conferences:** To encourage networking and exchange best practices, difficulties, and success stories, host conferences and workshops centered on women in construction.

#### 5. Awareness and Advocacy

- **Awareness Campaigns:** Start initiatives to increase public knowledge of the value of gender diversity for economic growth as well as the contributions made by women in the construction industry.
- **Involve Male Allies:** Motivate male coworkers to actively back efforts for gender equality and take part in conversations about women's roles in the workplace.

#### 6. Research and Data Collection

- **Continuous Research:** Keep an eye on the situation of women professionals in the construction sector and evaluate the success of policies and initiatives that have been put in place.
- **Data Disaggregation:** To gain a better understanding of the particular opportunities and problems experienced by female employees, gather and examine data that has been broken down by gender.

By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for female professional workers in the building construction industry in Addis Ababa, ultimately fostering greater economic and social development.

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### **Policy and proclamation used in the study**

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- Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) (African Centre for Gender, 2014)
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals:(September 2015)
- The gender agenda in Agenda 2063: (2015)
- The African Charter on Human and People’s Rights: (06/1998)
- The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- The national policy on women, formulated in 1993
- The Federal Civil Servants Proclamation No. 1064/2010
- Labour Proclamation NO.1156-2019
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## **Appendix**

### **Questionnaire**

#### **Request for participation in master degree research questionnaire**

“Assessment on Opportunities and Challenges of Female Professional Workers in the Building Construction Industry; Case Study in Addis Ababa.”

**Dear respondent,**

The main purpose of this questionnaire is to assess the opportunities and challenges of female professional workers in the building construction industry, case study in Addis Ababa.

The research is a part of a master degree in Gender studies at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, and the research will result in a master thesis. The research will be submitted to Addis Ababa University, Centre for Gender Studies, College of Development Studies.

Your participation is voluntary and this survey may take approximately 15 minutes of your time. The answers you provide are completely confidential. Please do not write your name. Only the researcher has access to the respondent information. Please provide your honest response to the questions in the survey and do not discuss them with other people. All information and recordings will be destroyed after analysing the data collected.

By answering these questions, you can help in providing valuable information to the researchers and to the industry.

Thank you for your time and cooperation

**Addis Ababa University**  
**College of Development Studies**  
**Centre for Gender Studies**

**Part I: Respondents' background:**

The responses to the following questions are meant only for analysis purposes. Please provide your responses by marking a tick (√) in the relevant boxes.

1. What is your age group?

20-25  26-30  31-40  40-50  50-60

2. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

BSC  Masters  Doctorate Degree  Other

3. Educational background: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Monthly wage/Salary: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Role and position of respondent:

No.	Role of Respondent	Yes
1	Site Engineer	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Office Engineer	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Quantity Surveyor	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Safety Engineer	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Project Manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Others:	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. How many years of experience do you have in the building construction industry?

Less than 5 years

6-10 years

11-20 years

More than 20 years

7. What is your marital status?

Unmarried  Married  Divorced  Widow

8. Do you have children?

Yes  No

If you answered yes to question 8, how many children do you have?

1  2  3  4  5 or more

## Part II: Factors affecting female employees' job satisfaction

### a. Workplace culture and environment

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
-------	----	---	---	---	----

The workplace culture promotes inclusivity and diversity.

I feel comfortable expressing my opinions and ideas in the workplace.

The work environment supports a healthy work-life balance.

Workplace policies and practices contribute to job satisfaction.

### b. Mentorship and career development

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
-------	----	---	---	---	----

Mentorship opportunities are readily available for career development.

I receive adequate support and guidance for professional growth.

Mentorship programs positively impact my job satisfaction.

Career advancement opportunities are based on merit rather than gender.

### c. Equal pay and benefits compared

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
-------	----	---	---	---	----

I feel that there is gender-based pay disparity in the workplace.

Equal pay and benefits are provided regardless of gender.

Fair compensation contributes to job satisfaction.

I am satisfied with the level of pay and benefits compared to male counterparts.

**d. Work-life balance**

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
I often feel stressed due to work.					
I often feel overwhelmed with my personal responsibilities.					
I work overtime frequently.					
I bring work home regularly.					

**e. Representation of women in leadership positions within the industry**

**Items** **SD D N A SA**

There is adequate representation of women in leadership roles within the industry.

Female leaders serve as role models for career advancement.

Increased representation of women in leadership positively impacts job satisfaction.

Gender diversity in leadership positions is important for a supportive work environment.

**f. Discrimination and harassment in the workplace**

**Items** **SD D N A SA**

Discrimination and harassment based on gender are prevalent in the workplace.

Policies and procedures effectively address discrimination and harassment issues.

Discrimination negatively affects job satisfaction.

I feel safe from discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

**g. Job satisfaction**

Items	SD	D	N	A	SA
I am satisfied with my current job in the building construction industry.					
My job provides opportunities for growth and advancement.					
I feel valued and appreciated for my contributions at work.					
I receive adequate support and resources to perform my job effectively.					

**Part III: Challenges Facing Women in Building Construction Industry:**

1. Do you think women are underrepresented in construction sector?  
Yes  No
2. Do you think there are equal opportunities for women in the building construction industry?    
Yes No
3. Do you think women's work is given equal importance as compared to their male counterparts in different construction work?  
Yes  No
4. Do you think women can easily participate in all types of construction sector?  
 Yes  
 No
5. How would you rate the level of support for female professionals seeking career guidance and mentorship in your workplace?  
Very Poor  
Poor

Assessment on Opportunities and Challenges of Female Professional Workers in the Building Construction Industry

---

Neutral

Good

Very Good

6. Have you ever felt underestimated or faced challenges due to stereotypes about physical capabilities in the construction industry?

Yes

No

7. Are there specific policies or practices in place in your organization to promote gender equality?

Yes

No

8. Do the company promote the development of women in the construction industry to enable them acquire marketable skills?

Yes

No

9. Do you think that on-job trainings and skill learning opportunities are equally available for men and women workers?

Yes

No

10. Have you ever experienced any form of harassment or abuse while working in the building construction industry?

Yes

No

If “yes”, what type of sexual harassment is it?

No. Types of acts and sayings

Yes No

1 **Verbal** (Insulting, Whistling, Making Kissing sounds or Disdain )

2 **Non Verbal** ( Elevator eye, Blocking path, Winking or Making Sexual gesture)

3 **Physical** (Massaging, Kissing, Touching or Standing Close)

11. Who was the perpetrator(s) of the harassment or abuse?

Colleague(s)  Supervisor(s)  Client(s)  Other

12. Did you report the incident(s) to anyone?

Yes

No

13. Have you ever witnessed harassment or abuse happening to a female colleague in the building construction industry?

Yes

No

If yes, did you take any action to support your colleague?

Yes

No

If no, what prevented you from taking action?

-----

#### **Part IV: Opportunities available for Female Employee**

18. Have you participated in professional development initiatives (seminars, workshops, certifications) to enhance your skills and knowledge in the construction industry?

Yes

No

19. How beneficial do you find professional development opportunities for your career growth?

Not Beneficial

Somewhat Beneficial

Beneficial

Very Beneficial

20. Have you engaged in cross-training programs to develop versatile skill sets in the construction industry?

Yes

No

21. How important do you think cross-training programs are for expanding your career opportunities?

Not Important

Somewhat Important

Important

Very Important

22. Are you a member of any employee resource groups or affinity groups within your organization?

Yes

No

23. How valuable do you find the support and networking opportunities provided by these groups?

Not Valuable

Somewhat Valuable

Valuable

Very Valuable

24. Have you been recognized or celebrated for your achievements and contributions as a female professional in the construction industry?

Yes

No

25. How important is recognition for you in the workplace?

Not Important

Somewhat Important

Important

Very Important

26. Do you have opportunities to interact with and learn from senior leaders in the industry?

Yes

No

27. Have you had opportunities for increased visibility and exposure within the construction industry (e.g., speaking engagements, panel discussions)?

Yes

No

28. How important is visibility and exposure for your professional growth?

Not Important

Somewhat Important

Important

Very Important

**Interview questions for professional female workers in building construction in**

**Addis Ababa**

**Career Development and Work-Life Balance**

1. How has your organization supported your professional development and career advancement?
2. What kinds of opportunities are available for women in leadership roles within your organization?
3. How does your organization balance the demands of work and family life for female employees?
4. Are there any specific initiatives or programs in place to support women's mental health and well-being in the construction industry?

**Workplace Culture and Equality**

1. How would you describe the overall workplace culture for women in your organization?
2. Have you experienced any gender-based discrimination or harassment in the workplace? If so, how was it addressed?
3. What steps does your organization take to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion?
4. How does your organization ensure that female workers have equal access to training, resources, and opportunities?

**Industry-Specific Challenges and Solutions**

1. What are the biggest challenges you face in the construction industry?
2. How can the construction industry be made more inclusive and equitable for women?
3. What role can organizations and individuals play in promoting gender equality in the construction sector?