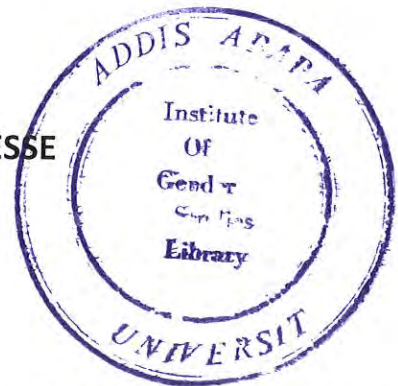


**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
INSTITUTE OF GENDER STUDIES**

**WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: THE CASE OF THE MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA**

**BY
HANNA ZERIHUN LEGUESSE**



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**By
Hanna Zerihun Legesse
Institute of Gender Studies**

Approved by the Board of Examiners

Emezat Hailu
Chairman, Department Graduate Committee

Signature

Dr. Emebet Mulugeta
Advisor

Signature

Dr. Enguday Ademe
External Examiner

Signature

Dr. Emezat H. Mengesha
Internal Examiner

Signature



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Above all, I give thanks to God.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this to my mother, W/o Zmam Reda. I wish you were here to see this.

ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
EC	Ethiopian Calendar
IGAD-CEWARN	Intergovernmental Authority on Development – Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GC	Gregorian Calendar
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WFPG	Women’s Foreign Policy Group

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The establishment of the Ministry, which deals with Ethiopia's relations with the other countries and international organisations, dates back to 1907 G.C. The study focuses on female employees at the Ministry occupying professional posts. It examines the positions these women hold, the opportunities they are given, the challenges they encounter and their aspirations to advance their career and occupy higher positions in this important field. Qualitative method was used to conduct this study. Both primary and secondary data were collected. In-depth interviews were conducted with twelve women working in professional positions. Secondary data in the form of reports, research and journals were used. The study shows that the Ministry, as a Federal institution, recruits women from different parts of the country to ensure representation of women from the different nations and nationalities. The Ministry provides women the opportunity to advance in their careers by applying affirmative action, both during recruitments and promotion. The Ministry also upgrades women, who have improved their educational qualification while on the job. This exercise especially benefitted young female employees who aspire to reach higher positions inside the Ministry. The women who took part in the study also revealed that the support they have from their families is essential for their achievement in the workplace. Unfortunately, despite these positive steps taken by the Ministry, the number of women in professional positions is still behind that of men. Lack of the required educational qualification and low self-esteem of the women themselves are some of the challenges cited by the female employees interviewed for this research. Cultural misconceptions on women's ability and gender stereotyped roles in the work place were also obstacles hindering women from joining the professional job category.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

“Too often the great decisions are originated and given form in bodies made up wholly of men, or so completely dominated by them that whatever of special value women have to offer is shunted aside without expression” (Tickner, 1992, p.1).

The above quotation, taken from a speech made by Eleanor Roosevelt to the United Nations General Assembly in 1952, draws a clear picture which shows that politics is a man's world; a world where the diplomats and civil servants are mostly men. Apart from the occasional head of state, there is little evidence to suggest that women have played much of a role in shaping foreign policy in any country in the twentieth century (Tickner, 1992).

In many countries, the political arena and the field of international relations/diplomacy are exclusively held or largely dominated by men, even if the right to participate in the management of public affairs is one of the main components of democracy. In a study undertaken on women scholars in the field of International Relations in 2007, Maliniak *et al* (2007) state that women may be underrepresented in the profession and are behind their male colleagues because they see the world differently as a result of their minority status within this field. Feminist scholars explain that gender subordination is a major reason why women see the world differently. Furthermore, it asserts that to some extent, women are still “second-class citizens” within the international relations profession, and that their research and teaching is different from their male counterparts (Maliniak, 2007). The study reveals that female political scientists choose topics that are not considered to be the best and undertake research that are not considered to be complex by editors of leading journals in the field of international relations (Maliniak, 2007).

Several decisions and declarations were adopted by international organizations; namely the United Nations in order to redress this inequality between women and men in power-sharing and decision-making. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights states that everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his/her country. Women's participation in decision-making is not only a right but it is also a necessary condition to incorporate women's interests and perspectives into decisions. This will in turn ensure equality, development and peace within that society (UN, 1995).

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly, in its Article 8 on equality in political and public life at the international level says:

“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations” (UN, 1994, p. 15).

Furthermore, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995, sets out strategic objectives and actions on critical areas of concern and proposes concrete actions to be taken to achieve the objectives. Some of the critical areas of concern are; women and poverty, education and training of women, violence against women and women in power and decision-making (UN, 1995).

To examine the steps taken in different countries, at institutional and non-institutional levels, and as a follow up to the *Beijing Platform for Action*, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) undertook a survey involving parliaments and political parties in different countries on their response to and action on the Beijing Platform and the Union's Plan of Action. The survey was launched in October 1998 and, one-third of all national parliaments of the countries taking part in the survey as did some 12 per cent of the political parties within them took part in it. Data

were collected from a total of 67 countries, either from one source or from both (IPU, 1999). The results showed that progress has been made, since 1995, to reduce the various inequalities that existed between men and women. The parliaments provided various examples to justify their response. Some of the progresses made were with regards to amendments to basic legal instruments or the ratification of major international conventions; the establishment of specific bodies to take action to reduce the existing inequalities or to address women's issues; and a greater determination to ensure more freedom of choice for men and women alike. The survey also identified lack of time because of the priority accorded to family or career, lack of training, lack of money, insufficient media influence and the existence of traditional prejudices and stereotypes as hindering factors to women's participation and playing a greater role in politics.

Like their counterparts in other parts of the world, women in Ethiopia have a low status in the society. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) has ratified various international conventions and formulated several laws and policies to promote gender equality in the country. In 1993, the National Women's Policy was formulated and national institutional machineries were put in place at federal, regional and woreda levels. In addition, in October 2005, the Women's Affairs Office under the Prime Minister's Office was upgraded to a Ministry with the aim of ensuring the participation and empowerment of women in the political and economic fields. Article 3 of the 1995 Constitution of the FDRE also makes provision for the equal opportunity for women to participate in the decision-making process by giving them the right to vote and be elected.

As stated in the above-mentioned survey of the IPU on progress with regards to addressing the existing inequalities between men and women, Ethiopia has also registered progress in this area. In a report entitled "Report of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on the Implementation of the African Union (AU) Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa" prepared in August 2006, it is stated:

Though much still remains to be done, there are noticeable achievements in the participation of women particularly in the parliament as well as in regional

councils. The ruling party took an important stride by making 30% of its candidates for 2005 election to be women. As a result, the number of women in parliament has increased significantly (FDRE, 2006, p.9).

The report provides the following data with regards to the increase in number of elected women in Federal Parliament by comparing the years 2000 and 2005. Recent data of the 2010 parliamentary elections added to this data, compared to the 2005 elections, shows an increase (close to 6%) in the number of women elected in the House of People's Representative women currently occupying 35 more seats. On the other hand, the number of women elected to the House of Federation has decreased by close to 5%, eventough the total number of seats had increased from 112 to 157.

Table 1: Women's Representation in Federal Parliament

Federal Parliament	2000			2005			2010		
	Male	Female	%	Male	Female	%	Male	Female	%
House of People's Representative	502	42	7.72	413	117	22.07	395	152	27.78
House of the Federation	110	7	5.98	91	21	18.75	135	22	14.01

Source: House of People's Representatives

With regards to women elected at regional level the report gives the following numbers: Oromiya among 537 seats 199, Tigray among 157 seats 76, Afar from 82 seats 8, Somali from 160 seats 5, Harari from 36 seats 7, Amhara from 250 seats 84 and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) from 347 seats 95 are held by women. It also goes on to tabulate the number of women occupying high positions such as Ministers, Deputy/State Ministers and Ambassadors for the years 2000 and 2005, as shown in the table below.

Table 2: Women's Representation in the Executive Branch

Positions	2000		2005	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ministers	16	1	20	2
Deputy Minister/State Ministers	12	4	30	5
State Ministers			30	5
Ambassadors	16	4	35	3

Source: Federal Civil Service Agency

The number of women elected at national level for the House of People's Representatives and the House of Federation has increased three fold between 2000 and 2005. Meanwhile, though the report indicated that an increase has been registered in the number of women elected at the regional levels, none of the regions have registered equal representation of men and women. In fact, out of the 1569 seats of elected positions nationwide, women only occupy 475 seats or 30.27%. The situation is even worse when considering the figures for women's representation in the Executive Branch which comprises positions such as Ministers and Ambassadors. In 2005 for instance, out of 115 positions, women only occupied 15 posts or 13%. Thus, it can be concluded that the government has a long way to go to empower women and have them occupy positions equally as their male counterparts.

The Ministry of Commerce and Foreign Affairs was one of the Ministries created in 1907 by Emperor Menelik. It was first led by Neggadras Haile-Giorgis Wolde Michael. Since then, the Ministry has had 24 Foreign Ministers. Data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs show that the Ministry, one of the oldest government institutions in the country, has never had a woman Minister, the highest position inside the Ministry. It is currently headed by a Minister with a State Minister as his deputy, both of whom are men. The Ministry has 13 General Directorates headed by Director Generals with Directors as their Deputies. Three of the General Directorates have women Director Generals and five of the Directorates are headed by women Directors (MoFA, 2012).

1.2. Statement of the problem

Ethiopia has been engaged in international diplomacy with its neighbors since at least the mid-seventeenth century and with the Europe since the mid-nineteenth century. The background information on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia accessed from the website of the Ministry on 22 December 2011 mentions that as a result of its geographical location, Ethiopia has been the centre of attention even before the establishment of modern diplomatic practices. In the recent history of the country, different regional lords and kings, like Tewodros, Yohannes and Emperor Menelik communicated with the outside world through the missionaries and envoys.

Ethiopia has been a member of the League of Nations and a founding member of international organizations like the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity and has also ratified several conventions to work towards bringing equality between men and women in areas such as education, employment and decision-making (MoFA website). Though minimal, progress has been registered in the country's effort to bridge the existing inequalities, to this day, no woman has acceded to the highest position, that of Minister, inside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which deals with Ethiopia's relations with other countries and international organisations. In this context, the current study is to find out the number of women employed at the Ministry and what positions and responsibilities these women have in the hierarchy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The study also attempts to see the opportunities and challenges women face in acceding to decision-making positions in the Ministry.

1.3. Objective of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of the study is to examine women's place in the field of international relations/diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The study has the following specific objectives:

- To find out the positions occupied by women at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- To find out aspirations of women working in the Ministry to reach high positions;
- To find out measures taken by the Ministry to increase the number of women in decision-making positions;
- To find out what obstacles, if any, exist preventing women from joining and progressing through the echelon of the Ministry to attain the highest position at the Ministry;
- To find out if there are any policies regarding the recruitment, training and promotion providing an opportunity for women in the Ministry to advance their career;
- To come up with recommendations to the Ministry to strengthen existing procedures/policies regarding women employees or to introduce new practices.

1.4. Research Questions

Based on the objectives above, the following will be the basic questions of the study:

- What is the educational background of women working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs look like?
- What are the positions held by women at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs?
- Which factors encourage or hinder women from holding decision-making positions in the field of international relations/diplomacy?
- Are there any measures in place to encourage women to occupy high positions in this field?

1.5. Significance of the study

Ethiopia, previously known as Abyssinia, is a country with a long history. According to historians, 1,000 years before Christ, women had ruled the country and had waged wars and lead armies. But, the historical references of the majority of these ancient matriarchs are not recorded due to the tendency of historians to focus on male monarchs and to ignore or misrepresent women's role. Women who are mentioned as having played an important role are cited because "either their deeds or inheritance, perhaps both, enable them to stand out quite singularly. Nonetheless, many more women are left without mention or annexed to their husbands or fathers" (Alem, 2008, p.57).

Empress Taitu Betul, wife of Emperor Menelik II, can be a very good example in recent history of a queen who has played a significant and wide ranging role in national politics, diplomacy and the development of the country in recent history. One of the strong stands for which she is well remembered for is with regards to the signing of the Treaty of Wuchale with the Italians in 1890. She opposed the signing of this Treaty from the outset and even commanded an infantry of around 5,000 along with 600 cavalry men and was accompanied by thousands of Ethiopian women when war finally broke out with the Italians (Baheru, 2005).

Given the long history of Ethiopia in the field of international relations, the researcher has not come across studies undertaken to find out the role, contributions and the level of participation of Ethiopian women in this important field. Nowadays, the world is said to have become a global village and no country lives isolated from other countries. Countries come in contact with other countries through trade, migration for different reasons, education and the like. It is, therefore, important that countries have, among other policies, a strong foreign relations policy to protect their own interest and that of their citizens. So, how are women involved and what positions do they occupy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs? This study will attempt to find out women's place in the current Ministry of Foreign Affairs identify

shortcomings and possibly come up with recommendations regarding women's recruitment, work and advancement in the Ministry. Ethiopian women in the field of diplomacy is a topic that has been under-researched. This study will, therefore, serve as valuable data for future research on this important issue and, hopefully, assist policy makers identify and find ways of increasing the number of women representing the country abroad, come up with solutions to problems hindering women from joining the diplomatic world and enjoying equal opportunity of progressing to decision-making positions.

1.6. Scope of the study

This study focuses on female employees occupying professional posts at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa. It attempts to find out challenges and opportunities faced by these women inside the Ministry. Unfortunately, due to financial and accessibility problems, the study did not involve female staff posted in Ethiopian missions abroad. Measures taken by the Ministry to encourage women to join professional positions have also been considered in this study. Male employees view of their female colleagues has not been dealt with in this study.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study is that, due to time constraints, it only focuses on female employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for interviews. The inclusion of male employees at the Ministry would have provided a clearer picture of the situation. The other limitation was due to the busy schedule of the employees and thus the difficulty of finding a suitable time for conducting the interviews.

1.8. Definition of key terms

International Relations: a branch of political science concerned with relations between nations and primarily with foreign policies (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1976). The Encyclopedia Britannica further explains that international relations is the study of the relations of states with each other and also with international organizations and certain subnational entities (e.g., bureaucracies and political parties) (International Relations, 2012).

Diplomacy: the art and practice of conducting negotiations between nations (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1976). The Encyclopedia Britannica defines diplomacy as the established method of influencing the decisions and behaviour of foreign governments and peoples through dialogue, negotiation, and other measures short of war or violence (Diplomacy, 2012).

Professional Post: job that needs special training or skills, especially one that needs a high level of education. The International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) defines professional work as analytical, evaluative, conceptual, interpretive and/or creative and thus requires the application of the basic principles of an organized body of theoretical knowledge, such as a field of science, learning or specialized discipline (ICSC, 2010).

Support Post: The ICSC defines General Service work as procedural, operational or technical in nature and supports the execution of the programmes of the organization. It ranges from simple, routine or repetitive duties based on following detailed instructions to varied and complex assignments requiring identification and consideration of alternative course of action based on extensive and in-depth practical knowledge of a specific subject area. The assignments are generally performed on a continuing basis (ICSC, 2010).

1.9. Organization of the Thesis

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one introduces the background and methods used for undertaking the research. Chapter two deals with the review of related literature and Chapter three presents the research design and methodology. Chapter four provides an overview of the field of international relations in Ethiopia and the research findings. Lastly, Chapter five, presents the summary and conclusion of the overall research and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Theoretical Approaches

International Relations deals with contacts between states and also organisations. International relations issues are no longer confined to war and security but have broadened to include “international political economy, socioeconomic development, human rights, non-state actors and civil society” (Ruiz, 2005, p.1). International matters directly influence people’s everyday life and issues such as war and peace are today no longer issues only relevant for the political arena alone.

The field of international relations which is conventionally devoted to the study of war has been reluctant to include feminist interventions (Peterson, 1998). In fact Tickner described international politics as a “man’s world, a world of power and conflict in which warfare is a privilege. Traditionally, diplomacy, military service and the science of international politics have been largely male domains ” (Tickner, 1991, p.27). The field has been dominated by “Anglo- and Euro-centric male practitioners (scholars, national policy makers) and masculinist constructs (state power, national security, sovereignty, Realpolitick, military might)” (Peterson, 1998, p. 581). Wibben puts it as follows:

“International Relations [IR] has been one of the last fields to open up to feminisms, which offer unique contributions to any field of research. Indeed, compared with other disciplines, the arrival (of) feminist perspectives in IR occurred relatively late. It was only in the late 1980s and early 1990s that several conferences and published books created momentum for a feminist study of IR” (Wibben, 2004, p. 98).

Feminism has repeatedly criticized the field of international relations for marginalizing women. Grant (1991) cites the emphasis placed on men as citizens and political actors as major source of gender bias in the field of international relations. This bias can be traced back to the formation of the state in ancient Greece around two thousand years ago (Grant, 1991). This period in ancient Greece saw the transition of the society which was until then based on kinship to a patriarchal one. This change Grant (1991) says "relegated women to a private sphere of domestic life" (Grant, 1991, p.11) and excluded them from participating in politics. In fact, women practically had no role outside their home. Two sets of social relations were thus established mainly based on gender roles. The female roles centered around their work inside the home while the "male social relations extended to the duties of citizens and soldiers in a democracy, and in this capacity to relations with other city states" (Grant, 1991, p.12). This relegation of women to the private sphere meant that politics was the sole responsibility of men in the society.

Feminists in the field of international relations state that women are excluded from foreign policy decision-making because of the "extent to which international politics is such a thoroughly masculinized sphere of activity that women's voices are considered inauthentic" (Tickner, 1992, p.2). Tickner (1992) states that it is widely believed, by both women and men throughout the world, that military and foreign policy are areas of policy-making that are the least appropriate for women. Those entrusted with the military and foreign policy issues, she says, should have strength, power, autonomy, independence, and rationality, characteristics that are typically associated with men. On the other hand, women, even those who have had practical experience in foreign policy "are perceived as being too emotional and too weak for the tough life-and-death decisions required for the nation's defense" (Tickner, 1992, p.2) .

Similar to feminist theories in other fields, there is not a single feminist approach that explains international relations. Realism and liberal feminism are two of the feminist approaches among the various feminist theories that will be examined in this section.

a) Realism

Historian E.H. Carr asserts that the destruction that occurred during the First World War was the motivation behind the foundation of the discipline of international relations, which was until then the concern of professional practitioners (Tickner, 1992). Thus, the enormous destruction caused by the war and the desire to prevent it from happening again led to the “democratization of both the theory and practice of international relations” (Tickner, 1992, p.5). The League of Nations which was created to focus on international law and ensure collective security failed as a result of its limited mandate. With the outbreak of the Second World War, scholars moved towards what they called “a more ‘realistic’ approach to the international politics” (Tickner, 1992, p.5). Realists claimed that conflict was indeed inevitable and the best way for states to assure security would be to prepare for war.

Realism focuses on how the state seeks power and defends its “national interests” against other states. Ruiz says that “states seek security through a balance of power in the international arena, primarily through military means, and resorting to war, if necessary” (Ruiz, 2005, p.3). Realists view the state as the main actor in international politics. Feminist theories argue that this ignores the role and views of the individual and overvalues the role of the state without questioning how the states includes or excludes the views of each citizen. Feminists further challenge realism by questioning who defines national interests and whether the definition would be the same if women were involved in defining them.

Another feminist critique of realism is with regard to the definition of the term “power”. Ruiz states “if power is defined by a patriarchal and realist society, which seeks global balances of power, then power is equated with military and economic strength. But how would this change if the discussion included women’s viewpoints? Would the indicators of power be viewed differently?” (Ruiz, 2005, p. 4). Thus, feminist theories say, realism does not bring about gender equality as patriarchy remains its central theme. It does not give importance to individuals even more when they are females.

b) Liberalism

Contrary to realism, liberalism emphasizes the role of the individual over that of the state. Liberal feminism is a widely known feminist theory. It defines gender inequality as “a violation of all of liberalism’s fundamental values – liberty, equality and justice” (Brown, 1998, p.462)

Liberal feminists focus on similarities between the two sexes and further explain that the differences between them are caused by discriminatory laws and institutions. Liberal feminists state that “women have the right to participate in all social and political roles (including war roles) without facing discrimination” (Goldstein, 2001, P. 39). Liberal feminists also advocate that women have the right to take part in the social and political life without facing discrimination (Goldstein, 2001). Liberal feminists “focus on the public sphere, on legal, political and institutional struggles for the rights of individuals to compete in the public market place” (Beasley, 1999, p.51).

Liberal feminism uses diverse “liberal thought dominant in western society since the Enlightenment, and affirms that women’s subordinate social position can be addressed by existing political processes under democracy. For liberals, the key battle is access to education” (Pilcher and Whelehan, 2005, p.49). They argue that if men and women are educated equally, they will have access to positions in the society. Liberal feminists do not use terms as ‘revolution’ or ‘liberation’ as the radicals and socialists. They believe that “democracy itself is naturally adaptable to equality for both sexes” (Pilcher and Whelehan, 2005, p.49) and what is needed is reform of the society (Beasley, 1999). A good example for this type of approach is that of Naomi Wolf which she calls ‘power feminism’, a type of “feminism based on a sense of entitlement and which embraces monetary and other forms of ‘success’ in existing society” (Beasley, 1999, p.52).

I chose the Liberal Feminist Theory because it sets a platform for the participation of women on more or less equal basis with men, by making reforms at the legal, political and institutional levels. In this study, I will attempt to show how and why, despite the various laws promulgated and conventions ratified internationally and nationally, women are, however, still not visible in the field of international relations, an important area which not only influences how countries interact but also the day to day life of people around the world.

2.2. Review of Related Literature

Access to power and power are limited and inequality is justified and maintained around the world on the basis of gender. Gender-defined rights, roles and responsibilities determine access to resources and control (Sadik, 1997 as cited in Caprioli, 2000). Though, the roles women play and the power they have differ from culture to culture, women, in general, are unequal with men in the economic and political spheres (Scott, 1986, p. 1069 as cited in Caprioli, 2000). In order to understand this inequality and lack of power compared to men, theorists use two schools of thought namely, biological reductionism or biological determinism and social constructivism. Biological determinism states that social roles are based on the physiological differences between men and women. According to these theorists, women's behaviour is instinctive and not learned. "The inclusion of women in foreign policy decision-making, therefore, would alter policy output – not women's nature, which is biologically determined" (Caprioli, 2000, p.54). Therefore, the participation of women in the field of international relations would mean that women's point of view and experiences would be taken into consideration in the formulation and implementation of policies. For instance, Grant and Newland noted that:

"few would deny that women are involved in distinctive ways in international processes such as migration and development assistance; that transnational phenomena like the changing international division of labour have differential impacts on women and men or that relations between the sexes are shaped, changed and sometimes distorted by forces external to a particular society.



Women rights have explicitly entered the realm of multilateral diplomacy" (Grant and Newland, 1991, p.6).

On the other hand, the social constructivist perspective asserts that there is no inherent difference based on gender since both males and females are forced into stereotypical roles. Individuals are taught and internalize, "culturally appropriate attitudes and behaviours. Families, schools, religious institutions and media are important sources of this socialization" (Peterson *et al*, 1999, p.34). Therefore they argue, the inclusion of women in foreign policy "would not necessarily alter policy output unless society were freed from gender stereotypes" (Caprioli, 2000, p. 54). What is needed is a paradigm shift. Unless the society, including women themselves, change the long held views such as those that stipulate that women are inferior to men and are not strong enough to take part in politics and diplomacy, the mere fact of including women in the foreign policy would not bring about any change in the formulation of policies.

Individuals differ in the way they conform to cultural expectations; but, none can escape gender socialization (Peterson *et al*, 1999). Richardson and Taylor further explain this thought as:

"Everyone is born into a *culture* – a set of shared ideas about the nature of reality, the nature of right and wrong, evaluation of what is good and desirable, and the nature of the good and desirable versus the bad and non desirable.... As totally dependent infants we are socialized – taught the rules, roles and relationships of the social world... In the process, we learn to think, act and feel as we are 'supposed to'" (Richardson and Taylor as quoted in Peterson, 1999, p. 34).

Thus, Peterson states, gender inequality is produced and reinforced through "gender stereotypes, dichotomies and masculinist ideology" (Peterson, 1999, p.34). Stereotypes, often incorrect and too general, "encourages us to ignore complexity and contradictions that might prompt us to challenge the status quo" (Peterson *et al*, 1999, p.35). Moreover, stereotypes can hide the reality as they "oversimplify and overgeneralize" and serve as an excuse to allow discrimination to continue. Peterson further gives the example of the United States where he says the dominant gender stereotypes picture men/masculinity as: "strong, independent,

worldly, aggressive, ambitious, logical, and rough” (Peterson *et al*, 1999, p.35). Women/femininity, on the other hand, are given attributes opposite that of men. They are depicted as “weak, dependent, passive, naive, not ambitious, illogical, and gentle” (Peterson, 1999 *et al*, p.35).

Various definitions of International Relations show that the field is a branch of political science (Webster, 1976) and that it is also concerned with power and conflict (Peterson, 1998). Both conflict and politics have been described as “a man’s world” (Tickner, 1991, p.27) so what part do women play in these fields and how are they affected by them?

2.2.1. Women in Armed Conflict and Peace Making

Conflict is a relationship between two or more parties, individuals or groups, who have, or think they have, incompatible goals (Mitchell, 1981). Armed conflicts affect entire members of communities. But, of those affected, women and children, the most vulnerable group of a society, suffer the most in times of conflict. Compared to a century ago when 90 per cent of casualties were military personnel, it is estimated that close to 90 percent of casualties of wars fought in recent years are civilians and the majority of these are women and children (Fact Sheet No. 5, Women in Armed Conflict). Women, children and the elderly are often forced to flee their homes, within their own countries as internally displaced or as refugees. In these cases, the burden of providing for the family solely rests on women.

Wars cause large number of deaths both of civilians and soldiers. The high mortality rate of men in wars, displacements and migrations bring changes in families, the major one being the formation of households headed by women who assume all responsibility for its upkeep. In Rwanda for example, ‘34 per cent of the households today are headed by women who, in most cases, have lost all (or almost all) their children and must take care of countless orphans left by close relatives or distant dead relatives’ (Mukamulisa and Mukarubuha, 2000 as quoted in Bop, 2001, p. 27).

At the end of a conflict, in most cases, the new government undertakes demobilization followed by the distribution of aid or land. Men are most often the beneficiaries of these measures while women combatants face alienation and poverty upon their return to civilian life (Bop, 2001). Sondra Hale illustrates this with the example of Eritrean combatants:

“a great number of demobilized combatants were women. Among them, most came from rural areas. They had changed so much that it was impossible for many of them to return to their village. Of the 12,000 demobilised women combatants, half had divorced, a statue that could have very negative consequences since their children could abandon them. They did not have much money, no work and little or no education, especially the rural women. Not only could they find themselves unable to return to their village, but they could also find themselves ‘unmarriageable’” (Hale, 1999 as quoted in Bop, 2001, p.29)

Women may be actively involved in conflicts such as “providing crucial political support, access to centrally-placed regional political actors, courier services, [and] funding sources...” (Luckham et al. 2001:43). But, they are largely absent from the peace negotiations table. Bop (2001) illuminates that “although it is true that women are almost never the initiators of conflicts, are never the leaders of conflicts, and are rarely at the negotiation table, they have participated in all wars as actors” (Bop, 2001, p.20).

To achieve and maintain peace in any society, it requires the participation and involvement of both males and females regardless of their class, age, race and ethnicity in the process of peace building. Ensuring the involvement of women and men has recently become a desirable strategy at international and local levels.

Wars have been common occurrences in the history of Ethiopia. Internal wars were mainly fought for territorial expansion, political supremacy, and tribal feuds of one sort or another. External wars were also fought in the attempt to defend the country’s territory and to

protect its independence (Minale, 2001). But throughout history, the role and contribution of women in these conflicts is not well documented (Hammond, 1989).

In the recent history of Ethiopia, Empress Taitu Betul played an important role in the war against the Italians at the battle of Adwa when she commanded her own contingent. Alem (2008) quotes Professor Tekeste Negash's speech delivered in Stockholm on the occasion of the Ethiopian Millennium celebration in August 2007, in which he states: "a great deal has been written on Emperor Minilik, as the hero of Adwa. It is doubtful, however whether the sagacious Minilik would have managed so much if it had not been for the determined stand of his consort Empress Taitu" (Alem 2008, p.65).

In addition, the literature does not also show women's contribution to peace-making. Peace-making is intervention designed to end hostilities and bring about an agreement using diplomatic, political and military means as necessary (Fisher et al, 2000). Like conflicts, conflict resolution or peace-making has been perceived as a domain of men. At the time of peace negotiations, emphasis is given to the sharing of power between the belligerents and gender issues are ignored (Bop, 2001).

Teemt Bekele (2009) states that women's participation in conflict related activities in the Nyangatom Woreda in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's (SNNP) is mostly centered on the ritual aspects, which can be classified into two. One is that, they provide sustenance to men during migratory periods for the purpose of carrying out raids. Women are also expected to deliver food for these male groups and provide a moral boost via song and dance. The other ritualistic aspect is the involvement of women in peace ceremonies. The women from the Nyangatom Woreda who are part of the the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (IGAD-CEWARN)CEWARN Local Peace Committees indicated that without women's participation in rituals related to conflict preparation, violent confrontation is often nullified (Teemt, 2009).

Elders and women interviewed in Teemt's study identified traditional conflict resolution systems as important components of conflict processes. But they differ on the importance given to the traditional system by the youth. One participant stated that the importance of the system is diminishing and attributed this to its lack of inclusiveness. Conclusions reached via traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are in danger of only being accepted among the elder generations according to this participant (Teemt, 2009).

Most of the women interviewees stated that their decision making powers are not appreciated by their male counterpart. Therefore, women have no or have limited role in peace talks (Teemt, 2009). The study concludes by saying that the women who were interviewed were almost unanimously in agreement that although the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (IGAD-CEWARN) Local Peace Committee had given them some visibility in the community, unfortunately, their ideas and opinions were not incorporated in the final decision making processes. In fact, their participation in these local peace committees have had negative repercussions in other areas of their lives (Teemt, 2009). This provides a good example of how legislation alone, though a step forward, is not the ultimate panacea to the issue of participation of women in social affairs.

Another study on the role of women is that of Tolosa Mamuye (2010) undertaken on the role of women with regard to conflict resolution in a woman based institution called *sinqee* in West Arsi, Oromia. *Sinqee* is a straight stick with three branches at the top. The three branches are said to be a symbol representing the husband, the wife and their children. According to this study, only married women possess and carry the *sinqee*. It is given to a bride during the wedding ceremony (Tolosa, 2010). It has a significant contribution in maintaining and restoring peace by resolving conflict between husband and wife and mother and son (Tolosa, 2010). Tolosa states that the depiction of the *gada* system as a democratic institution is challenged or questioned as it excludes women from holding power and passing important decisions. This, Tolosa adds, is however compensated by the *sinqee* whereby women in turn can exclude men

from their institutions under certain circumstances. *Sinqee* is mostly concerned with immediate conflicts.

Unfortunately, the *sinqee* institution which provided some sort of power to women is nowadays disappearing. According to Tolosa, there are several reasons for the decline of the *sinqee* institution. One of the reasons is the expansion of religions. He adds that today, in every mosque in Arsii, the Imams and Sheikhs teach that *sinqee* is just a stick and has no power. They also tell their followers that those who use it should not come to the mosque and will not be buried there. Likewise, the expansion of modern education, access to television and radio which have exposed the young generation to western culture and values play a part in the diminishing use of the *sinqee* (Tolosa, 2010). This can be considered as one good opportunity where women's interference as a player in conflict resolution was accepted, though not regulated in writing.

2.2.2. Women in politics

Women play and have been playing an important role not only in sustaining the family but also in contributing to the economic development of their society and country. But, in spite of this, women have been largely excluded from participating in decision-making and other activities including politics (Duke II, 2010). Giving emphasis to the African context, Duke II states that women's lack of access to power and decision-making is an issue that has long been ignored. This situation states Duke II "accounts for the trivialization, if not total disregard, of the concerns of women particularly in this region, where women continue to remain oppressed and struggle over virtually everything: from basic survival to ownership" (Duke II, 2010, p.84).

Nevertheless, despite the various obstacles they face, "many women in several countries across the world have demonstrated the capacity of the female folk in delivering on performance, by reaching great political heights and attaining remarkable successes" (Duke II, 2010, p.85). Some of these women include Indira Gandhi – the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, who was the longest serving woman Prime Minister, staying in office for 15 years;

Margaret Thatcher – Britain’s Prime Minister who won three consecutive terms of office; and Maria Corazon Aquino – the 11th President of the Philippines.

Despite the improvements in the rate of literacy and political awareness among women, their level of political participation is still minimal (Duke II, 2010). This is due to several factors, of which customary and traditional laws can be cited. These laws have always given power and control over resources and decision-making processes to men thus making most systems largely undemocratic (Duke II, 2010). Duke II goes on to explain that, “the dilemma for women, today, is that despite the liberal provisions of national constitutions and various state policies, deep structural inequalities still remain in most societies” (Duke II, 2010, p.84).

When the United Nations First World Conference on Women was held in Mexico City in 1975, it brought to light once again that discrimination against women was a persistent problem in many countries; and even though governments were called upon to develop strategies to promote the equal participation of women, political participation was not yet identified as a priority. Since 1975, though, there has been an increasing focus on women’s representation and their impact on decision-making structures. For example, records from 28 of the 39 parliamentary elections held in 2005, showed that progress has been made. Norway had 37.9 per cent women of all elected officers whereas Denmark, Sweden and Germany exceeded the 30 per cent benchmark set by the Beijing Platform of Action which “resolved that 30 per cent of all elective office be reserved for women, especially parliamentary ones” (Duke II, 2010, p.87). From Africa, Rwanda, Burundi and the Republic of Tanzania had each achieved 30 per cent by 2005 (Duke II, 2010).

However, though they still have a long way to go, like their counterparts in other parts of the world, women in Africa are making their presence felt in the political sphere, (Morse, 2009). According to the International Parliamentary Union (IPU), among African countries, Rwanda stands out as one where women have made progress in politics (Morse, 2009). Women in Rwanda hold a third of all cabinet positions, including foreign minister, education minister,

Supreme Court chief and police commissioner general. And Rwanda's parliament in 2008 became the first in the world where women are the majority - 56 percent, including the speaker's chair (McCrummen, 2008). One outcome of this McCrummen states is that the country has banished archaic patriarchal laws such as those that prevent women from inheriting land. The legislature has also passed bills aimed at ending domestic violence and child abuse. A committee was also going through the legal code to purge it of discriminatory laws (McCrummen, 2008).

Rita F.N. Chiejina (2008) in her findings, lists various factors hindering women from taking part in politics in Nigeria. Some of these she cites are household tasks and family commitments; the gender gaps in economic and financial status and traditional and cultural beliefs and practices. Business women interviewed for Chiejina's study, said that they had political aspirations. But, violence and intimidation were reasons cited for them not taking part in political activities (Chiejina, 2008). Chiejina cites Betsy Thom regarding women's under representation in decision making/policy making which she says is attributed to the socialization process girls undergo, is evidenced by the fact that many women within the United Nations system are less ambitious than men, having internalized society's expectations that they are not suited for policy making positions (Chiejina, 2008). This, once again, shows the need for change in the mental framework.

In the Ethiopian context, when we look at the movement of women during the Derg regime which followed a Marxist policy, women from all walks of lives were forced to join the Revolutionary Ethiopian Women's Association (REWA). These types of associations set up by the Derg were strictly under the control of the party and their responsibility were the execution of government policies (Alem, 2008). Though women were allowed to take part in politics in this way, they could only undertake activities prescribed to them by the political party. Alem further states that:

"many Ethiopian women have selflessly dedicated their time, knowledge, money and resources for what they believed was a noble cause... In retrospect, however,

they were kept from achieving their goals by the larger political machinations. The tragedy is that, as a result, many became disillusioned, frustrated and in the end abandoned politics” (Alem, 2008, p.143).

Beza (2010) notes that women participated and made significant contributions during the civil war between the Derg and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) in the recent history of Ethiopia. She adds that the number of women fighters inside the front had at one point reached about one third of the armed forces. Some of these women had risen to occupy the post of commanders while many others served as administrators, health workers and the like (Alem, 2008 as quoted in Beza, 2010). However, despite their contributions in the armed struggle, women were not visible in the political leadership of the TPLF. Since the beginning of the struggle and (even until recently), there was only one woman in the highest structure of the TPLF, the Central Committee. Respondents in the study informed Beza (2010) that the officials of the TPLF were against the idea of women being members of the Central Committee. One respondent puts it as: “women were systematically withdrawn from the positions at different times, the reasons presented for the disqualification of women in the selection process was ‘inefficiency’ for administrative posts as described in different seminars held to elect members in the Central Committee” (Beza, 2010, p.40). This again shows that eventhough women’s contribution is welcomed in times of crisis, the *status quo* that relegates women to a subordinate position is maintained when it comes to giving decision-making power to women once peace is restored or the crisis is over.

2.2.3. Women in International Relations

Rebecca Grant goes back in history and states that the gender bias in international relations theory dates back two thousand years ago to the formation of the state in Greece (Grant, 1991). The formation of the state changed societies from one based on kinship to patriarchal units or male-headed family and, the state “depended on a sexual division of labour to establish and reinforce economic and political structures. These were the grounds for separating women into a private sphere.” (Grant, 1991, p.11-12). The relegation of women to

the private sphere brought “elevated men to the position of solely responsible moral agents in political society” (Grant, 1991, p.12).

Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland say that “International Relations is a discipline concerned with the fate of the world,” (Grant and Newland, 1991, p.1). Like many other discipline, it operated with a somehow narrow conception of what is relevant to it and:

“Excluded from that conception, quite comprehensively, is the experience of most women. This is not only because women are, with rare exception absent from the circle of people – the makers of foreign policy – whose direct experience is the stuff of traditional international relations but also because international relations theory has, overwhelmingly, been constructed by men working with mental models of human activity and society seen through a male eye and apprehended through a male sensibility. The component ideas of international relations are accordingly gendered because women and men experience societies and their interactions differently” (Grant and Newland, 1991, p.1).

Grant and Newland (1991) continue that knowledge and theory are built upon experience and that the differences of experience give different meanings to fundamental concepts in international relations such as authority, sovereignty, security, development and power. And, “as long as the discipline excludes all that flows from women’s experiences of the world from its field of vision it will continue working with a version of the world that is more partial and distorted than is otherwise possible” (Grant and Newland, 1991, page 2).

Questions of gender regarding particularly the place and role of women had acquired greater importance in the social sciences in the 1970s (Halliday, 1991). However, little or no mention is made on gender questions with regards to international relations as a survey on British and American journal of international relations reveals (Halliday, 1991).

International Relations is different from political science in that it values matters of foreign policy over matters of domestic policy; it focuses on the relationship between states and

not within states (Peterson & Runyan, 1999). Tickner (1992) expresses the absence of women in the field of international relations as follows:

“As a scholar and teacher of international relations, I have frequently asked myself the following questions: Why are there so few women in my discipline? If I teach the field as it is conventionally defined, why are there so few readings by women to assign to my students? Why is the subject matter of my discipline so distant from women's lived experiences? Why have women been conspicuous only by their absence in the worlds of diplomacy and military and foreign policy-making?” (Tickner, 1992, p. 1).

Tickner goes on to explain that even if feminist perspectives in the field of international relations have increased in the last ten years, feminists engagements with international relations scholars are still minimal. This is mainly because of the misunderstandings about feminist international relations scholars. Feminists and international relations scholars mostly talk about different worlds and use different methodologies to understand them. Critics of feminists often challenge feminists of implying that women are somehow “better” than men which entails in international relations that women are more peaceful than men or that a world run by women would be less violent and morally superior. These critics support their challenges by referring to policymakers, such as Margaret Thatcher, Golda Meir, or Indira Gandhi, who, they claim, behaved exactly like men (Tickner, 1992).

Women have been employed in the British Foreign Office since its creation in 1782. But, it was not until 1946 that women were given the opportunity to be employed as diplomats. Miller (1991) writes of the debate that took place in Britain on how far women should be integrated into the field of foreign affairs both through the Diplomatic Service and the League of Nations during the inter-war period, between the first and the second world wars. Though Article 7 of the League of Nations, ratified in 1919, stipulates that all positions in the League would be open to both men and women, only one woman held the position of head of section and very few women were appointed by their governments as delegates to the Assembly (Miller, 1991). British Diplomats like Sir Patrick Ramsay were of the opinion that women should continue to be subsidiary to politics and diplomacy. He was quoted as saying “the interests of

the public service would be better served by endeavoring to secure a more virile type of official than by embarking on the experiment of admitting women”(Talyn, 2011).

It wasn't until 1946 that women were given the opportunity to become career diplomats in the British Foreign Office. Even then, there were still reservations among some that the Foreign Service would be turned into a matrimonial bureau, considering that single women who married diplomats would have to leave the service. A policy known as 'the marriage bar' was thus implemented which instructed single women to resign from their appointment in the event of their marriage. As a result of this policy, around 25% of newly-wedded women left the service (Talyn, 2011).

The 'marriage bar' was finally withdrawn in 1972, opening the door for married women to become employable again without discrimination. However, the implementation of the policy was slow as women in the most senior posts were all unmarried even as far as 1985. No woman was appointed Head of a British diplomatic post before the early 1970s, and the first married female Head of Consulate was only appointed in 1987. The admission and promotion of women continued to be a relative problem even after these changes were implemented (Talyn, 2011).

Currently, the number of female Heads of Mission has steadily risen from having 11 senior females in 1999 to 30 in 2010. With regards to employment, between January and November 2009, a total of 4,070 people had applied to the British Diplomatic Service with 2,013 female candidates and 2,057 male candidates. Out of the total applications only 3% passed the entrance exams, of which 58% were female. The success rate of women has increased by 2% from 1990 to 2010. There are now more female junior diplomats in local embassies than men (Rahman-Figueroa, 2012).

In the United States, women were permitted to join the diplomatic corps in 1922 and they have slowly made their way to the highest leadership positions in the State Department.

In 1933, Ruth Bryan Owen was appointed as the first female chief of mission as head of the U.S. embassy for Denmark and Iceland. In the first 42 years following Ruth Owen's appointment, the number of female appointments as chief of mission or assistant secretaries of State stayed well within the single digits. This barrier was broken during President Ford's administration with the appointment of seven female chiefs of mission and three women to senior positions. The number of appointment for women kept on increasing with the Carter administration, when 18 women were made chiefs of mission and 10 were appointed to other senior positions. Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush continued the trend, with 33 and 37 female appointments, respectively. An important leap was recorded with the Clinton administration with the appointment of 116 women to senior diplomatic posts. In his first term alone, President George Bush had named 69 women to the highest diplomatic posts.

Ann Wright states that "the citadel of US diplomatic white male service – the position of Secretary of State – had not been breached by a woman" (Wright, 2005, p.1) until 1997. President Clinton was the first president to break the gender barrier by appointing Madeleine Albright as Secretary of State in 1997. President George W. Bush continued the trend in 2005 by appointing Condoleezza Rice at the same post (Wright, 2005). Prior to these two appointments, and despite the increasing number of women joining the State Department, women were not appointed as Ambassadors to countries of great political and economic importance to the United States like China, Russia and Germany among others (Wright, 2005). Madeleine Albright's appointment as Secretary of State, Wright stated, broke the mold of appointments for women in the Foreign Service. Well qualified women can be given the opportunity to work in countries and in positions in the State Department that were not previously offered to them.

Though the few women that have occupied posts that were "traditional" and reserved for men have shown they can perform as well as their male counterparts, only a very limited number of women have acceded to these positions worldwide. This fact is true both in the developed countries where women have been fighting for equal opportunities with men for several decades, as well as in developing countries.

Pakistan is a country where women are progressively gaining importance in the world of diplomacy. Currently, women diplomats head a dozen foreign missions in regions including Americas, Africa, Europe, Middle East and South Asia. For the first time in the country's history, the diplomat leading the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is a woman. Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, is the youngest ever foreign minister to head the male dominated Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The latest information from the ministry regarding the current number of officers shows that of the 447 serving officers 63 are women, constituting 13.2 per cent of the total officers. The existing gender imbalance is partly explained by the fact that Pakistan Foreign Service opened to women only in 1973 as a result of the Administrative Reforms of 1972. However, the role of Pakistani women in diplomacy dates back to 1952 when Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan became the first woman to be appointed as ambassador. She served as Representative of Pakistan to the 7th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Moreover, in addition to the Minister, a couple of the ministry's key divisional desks including Europe and South Asia are also headed by women. The appointment of women officers to the high profile slots has little to do with Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, as most of them had made their mark on their own merit, much before she was elevated to the office of a full minister. One reason for the highest number of women envoys at this given time is that a larger number of women officers have reached the level of seniority required for ambassadorial posts. However, this is the result of affirmative action for ensuring equal opportunity in the ministry for women officers who had earlier been sidelined. Former foreign secretaries Riaz Khokhar and Riaz Mohammad Khan are given credit for recognising the merit of women and ensuring impartiality in nominations and appointments for key diplomatic positions. Mr. Khokhar was the first foreign secretary to take affirmative action and increase visibility of accomplished, but mostly underappreciated women officers, by appointing them to important positions in the ministry. His successor Mr. Riaz Mohammad Khan had, for the first time in the ministry's history

appointed a woman officer, Ms. Tasnim Aslam, as the spokesperson, a high profile post that had till then been reserved for male officers.

Over the years women officers from the Pakistani foreign service have been posted in different regions and countries to most prized and difficult posts including China, US, UK, Central Asian states. In the recent past, Pakistani women diplomats heading foreign missions have been caught in crisis situations but remained steadfast. So those who believe that women are appointed ambassadors to promote a “soft image” of the country should think again says Qudssia Akhlaque. “This whole notion of women promoting a “soft image” is sexist, flawed and downright offensive. It is condescending and tends to undermine their professionalism and competence” continues Akhlaque. She mentions an incident related to this issue that happened in 2007 when Ms. Tasnim Aslam was appointed ambassador to Italy. At the farewell dinner held for Ms. Aslam in Islamabad, the Italian ambassador remarked that Ms. Aslam would project the ‘soft image’ of Pakistan in Italy. Fortunately for Ms. Aslam, the then foreign minister Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri who was present there immediately corrected the Italian Ambassador saying “It is for substance, not soft image that we are sending her as ambassador” (Akhlaque, 2012).

Women diplomats face several challenges and prejudices as the incident mentioned earlier involving the Pakistani Ambassador. Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch (2004), United States Ambassador to Nepal, from 1989 to 1993, cites two researches that were undertaken on women in diplomacy. The first study was conducted in 1995 by Nancy E. McGlen and Meredith Reid Sarkees who found that various factors excluded women and continue to exclude women from the field of foreign policy. Three factors mentioned among those are: traditional gender stereotypes; cultural norms; and overt discriminatory practices of foreign policy institutions. Women have been marginalized from foreign policy-making because traditional western and eastern philosophers from Aristotle to Confucius have taught that the state, like the household, should be governed by men. Particularly in affairs of the state, the traits most associated with being a man have been those most valued in the conduct of international politics. In addition, to the barriers posed by gender and cultural stereotyping, the study found

both direct and indirect discrimination against women by the National Security Council, Congress, the Department of State and the Department of Defense of the United States.

The study also pointed out that although more women are entering Foreign Service fields, the increase is concentrated in lower positions. Women remain largely under-represented in the top administrative and policy decision-making positions.

The second study was undertaken in 1998 by the Women's Foreign Policy Group (WFPG), involving 589 women, including in-depth interviews with 43 women, to learn more about the personal, professional and environmental factors that have shaped women's careers in the diplomatic service. The results were published in a report entitled "*Leading by Example: US Women Leaders in International Affairs*". Some of the findings of the study, Ambassador Bloch cites were:

- "A large proportion of the women studied were first, second or third generation Americans who were stimulated early on by study or work abroad.
- Job satisfaction outranked job security, material benefits or career status as motivational factors in their careers.
- A majority shared similar generational experiences and educational qualifications. Most had early exposure to other cultures, had studied abroad and obtained advanced college degrees.
- Affirmative action and special training programs did not often figure in their career progression.
- Most cited mentoring as important for advancement even though they did not have the benefit of mentors.
- Almost all said that serendipity, in the form of seized opportunities, had been more important to their career advancement than structured planning.
- Balancing family life with frequent overseas travel, long office hours and the need to attend conferences exacted a toll.

- To succeed the women had constantly to exceed performance expectations, make their male colleagues feel comfortable, and schedule marriage, family time, and even childbirth around their careers.”(Bloch, 2004)

Of her own personal experience Ambassador Bloch says that similar to the women who took part in the two studies, she realized quickly that she would have to work harder, smarter and constantly to exceed performance expectations and be able to even gain a foothold in diplomacy. Twenty years after she started work, she was finally offered an ambassadorship. However, a different problem surfaced in that her husband was not enthusiastic about her appointment. Faced with having to balance marriage with a career move, she opted for marriage. Women in diplomacy are often faced with such dilemmas she says; international careers often become "either/or" propositions, forcing women to choose between family and work. In fact, she added until the 1970s, women diplomats had to choose between marriage and career and the State Department expected women to give up their jobs if they married. It was only in 1974 that this requirement was removed.

Four years after her first nomination, Ambassador Bloch was given another Ambassadorial post and this time, her husband gave his blessings, even if he had to "give up" his wife for three to four years. Becoming ambassador, she felt a double burden. She, for one, had to succeed, to break the stereotypes that women and Asians are not equipped to handle foreign affairs. And second, she said she did not want to become another excuse for denying women and Asians future ambassadorial appointments. In her opinion, women will have finally made it in diplomacy when they can have both, their dream jobs and a happy personal life. Unfortunately, women still have a long way to go because her experience has taught her that diplomacy is still very much a man's world. But even so, she wants to acknowledge the changes registered as more and more women are becoming involved in international relations and increasingly taking positions that matter and gender stereotypes and assumptions are becoming less deeply embedded in international relations and foreign policy theory (Bloch, 2004).

A discussion forum for women in the diplomatic career was held from 24 to 27 October 2011 by the Instituto Matías Romero in Mexico. Several women who worked and also those still working in the diplomatic field took part in the discussions which raised topics such as: relations of power between genders; how to work and make a career while being a mother; and the role of women in the decision making process in foreign policy.

On the issue of relations of power between genders, a common stand of the women was that men all over the world normally have problems adjusting to a family setup where the wife is the one defining the conditions for the family life. The majority of husbands had difficulty coping with the fact that they may not be the breadwinner during a posting abroad, and instead, stay at home taking more care of the children. Other men simply do not accept to move with the family, but stay at home, or come to visit from time to time, leaving the women to take care of the children even while abroad. And others again give up on the relationship. A minimal number of men love staying at home and letting their wives become the breadwinners (Instituto Matías Romero, 2011).

Other issues raised by women regarding the relations of power between genders are for example as one participant said being ignored during meetings conducted by some male colleagues who only ask their male peers for comments and suggestions. While at other times she says, even though she was in a senior position than her male colleagues present in the room, she has been asked to make copies of documents or send out messages, because she was the only woman at the table (Instituto Matías Romero, 2011).

On how to work and make a career while being a mother, the women recalled how not so long ago women wanting to go into diplomacy were forced to choose between pursuing a successful career and having a fulfilling personal/family life. Though those rules have been removed women still face difficulties balancing the two. In some countries for instance mothers of young kids are perceived as less willing to work long hours when shortlisted for promotions (Instituto Matías Romero, 2011).

A diplomat from Latin America said when she joined her country's Foreign Service, many of her female role models were either single, or divorced or married but with no kids. Many of them she said stated quite proudly that they had had the courage to make the right choices, which in those years meant to succeed but stay childless. She believes things are changing now and that despite what women had been told for generations, women can have it all: being mothers, professionals and being good on both. She personally has four kids that she each breast-fed for at least one year a decision she said which was very challenging.

A participant from Mexico shared her own experience on the challenges of being a mother and a diplomat this way:

"I have a very supportive husband that takes care of my two daughters, who are 21 and 13 years old. Regrettably, my experience has not been an easy one. During the first years I traveled a lot and worked overtime to respond to the demands of my job. In both cases I had to short my maternity leave and I traveled so much that sometimes I have the feeling that the cost of my career has been very high not only for me, but for my family. In the other hand, I have two empowered young ladies that are very proud of their mother Ambassador. I always try to keep the balance of my role as professional and as a mother."
(Instituto Matías Romero, 2011)

On the role of women in the decision making process in foreign policy the women recalled how some scholars on gender and international relations have argued that women are inherently pacifist, and therefore they are more reluctant than men to promote sanctions or the threat of the use of force, than the use of force, or armed violence as a mean to solve problems. This would imply that the more women participate in foreign policy the more likely international peace would be reached and maintained.

One participant was of the view that the belief that women have any kind of different qualifications has to deal with the social environments in which women have develop more skills than others. It is natural to see women more inclined towards negotiations because in our societies the monopoly of the use of force is related with men. But she added that we should

not forget at the same time that women in power are very tough, citing the German Chancellor Angela Merkel. This she says reflects that we have the same capabilities than men.

Another participant further explained that since women and men are gender perspective oriented, it adds value to decision making processes since they look at all issues with a gender perspective so that programs, initiatives or solutions to a problem reflect it.

A participant from Finland stated that she sees lot of differences in the way women influence and adopt foreign policy, compared to men, giving the example of her country. In Finland, women obtained full political rights in 1906 and started to work in the Finnish parliament in 1907. They took up questions that were important to women like the right to education, child care, health care, care for elderly people and free school meals. This is true also in foreign policy. Women leaders such as Mary Robinson of Ireland, Tarja Halonen of Finland, the Liberian Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf and many others have taken up the questions of equality and promotion of women and children's rights in the international fora. There have been enormous steps forward in these areas as a result. The impact of women can also be clearly seen in development policy as well, the participant from Finland continued. Nowadays there are no development projects without a gender impact analysis. It comes as naturally as environmental impact assessments. There are more and more projects and programs to increase the participation of women in political life. Women foreign policy leaders put emphasis on projects focusing on education and health care, as well. To elaborate this idea she gives an example of her own experience working as Deputy Permanent Delegate to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). She recalls that the few active women in the Executive Board, decided to unite their forces in order to bring changes in the UNESCO which at that time she says had "unhealthy administrative" practices including corruption. The group worked closely together before big meetings and formed common positions on agenda items which would then be presented by the speaker. This way, she added they were able to have an impact on how policy was made at the UNESCO (Instituto Matías Romero, 2011).

Another participant to the forum discussion shared her view that there is nowadays a gradual shift of power from men to women. This, she continues, is still work in progress and changes are slow because it requires transforming the habit of men, but also of women. Women, do also need to understand that they have the capacity to deal and handle situations that were so far associated with men, including that of decision making process in foreign policy.

This information on the experience of women in the diplomatic world provides an important insight into the opportunities and challenges women face in this discipline. However, though many of the experiences sighted are of enormous relevance it is also important to assess if similarities and differences exist in opportunities and challenges faced by women here in Ethiopia. The unique and contextual factors of the country should be taken into consideration.

As mentioned in Chapter I, according to historians, a line of virgin queens had ruled Abyssinia, present day Ethiopia, 1000 years before Christ. Historians have recorded contacts made by several of these queens with foreign countries. One such well known queen is the Queen of Sheba, depicted by some historians as a legendary figure. Queen Sheba is described as “excelling in public relations and international diplomacy ... (and) also a competent ruler” (Alem, 2008, p.60). She is remembered for her visit to Israel to meet King Solomon from whom she had a son, Menelik I. Rita Pankhurst, who believes in the legendary aspect of the story states that Menelik I was said to be the founder of the Ethiopian Solomonic Dynasty which ended with the deposition of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974 (Pankhurst, 1996).

Another well-known Queen, this time from the middle ages, is Queen Eleni a good military strategist credited for the arrival of one of the first Portuguese diplomatic missions to Ethiopia in 1520. She welcomed the envoys sent by Dom Manuel, the then King of Portugal, who sought an alliance against Egypt and other Muslim powers in the Indian Ocean, and sent an Ambassador to Portugal suggesting joint action to defend Christianity (Pankhurst, 1996).

Empress Taitu Betul who was Empress of Ethiopia from 1889 to 1913 also played many significant roles in national and international politics, government, diplomacy and the development of the country (Alem, 2008). Empress Taitu could read and write Amharic and was more educated than the average lady of her days (Pankhurst, 1996). She was a close adviser to Emperor Menelik II who she considered was too trusting of the foreigners present in his court (Pankhurst, 1996). She had opposed the signing of the Treaty Wuchale signed with the Italians in 1890 suspecting a hidden motive from the side of the Italians (Alem, 2008).

After the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a Ministry in 1907, women were not assigned or appointed to work there until 1961. It was following the failed coup of 1960 that Emperor Haile Selassie named a new government and appointed cabinet ministers and assistant ministers, among whom Ambassador Yodit Imru, daughter of Ras Imru Haile Selassie who was a cousin of the Emperor, was appointed Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Yodit, the first woman Ambassador, served her country in various capacities as Assistant Minister, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador to different countries. She also led the Ethiopian delegation to the Non-Aligned Nations Conference in 1971.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Methodology

It was in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia that this study took place. The methodology that is used for this research is qualitative. Using this method the study aims to find out the position and the role of women at the Ministry. Polkinghorne (2005) describes qualitative research as “inquiry aimed at describing and clarifying human experience as it appears in people’s lives”. This type of research “explores attitudes, behaviour and experiences through such methods as interviews or focus groups. It attempts to get an in-depth opinion from participants” (Dawson, 2002, p. 14).

Qualitative research is further defined as “a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2009, p.4). Researchers using this method, Polkinghorne (2005) further explains, gather data in the form of spoken or written language rather than number. Creswell goes on to say that “the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data” (Creswell, 2009, p.4).

Different methodologies exist under the qualitative research among which there is Feminist Research. Feminist Research is research that utilizes feminist concerns and beliefs to ground the research process. As stated by Dawson (2002), “Feminist researchers argue that for too long the lives and experiences of women have been ignored or misrepresented. Often, in the past, research was conducted on male ‘subjects’ and the results generalised to the whole population” (Dawson, 2002, p.18). These feminist researchers also criticized the research topics and the methods used. Accordingly, the current study applies a feminist approach in its

endeavor to explore the perceptions and experiences of women in the field of international relations from their own perspective.

3.2. Data Sources: Primary and Secondary

Data for the research was collected from primary and secondary sources, but the main focus was on the primary data which was used as the main source of information. The purpose of data gathering in qualitative research is “to provide evidence for the experience it is investigating. The evidence is in the form of accounts people have given of the experience” (Polkinghorne, 2005, p.138).

Secondary data sources in the form of research reports, journal articles and related literature in the area of gender and international relations and the obstacles women face in taking part and making an impact in this field are used. They are in the form of books, published or unpublished reports, studies and policies.

3.2.1. Sampling

In selecting key informants, purposive sampling technique was used by the researcher. Purposive sampling is used because the aim of the research is describing the findings rather than generalizing (Dawson, 2002). The selection of women taking part in the research was based on the position they occupy at the Ministry and upon availability. As the research’s focus is on women in international relations, the women interviewed are those that occupy professional posts and not those that are in positions known as support giving staff such as secretary and mail runner.

3.2.2 Interview Guide

The primary data was collected using an interview guide. In-depth interviews, were conducted with twelve female employees at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. One-on-one

interviews using a well prepared interview guide was used to collect information. This type of data collection allowed me to have control over the line of questioning and also allowed the participants to discuss issues freely and also provide background to various issues raised. Nevertheless, this type of data collection could also have some drawbacks as the participants could be biased and/or might not be articulate or perceptive.

3.3. Method of data analysis

Interviews were conducted in Amharic upon the request of participants. The findings derived from the data collected were analysed and presented by grouping similar responses under general themes. The analysis and grouping are done in different steps. Initially, the data was read and reread to get an in-depth understanding of the various recurring issues. Then coding was done, followed by recoding to bring together similar issues to see patterns. Eventually themes were discerned that guided the write up, which are substantiated using quotations from the interviews. As Polkinghorne (2005) explains, in presenting his/her findings, “the researcher draws excerpts from the data to illustrate the findings and to show the reader how the findings were derived from the evidential data” (Polkinghorne, 2005, p.138).

3.4. Ethical consideration

The researcher asked for the consent of interviewees to take part in the research and have their views, ideas and comments used in the findings. They were also informed that they can withdraw from the study anytime they decide not to be part of the study anymore. The researcher respected the right of those taking part in the interviews and guaranteed them anonymity and confidentiality by not mentioning them by name in the findings, when requested as such.

CHAPTER FOUR

OVERVIEW OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Overview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ethiopia has a long history of communication with many different countries. This communication with the outside world was done through missionaries and envoys. Governmental institutions in the form of ministries were first started by Emperor Menelik in 1907 G.C. when he established the first Cabinet made up of twelve Ministries. One of these ministries was the Ministry of Commerce and Foreign Affairs led by Neggadras (Leader of Merchants) Haile-Giorgis Wolde-Michael. Twenty-four Ministers have since led what came to be known the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1907 to date. (MOFA, 2012)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs currently has a Minister, a State Minister, thirteen General Directorates and 46 Diplomatic Missions abroad. Two new additional Missions have been opened and are in the process of being staffed which will bring the total number of Diplomatic Missions abroad to 48. The Ministry has a total staff of 465 in Addis Ababa out of which 115 (or 24.73%) are women. The Diplomatic Missions have 227 staff in total and women occupy 57 (or 25.11%) of the posts.

Table 3. Staff currently serving in Ethiopian Diplomatic Missions abroad

No.	Position	Male	Female	Total
1.	Ambassador	46	5	51
2.	Minister Counselor I	33	8	41
3.	Minister Counselor II	14	2	16
4.	Counselor General	1	-	1
5.	Assistant Counselor General	2	1	3
6.	Assistant Counselor General I	4	1	5
7.	Assistant Counselor General II	1	2	3

8.	Assistant Counselor General III	2	1	3
9.	Assistant Counselor General IV	1	1	2
10.	Advisor I	18	2	20
11.	Advisor II	13	6	19
12.	First Secretary	15	2	17
13.	Second Secretary	5	2	7
14.	Third Secretary	2	6	8
15.	Secretary II	--	1	1
16.	Attaché	3	2	5
17.	Executive Secretary I	--	7	7
18.	Executive Secretary II	--	5	5
19.	Executive Secretary III	--	3	3
20.	Unspecified	2	--	2
	TOTAL	170	57	227

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012)

4.2. Female employees at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Several women, though their numbers could not be remotely compared with men, have been appointed as Ambassadors and have represented Ethiopia in different countries since the appointment of Ambassador Yodit Imru in 1961 by Emperor Haile Selassie. There are currently 5 (or 9.8%) women ambassadors serving in diplomatic missions abroad out of a total of 51 positions. Among the well-known career diplomats still working in the Ministry is Ambassador Konjit Sinegiorgis. Ambassador Konjit joined the Ministry in 1962. She is the most senior career diplomat in the Ministry and has held numerous positions both in Addis Ababa and overseas. She is currently serving as Permanent representative of Ethiopia to the African Union and to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and is also the Director-General of the African Union Directorate-General at the Ministry (MoFA, 2012).

4.3. Findings and discussion

Out of the 13 General Directorates at the Ministry, 3 are headed by women. Five of these Directorates have women Directors. These numbers show that the number of women at higher levels barely fills 1/3 of the positions. In addition, out of the 115 female employees only 37 (or 32.17%) are in the diplomatic line of work, which is the “core business” of the Ministry. The remaining (67.82%) are found in support giving positions with the highest number, 33 (28.69%) performing secretarial duties (Executive Secretary, Secretary and Secretary Typist).

Table 4: Posts occupied by female employees at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NO.	POSITION	NUMBER
1.	Director General	3
2.	Director	5
3.	Head of Division	1
6.	Senior Officer	4
7.	Officer	13
8.	Diplomat Trainee	11
9.	Senior Accountant	1
10.	Accountant	4
11.	Cashier	3
12.	Assistant Librarian	1
13.	Executive Secretary	19
14.	Secretary	7
15.	Secretary Typist	7
16.	Archives staff	10
17.	Floor attendant	7
18.	Information Assistant	2
19.	Mail runner/messenger	9

20.	Fax and Telephone Operator	3
21.	Photography and film making	1
22.	Transportation services staff	1
23.	Driver	1
24.	Security guard	1
25.	Gardening and landscape	1
	TOTAL	115

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012)

The educational qualification of the female employees ranges from the Master's level all the way down to a grade 2 level. Forty women (34.78%) have a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in subjects such as Economics, English Language and Educational planning while, 35 (30.43%) have Diplomas in secretarial sciences. Seven women (6.08%) have a Master's Degree, the highest educational qualification among the female employees.

Table 5: Educational Qualifications of female employees at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

NO.	POSITION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
1.	MA/LLM	7	6.0
2.	First Degree (BA/BSC)	40	34.78
3.	College Diploma	35	30.43
4.	Technical School Diploma	24	20.86
5.	Certificate	1	0.86
6.	High School	6	5.21
7.	Elementary School	2	1.73
	TOTAL	115	100

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2012)

4.3.1. Background of professional female employees who were interviewed

Twelve women (or 32.43%) from the professional category (Director General, Director, Head of Division, Senior Officer, Officer and Diplomat Trainee) were interviewed for this study. They were selected to represent the different Directorates of the Ministry. Seven of these employees were recruited from Addis Ababa and five came from Regional Administrative Bureaus to work at the Ministry. The working experiences of the interviewees ranges from 7 to 2 years and 8 months. Eleven of the participants hold a BA Degree and one holds a Master's Degree. Six of the women were married and have three to one children, and six are single. Interviews were conducted inside the Ministry with the assistance of the Women, Youth, and Children's Affairs Directorate.

Table 6: Experience, Educational Qualifications and Marital Status of female employees in professional posts, interviewed for this study

Position	Years of Experience	Educational Qualification	Marital Status	Number of Children
Director General	4	BA	Single	--
Director	4	BA	Single	--
Head of Division	7	BA	Married	3
Senior Officer	5	BA	Single	--
Officer	4	BA	Married	1
Officer	2 years 8 months	MA	Single	--
Diplomat Trainee	4	BA	Married	1
Diplomat Trainee	3	BA	Married	2
Diplomat Trainee	5	BA	Single	--
Diplomat Trainee	4	BA	Married	--
Diplomat Trainee	3	BA	Married	1
Diplomat Trainee	6	BA	Single	--

The findings are presented under sub-topics 'opportunities', 'challenges' and aspirations. Opportunities are taken to consider the positive aspects of the current situation of the interviewees while challenges show problems they face and indicate existing gaps.

4.3.2. Opportunities

a) Recruitment

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs applies affirmative action for women applicants and women are encouraged to apply for all positions advertised. In addition, the Committee of Recruitment in place is composed of 3 women and 3 men to ensure equal and fair treatment to applicants. This is an implementation of Article 35 of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) which states that women have equal rights to those of men in all spheres, including education and employment. It also grants women the right to benefit from affirmative action and equal employment, pay and promotion (FDRE, 1995). This provision in the Constitution is also in agreement with liberal feminism which calls for the equality of men and women through political and legal reforms.

Affirmative action is the preferential treatment of persons in employment, the admission to selective schools and universities and the granting of other social goods and resources by giving positive consideration to specified races and ethnicities and to one gender (Crosby, 123). In the case of the Ministry, the Researcher was informed by the Director of the Women, Youth and Children's Affairs Directorate that three points were added to the result of female candidates during recruitments or promotions.

But, despite these measures put in place by the Ministry to ensure that women join the Ministry, the number of women that apply for vacant posts is minimal. When interviewee D joined the Ministry close to 300 people had applied for the advertised vacant positions of these, there were only forty women that sat for the written exams and interviews. In the end, of the 170 people recruited, only 7 were women. The number of women that applied was small she believes, because the number of women that meet the educational requirement is small. Even when she graduated from University, there were only 10 female students among the batch of 35 students.

When interviewee D joined the Ministry close to 300 people had applied. Forty women were listed for the interview and written exams. In the end, of the 170 people recruited, only 7 were women. The number of women that applied was small she says, because the number of women that finish university is also small. The nature of the work in the Directorate she is working in is such that staff are asked to travel abroad on short notice, work late after working hours or even come in the Office on holidays. Some staff in the Ministry had openly told some of the successful women candidates that they will not be occupying the positions for a long time because of the challenging nature of the work. But, contrary to their expectations, all 7 women had risen to the occasion and are still working in the Ministry.

In addition to the affirmative action in place women also benefit from the practice that calls for representation of the different nations and nationalities at the Ministry. In order to have nations and nationalities represented at the Ministry recruited successful candidates from regional administrative bureaus. Two of the staff who were interviewed for this study, Interviewees C and F, benefitted from this measure. Interviewee C was among 64 candidates that were shortlisted for advertised positions. Out of the fifteen who were finally recruited five were women. Ensuring diversity both in terms of gender and regional representation allows the Ministry to bring different perspectives to address issues of national interest.

b) Promotion of support staff within the Ministry to professional posts

With the recently undertaken Business Process Reengineering (BPR), staff who were recruited for support giving positions and had gotten their first degrees while working at the Ministry were promoted to professional posts category and were appointed at the entry level as Diplomat Trainees. Women benefited more from this undertaking with eleven promotions out of twenty going to them.

Interviewee I, one of the newly promoted staff, says this promotion is the first she has heard of since she first started working in the Ministry six years back. She is happy to see that the efforts and the sacrifices she has made has paid off and she is certain that, colleagues who said that it was all in vain will now reconsider their stand.

This move will help in increasing the number of women in professional posts and encourage more young women to join the Ministry. It will also help the Ministry achieve equal representation and participation of women and men in diplomacy and also ensure that the diplomats are representative of the whole society (Rahman, 2011). This type of undertaking will also help eradicate institutional biases on the capacity of women which liberal feminists say is one of the practices that contribute to enforce the inequality between women and men.

c) Training

The Diplomat Trainees undergo 18 months of on the job training in three different Directorates of the Ministry before they are placed in one of the Directorates. Interviewee E said that this training gives them a general understanding of the activities and works of the Ministry and also allows them to identify in which Directorate they will be better qualified to work in.

Interviewee E further indicated that she has been given the opportunity by the Ministry to attend English language classes given at the Economic Commission for Africa. This is a very good opportunity she says as it will enable her improve her English language skills an important asset for staff of the Ministry who to interact with the many foreigners they come in contact with while on duty. She recalls the experience she had while she was assigned as a Protocol Assistant during one of the African Union Summit that took place in Addis Ababa. She said she was embarrassed and she still is when she remembers how she was unable to easily communicate with the delegation she was assigned to assist during their stay in Addis Ababa.

Diplomat trainees are assigned a coach who follows up their progress and advises them and guides them throughout their training. Coaches are chosen among staff with a very high performance evaluation record. Interviewee L said she is benefiting a lot from her coach who advises her, from his practical experience, how to excel on the job and how to keep on improving her knowledge of diplomacy by providing her with various materials and resources. Out of the six diplomat trainees interviewed, none had a woman coach which I believe is a drawback as these future diplomats miss out on the practical experience of women diplomats and the challenges and opportunities awaiting them.

d) Support of family and/or spouse

Interviewees agree that the support given to them by their family and husband, for those that are married, was crucial for their success and performance both at work and in their studies. Interviewee G is quick to give thanks to her family, “had it not been for their financial support, I would not have been able to finish my university studies due to the low salary I received.”

Employees at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are eligible for transfers to Ethiopian missions abroad after having served four years at the Ministry in Addis Ababa and pending a positive performance evaluation and clearance from the government. On the issue of transfer, except for the Head of Division, who has been married for well over 20 years, the interviewees married for not more than 6 years on average, say that they have discussed the issue of working in Ethiopian missions abroad with their spouse who have agreed “in principle” to living abroad.

4.3.3. Challenges

a) Lack of required educational qualification by women

Despite the measures put in place, such as the affirmative action and also the fact that Ministry says it gives equal opportunity to women and men, the number of women that actually

apply for vacant posts is minimal. One reason cited by participants as to why more women do not apply for professional vacant posts is that they don't fulfill the educational requirement. This is due to the small number of female students attending higher education. The table below, with data for the academic year of 2010-2011, obtained from the Ministry of Education proves this fact. Enrolment for female students in both government and non-government higher education institutions is less than fifty per cent. The highest percentage of female students is found at the undergraduate level with 31.9%. The number of those enrolled at the graduate, Master's level, comes next with 22.05% of female students enrolled in non-government education institutions. Female enrolment at PhD level is very minimal with a total of 12.54%.

Table 7: Enrolment in Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia – 2003 E.C. (2010/11)

Program	Enrolment								
	Government			Non-Government			Government and Non-Government		
	Male	Female	Female Enrolment (%)	Male	Female	Female Enrolment (%)	Male	Female	Female Enrolment (%)
Undergraduate – Degree	273,368	95,886	25.96	53,401	25,038	31.9	326,769	120,924	27.01
Postgraduate – Masters	15,996	2,490	13.46	682	193	22.05	16,678	2,683	13.85
Postgraduate – PhD	690	99	12.54	–	–	–	690	99	12.54
Total	290,054	98,475	25.34	54,083	25,231	31.88	344,137	123,706	26.44

Liberal feminists believe that education is key to women's emancipation. As can be seen from the table above, the number of women joining higher education institutions is still low proving once again that legal provisions need to be supported by additional measures such as sensitization of the society as a whole. An example is the recent media campaign which shows that practices discriminating girls still exist and need to be changed.

b) Stereotypes and cultural misconceptions

Gender stereotyped roles are observed at the Ministry with more women found in support giving posts as secretaries and few of them occupying higher posts as Director, and Director General. Interviewee K started working as a messenger while continuing her evening

studies at university. She recalls several instances where officers with whom she came to work with treated her as barely being able to read and write. One male colleague suggested that she continues her studies saying; ‘how far have you gone? Grade 8? It would be good for you if you at least finish high school.’

Interviewee D still recalls vividly how some male colleagues were confidently telling her that the successful women would have been better off applying in other Ministries because the Foreign Affairs was no place for young women, especially those that are yet to start a family. But, contrary to their expectations all 7 women are still working in the Ministry and performing as well as their male colleagues.

Despite the measures welcoming women into the diplomatic hierarchy, many of the decision-making posts are still dominated by men and this leads to the existence of stereotypes and cultural misconceptions that make it difficult for more women to break through.

c) Women’s low self-esteem

One factor contributing to the continuation of the gender stereotype is the low self-esteem of women themselves. Women need to break free from this negative outlook and consider themselves equal with men. Interviewee D explains that she has come across some women, who when designated to lead task forces, shy away from responsibility and have their right taken by male colleagues who are more than willing to lead. She said, “we women should stop stopping ourselves” and seize the opportunities given to us to demonstrate that we can perform as well as men. While promoting education, she also believes that we need to encourage girls assuring them that they can achieve anything if they work hard.

A study by Europe’s Institute of Leadership and Management revealed that women have lower confidence with regard to their careers. Half of the women interviewed admitted to feelings of self-doubt about their performance and career while only 31% of men felt the same

way. Men also were more confident, with 70% of those taking part in the study showing high or very high levels of self-confidence compared to 50% of the women (Flynn *et al*, 2011).

The above-mentioned study also revealed that the lack of self-confidence in women is also displayed when applying for jobs or promotions. Twenty percent of the men said they would apply for a post in they only partially meet the requirements compared to 14% of women. (Flynn *et al*, 2011).

d) Difficulties encountered in self-development

Interviewee J worked as a secretary and continued her studies to obtain her BA Degree. Unable to get admitted for an extension MA programme, she registered for another BA Degree course. Unfortunately, she was soon after transferred to a new Directorate where the work load required that she stays in the office well after working hours. She missed many classes and exams and was forced to withdraw from the University.

Absence from class is not the only challenge that these women faced while working and studying, arriving on time is also a problem. Interviewee G explains that classes in most universities begin at 6:00 pm so they have to rush to get there on time, but “with the salaries we earn, it is difficult to use taxies every day. So I often walked half of the way and then took taxies. I was not married at that time so I also used to take money from my parents until I received my next salary.”

One issue that the interviewees agree on is that women are not many in the Ministry’s professional positions because they do not have the required educational qualification. Therefore, even if the affirmative action is there to help them they cannot benefit from it either for promotion or for scholarships. Interviewee D says, “It is true that the affirmative action is in place and women are encouraged to apply for the various vacancies that are advertised but

how many women meet the minimum requirements in the first place to be able to benefit of these measures?”

The situation is at times the same once women are inside the Ministry whereby they cannot benefit of opportunities for scholarships because of their lower grades than men. Interviewee H graduated from university with a 2.5 cumulative average and says that the minimum point to compete for scholarships offered by different countries is 3.00 point. Though without success, she says she has tried on one occasion to have the Human Resources Directorate of the Ministry discuss with the Embassy, of the scholarship awarding country, to see if there was any possibility of lowering the grade for women. She hopes that the Ministry will find a way to accommodate her desire and that of the other female colleagues to further their education by arranging special classes with universities so that they can have the chance to compete with their male colleagues.

e) Separation of families due to movement of women

Interviewee C took the opportunity offered to staff from regional Bureaus to apply for posts at Federal Ministries and was successful in joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Unfortunately, her family could not join her when she came to Addis Ababa. She left behind a two-year old and a fourteen year old daughters and a nineteen year old son with their father. Although there was a maid in the house, the fourteen year old girl assumed the role of her mother in overseeing the running of the house in addition to her studies. Because of household chores and responsibilities, the young girl was spending less and less time studying and became weak in her studies. The fate of the boy was worse. He failed in his exams and dropped out from university. His mother is still trying to have him attend, at least, a technical school. Interviewee C says that though she is happy to have had the chance to advance her career, she regrets the price that her children had to pay.

Diplomacy, Rahman states, is a highly “peripatetic business specifically because every diplomat’s contract includes a mobility clause that means they can be sent anywhere in the world at any time” (Rahman, 2011). Each diplomatic post lasts approximately 4 years. These movements pose a great challenge to women. Though I was not able to interview the staff in question, I was informed by one of her colleagues about a woman who went through divorce as a result of problems that arose in her family following her assignment abroad. It is often difficult interviewees said for a woman to be posted abroad and have her husband leave his job and follow her to her duty station.

In fact, while it goes without saying that wives accompany their husbands to missions, men, most often do not do so. Interviewee C recalls that one of the women, among the five that was recruited then, unfortunately had to return back to her hometown because her family could not move with her. Her husband who was also a government employee could not get a transfer to Addis Ababa so she had to choose between her own career and her family.

Men often regard their career as central to their self-identity and may therefore be unwilling to give up their job to accompany their wives. The situation is further complicated if the diplomat posted to a mission abroad has a spouse with an independent career outside the diplomatic service (Rahman, 2011). This problem of separation of families and even divorce is also seen in other countries. When the journalist, Mary Jordan, interviewed female ambassadors in Washington about their marital status, 4 out of the 8 diplomats said they were divorced while the other half said their husbands did not accompany them to the United States because of their own jobs (Jordan, 2010).

Another problem which might seem trivial says Interviewee C is the housing problem faced by women moving to Addis Ababa. She rents houses from individuals and has become so fed up of moving from one place to another. Her hope is now that the Ministry arranges with the agency of rented houses to enable her rent a government house.

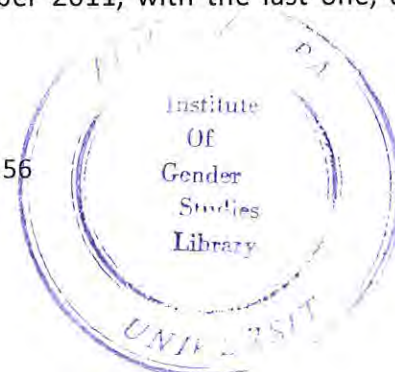
f) Lack of clarity in promotional rewards

Promotions, transfers and posting to missions abroad are mainly based on performance evaluations that are filled by superiors. Evaluations used to be filled every year but are now done so every six months. Around four years back, obtaining good results on evaluations was based on the good will of supervisors and was final as staff could not question it nor have their objections heard by a higher decision-making body. Interviewee A states that this practice affected more women employees than men as supervisors used it to settle scores with those they had misunderstandings with or those to whom they did not want to give a promotion. In addition, women were also vulnerable she says as some supervisors asked them for “favours” in return for good results. But, a Committee of five people has now been set up to enable staff who wish to appeal to do so without fear of retribution. Two of the Committee members have to be women.

I had the privilege of meeting Ambassador Yodit Imru during my research for this paper and from what she said, favouring men for promotions seems to have been the norm during the time when she was at the Ministry. She said men were unquestionably given promotions because they had families to support whereas women could always fall back on their family’s support even if they lost their jobs.

g) Lack of visibility of the Women, Youth and Children’s Affairs Directorate in the Ministry

All staff who were interviewed for this study except, two, did not know what the activities and the mandate of the Directorate were. From discussions with staff of the Directorate, I was able to understand that staff assigned to the Directorate have been changed frequently disrupting the continuous flow of its activities. The four staffs in the Directorate have been assigned to work starting from September 2011, with the last one, a diplomat trainee,



joining in April 2012. Two of the senior staffs are currently awaiting assignment to diplomatic missions abroad.

Directorates of women's affairs were created in government institutions following the 1993 National Policy on Women. This policy aims to create appropriate structures within government offices and institutions to establish gender-sensitive policies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is late in establishing its Women, Youth and Children's Affairs Directorate which is established five years ago. The negative impact of the late establishment of the Directorate is revealed in the study of Mulu (2009). According to her findings, interviews conducted in the Ministry reveal that there is no gender policy, guideline or strategy that serve to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment (Mulu, 2009).

Current practice also show that the Directorate needs to be given due attention with the allocation of adequate staff in terms of expertise and number in order to ensure that gender issues are properly addressed at the Ministry and also to enable the Directorate assist female employees.

h) Lack of training tailored to meet the needs of female employees

Trainings attended by interviewees so far were on issues of interest to all staff in general. Staff also benefit from two-days training on topics such as gender mainstreaming and assertiveness organized by the Women, Youth and Children's Affairs Directorate.

Interviewees all agree that as women working in a field that has so far been dominated by men they would like to have trainings catered for their needs. Interviewee J works in a Directorate where they have to present investment opportunities in Ethiopia to representatives of foreign companies. Thus her training needs are in the area of public speaking and presentation.

Interviewee C says her training need is in the area of leadership skills. She at times encounters problems with male colleagues who do not come outright and refuse to obey her orders but find a way of letting her know that they do not wish to take orders from her. This has at times forced her to work overtime to meet deadlines. She believes attending trainings or short courses for women and leadership will help her develop skills to solve such types of problems.

To develop in the professional world, and use their potential to the maximum, women have to be exposed to the same opportunities as men. Women need to have access to different types of trainings, participate in meetings, be allowed to travel so that they can have more exposure to the outside world.

4.3.4. Aspirations of women in the Ministry

Interviewee D has several years of working experience in the Ministry. She graduated from the University and worked in a government organization for a few months before joining the Ministry at the level of Diplomat Trainee and has had two promotions so far. She is currently looking for scholarships to obtain her Master's Degree and prepare herself for more challenging and higher decision making positions.

Interviewee L, a Diplomat Trainee, recalls with enthusiasm the three months on the job training she had in one of the Directorates led by a woman. In her own words she said, "since I finished school and started work, I have never met such an intelligent, efficient, dedicated and a positive woman. She encourages staff under her to excel at their job and believes in team work. I have a very good relationship with her." Having worked with such a competent woman, Interviewee L is now more than before confident that women can become good managers and leaders and that she can also progress in her career, to fulfill her dream of joining the rank of the few career diplomats that have served their country.

The aspiration of women to move up to assume higher posts is demonstrated by the diplomat trainees promoted within the Ministry. They overcame challenges and prepared themselves for opportunities to transfer to higher positions. With this chance given to them they are ready to show that with proper educational qualifications, they can perform as well as their male colleagues. All Trainees participants to this study share the view that this is not the ultimate goal for them. With further trainings and equal opportunities given to them, they want to make use of their right to equal employment and pay with men, and assume higher positions with more decision making powers and responsibilities. The success of these women would be a good benchmark to other aspiring women inside and outside of the Ministry.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. SUMMARY

Positive steps are being taken by the Ministry, as a Federal institution, for the recruitment of women both from the capital and the regional/administration so as to represent women from different nations and nationalities. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has started a good practice of promoting women within the Ministry who have upgraded their educational qualification while on the job. This is indeed a good undertaking that will enable women occupy higher positions and eventually decision-making positions within the Ministry. Furthermore, the fact that the structure of the Ministry includes a Women, Youth and Children's Affairs Directorate is a step forward in acknowledging the importance of gender issues. Moreover, the implementation of affirmative action during recruitment, promotion and the award of scholarships is also witness to the efforts being made by the Ministry to provide an opportunity for women.

Nevertheless, despite these positive steps which liberal feminists promote, the number of women in the professional category still lags behind that of men. In addition, gender roles are stereotyped with more men occupying positions usually classified as jobs for male such as director, driver ... and women are assigned to posts such as secretarial jobs.

Measures such as affirmative action are positive tools put in place to ensure equal participation of women to education and employment. However, these measures should be implemented with practical action to close the gaps in the academic levels between women and men.

The measures to be applied should also take into consideration culture. To develop in the professional world, women need to be exposed to the same opportunities as men. They also need to have access to training, participation in meetings and official travel. When providing special emphasis should be given to assertiveness to counter the negative cultural impact resulting in women's low self-esteem. Arrangements to assist women should also pay attention to their family and their personal concerns which might include, parental leave, nursery care in order to be able to enjoy the opportunities given to them.

The researcher was able to meet a group of young women who aspire to move to higher responsibilities and positions. These young women put themselves through evening school and prepared themselves for promotions. They all agree that the support given to them by their families have been a determining factor for their success. The Ministry has given recognition to the efforts of these employees by promoting them to the professional post category. While giving a chance to staff to progress on their career is a positive step it should also be accompanied by proper training.

5.2. CONCLUSION

I agree with Rahman-Figueroa who wrote in her article "Celebrating the rise of women in diplomacy", that classifying women as weak, vulnerable and submissive are old stereotypes that are no longer acceptable as grounds for misemployment. Rather, the inclusion of women in senior ambassadorial positions and decision-making positions in the field of international relations illustrates a progressive and modernised diplomatic society that takes into account the opinions and perspectives of women.

To conclude in the words of Rahman-Figueroa, "diplomacy is not symbolic of men's status and views of world affairs but is reflective of a whole society. In respect to this, diplomacy of the 21st century must be represented equally by men and women of equivalent merit and standing. Women's equal participation in diplomacy plays a crucial role in the general process of

the advancement of women in any field. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved".

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a whole and the Women, Youth and Children's Affairs Directorate specifically.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

- a) Allocate budget to sponsor women employees who wish to further their education and when needed assist them in obtaining scholarships from its various partners and higher educational institutions both within the country and outside.
- b) Assign qualified and committed staff to the Women, Youth and Children's Affairs Directorate to sensitize staff of the Ministry on gender issues and lead the fight against the deep rooted stereotype and cultural misconceptions regarding women.
- c) Work closely with higher educational institutions and have regular sensitization programmes so that they can recruit young and aspiring diplomats right out of university.
- d) Ensure that the staff of the Ministry are well qualified so as not to compromise on the high caliber/qualification required from its staff, while implementing the affirmative action.

- e) Organise regular trainings to upgrade the capacity of staff.
- f) Make special arrangements to encourage and allow women to join and attend classes regularly at higher education institutions.

The Women, Youth and Children's Affairs Directorate of the Ministry to:

- a) Play a more active role in the awareness raising of gender issues among all staff of the Ministry and ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all activities, policies and programmes.
- b) Strive to get the support from the higher officials to rally for the cause of women.
- c) Establish a forum where women can share experience among themselves and also establish a link with foreign women Ambassadors posted in Addis Ababa.

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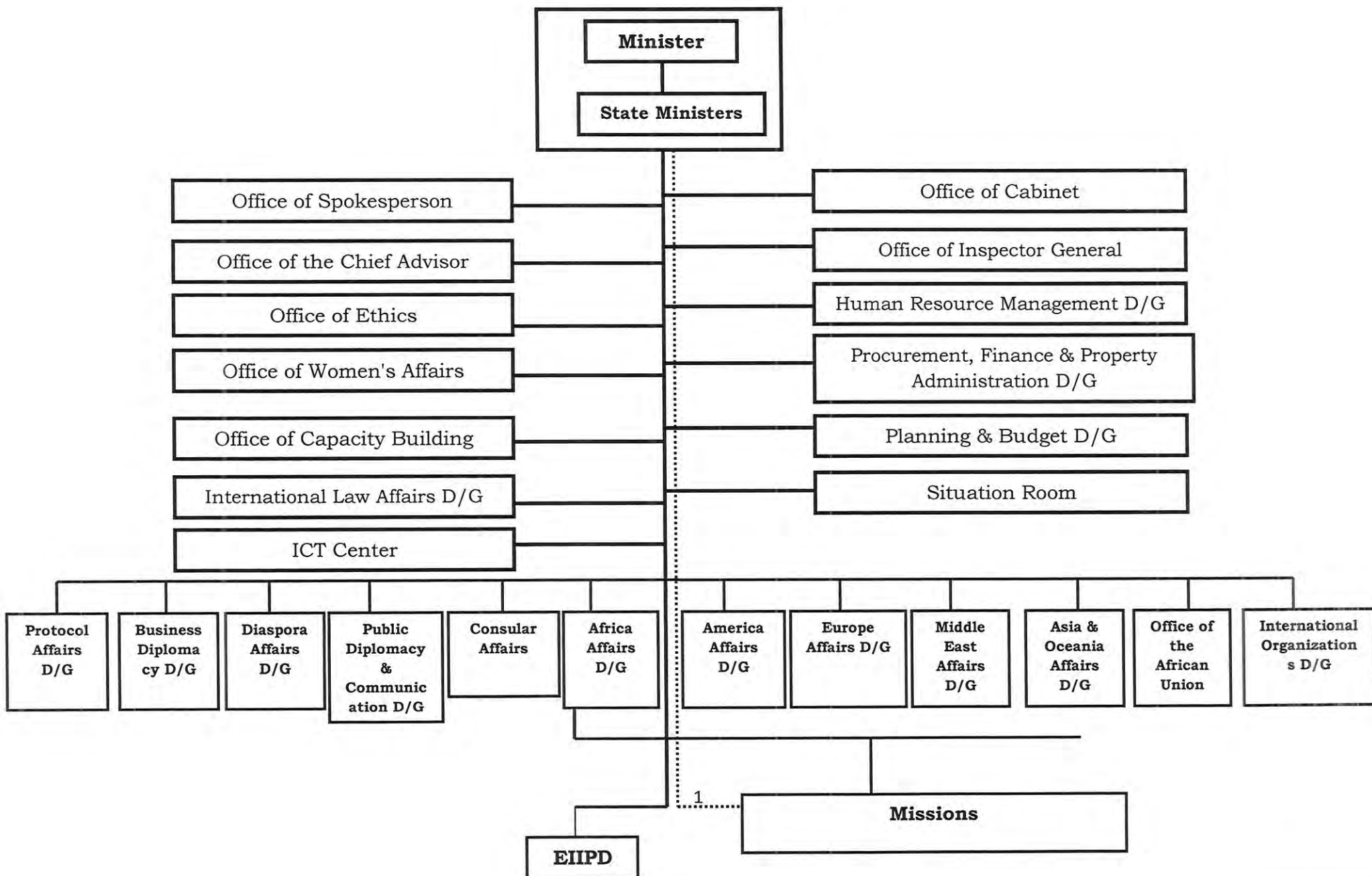
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List of Ethiopian Foreign Ministers since 1907 G.C.

No.	Name	Date (from – to)	Title
1.	H.E. Negadras Haile Giorgis W/Michael First Minister	1907-1910	Minister of Foreign Affairs
2.	H.E. Negadras Yigezu Behabte	1910-1911	Minister of Foreign Affairs
3.	H.E. Fitawrari Habte Giorgis Dinegde	1912	Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs
4.	H.E. Dejazmach Beyene Yimer	1912-1916	Minister of Foreign Affairs
5.	H.E. Ras Mulugeta Yigezu	1916-1917	Minister of Foreign Affairs
6.	H.E. Tsehafe Tizaz Wolde Meskel Tariku	1917 (for few months)	Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs
7.	His Highness Crown Prince Tefferi Mekonnen	1917-1930	Minister of Foreign Affairs
8.	H.E. Bilaten Getta Hiruy W/Silassie	1930-1937	Minister of Foreign Affairs
9.	H.E. Bilaten Getta Lorenzo Mebrhatu Taezaz	1941	Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia
10.	H.E. Bilaten Getta Ephrem T/Medhin	1942-1943	Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs
11.	H.E. Tsehafe Tizaz Aklilu Habte Wold	1943-1949 1949-1957 1959-1961	Vice Minister Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs
12.	H.E. Ato Yilma Deressa	1958	Minister
13.	H.E. Lij Michael Imiru	1961 (for few months)	Minister of Foreign Affairs
14.	H.E. Ato Ketema Yifru	1961-1966 1966-1970	Minister of Foreign Affairs
15.	H.E. Dr. Minase Haile	1970-1973	Minister of Foreign Affairs
16.	H.E. Dr. Dejazmach Zewdie G/Silassie	1974 (for few months)	Minister of Foreign Affairs
17.	H.E. Ato Kifle Wodajo	1975-1977	Minister of Foreign Affairs
18.	H.E. Dr. Feleke Gedle Giorgis	1977-1983	Minister of Foreign Affairs
19.	H.E. Col. Goshu Wolde	1983-1986	Minister of Foreign Affairs
20.	H.E. Col. Berhanu Bayih	1986-1989	Minister of Foreign Affairs
21.	H.E. Ato Tesfaye Dinka	1989-1991	Minister of Foreign Affairs
22.	H.E. Ato Tesfaye Tadesse	1991 (One month)	Minister of Foreign Affairs
23.	H.E. Ato Seyoum Mesfin	1991 – 2010	Minister of Foreign Affairs
24.	H.E. Ato Hailemariam Dessalegn	2010 - to date	Minister of Foreign Affairs

Organisational Chart of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs



**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR FEMALE EMPLOYEES OCCUPYING
PROFESSIONAL POSTS AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF
THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA**

Date of Interview:

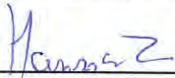
1. Case ID:
2. Marital Status:
3. Do you have any children?
4. What is your religion?
5. What languages do you speak? (local and international)
6. What is your educational background?
7. When did you join the Ministry?
8. At which position?
9. What is your current position?
10. How do you see the promotional rewards in your ministry?
11. How is it for men and women?
12. Do you see any difference in promotion processes and patterns among men and women employees? If so why?
13. If you have had any promotion what were the criteria/procedures you went through to obtain your post?
14. Are you currently attending classes or have you attended classes at a higher educational institution while working at the Ministry? What are/were the challenges you faced?

15. Were there any opportunities open to you inside the Ministry once you finished your studies?
16. What type of on job trainings have you had?
17. Did you find the trainings useful in performing your duty and facilitating your career advancement? If not what type of training would you recommend?
18. Which position do you aspire to occupy? (Here you need to probe further. If they are not aspiring for top positions, why not?)
19. What procedures are in place or what measures are taken by the Ministry to encourage women advance in their careers inside the Ministry?
20. Have your benefitted from any affirmative action with regards to employment, promotion or scholarships?
21. What is your assessment of this affirmative action? Do you think that the current affirmative action goes far enough in enabling women to have access to higher positions? What other action would you recommend?
22. Do you have the support of your spouse/partner and your family in your work?
23. How do you relate with your male colleagues? Would you say that they see you as their equal in the performance of your duty? Are they supportive of your career advancement and goal?
24. What kind of reception do you get from people outside your professional circle when you are serving in this capacity?
25. In your opinion what are the challenges the younger generation should overcome to serve in high positions? Would you say that society's view of working women has changed?
26. What changes or new practices would you recommend to the Ministry so that more women join and progress to higher positions?
27. What would you recommend to young women who wish to join the Ministry?

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Student's Name: Hanna Zerihun Leguesse

Signature: 

Date of Submission: 06/07/2012