

Perception of Females Instructors and Administrative Workers as to the Challenges to Ascribe Management Positions in Debre Markos University, Ethiopia

Bizualem Lemma Ketema (MBA)

Lecturer, Department of Management, College of Business and Economics, Debre Markos University

Biruk Ayalew Wondem (PhD)

Assistant Professor, Department of Accounting and Finance, College of Business and Economics, Debre Markos University

Abstract

The general objective of the study was to investigate the perception differences between female instructors and administrative workers as to the challenges to ascribe management positions in Debre Markos University. To achieve the objective of the study from 927 total populations who were working in Debre Markos University 280 sample have taken through simple random sampling method. Primary data were collected through questionnaires from a sample of 280 respondents. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the existing situation of women's representation in leadership in Debre Markos University. Statistical tests would be performed based using Mann-Whitney non-parametric statistical tests to examine the perception differences between female instructors and administrative workers as to the challenges to ascribe management positions in the university. From the descriptive result, it has shown that the representation of women in management position is very low. The study of this finding revealed that organizational, social and personal related challenges influence equally female academic and female administrative staffs towards ascribing management position. Finally, it is recommended that; it is important to create work environment that is suitable for women in order to improve uniform representation of women across management position and to aspire managerial positions.

Keywords: Ascribe management positions, Social challenges, Organizational challenges, Personal challenges, Empowerment, Debre Markos University

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1. Introduction

Leadership is not a simple process which requires multiple abilities whether assumed by female or male (Al-Jaradat, M & Khaled M, 2014). According to Carey (2007), female leaders are more assertive and persuasive, have a stronger need to get things done and are more willing to take risks than male leaders. Female leaders were also found to be more empathetic and flexible, as well as stronger in interpersonal skills than their male counterparts. In most societies with patriarch, females are regarded as inferior to their male counterparts (Gudata and Moges, 2016). In an ideal world, public institutions are guided by principles of fairness, accountability, justice, equality and non-discrimination, and serves as a model of governance for society which includes the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in the civil service workforce. However, globally; this is not yet the reality. Instead of being a driving force behind the implementation of internationally-agreed goals on gender equality and human rights standards and principles, in many developed and developing countries, public administration often remains a patriarchal institution, perpetuating gender biased traditions, attitudes and practices women do not yet participate equally in public administration, especially in leadership and decision-making (UNDP, 2014).

Akpan, E.O (2015) stated that the issue of women on management position is gaining attention globally. Empirical findings confirmed that institutions with the highest proportion of females in the board room outperform than those institutions with no female (Fondas&Sassalos, 2000; Carter, Simkins& Simpson, 2003; Ismail, Abdullah & Simpson, 2003; Zelechowski&Bilimoria, 2004; Farrel&Hersh, 2005 and McKinsey & Company, 2010). Terjesen, Couto & Francisco (2016) pointed out woman has a better overview on the complex issues, attending more boards and management meetings and tend to influence larger public transparency. The United Nations development program report 2014 further stated that the target of a minimum of 30 percent of women in leadership positions, originally endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1990 and reaffirmed in the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995, is being approached in many public institutions and even surpassed in some. Nevertheless, while progress is being made in terms of total numbers of women in public administration, both glass ceilings and glass walls continue to present challenges to women's equal participation in decision-making positions (UNDP, 2014).

2. Statement of the Problem/Rationale

Ethiopia is part of all major human right treaties including the most important women’s conventions, i.e. Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (BDPA), which requires governments to attain a 30% benchmark for women public decision making positions (Meaza, 2009). The numbers are clear-cut. Despite women’s impressive gains in education and the workplace over the past 50 years, men greatly outnumber women in leadership, especially in top positions. From corporate boardrooms to the halls of Congress, from universities to the courts, from religious institutions to public organizations, men are simply much more likely than women to be leaders. Time will not solve the gender leadership gap; action will. Women’s representation in leadership will not increase substantially without major changes in the culture, policies, and practices of the organizations where women learn and work (American Association of University women Report, 2016). Despite the government’s efforts to provide equal opportunities for women and design non-discriminatory policies, the existences of deep-seated discriminatory practices thwarted their progress, yet women are economically, socially, culturally and politically disadvantaged in the enjoyment of equal rights, in accessing opportunities, decision making processes, and basic resources.

In the case of the study area, Debre Markos University, female’s representation and participation in management positions is very low. According to the data from Debre Markos University Gender, HIV/AIDS and Disability affaires directorate the number of female instructors representation in the top, middle and lower management position are 1, 2 and 2 respectively; whereas the number of male instructors in top, middle and lower management position are 4, 58, and 79 respectively and female administrative staffs representation in the top, middle and lower management position are 8, 2 and 0 respectively; whereas the number of male administrative workers in top, middle and lower management position are 34, 15, and 0 respectively. The data indicates 3079 workers out of these 927 female workers around 31.5%. But when we see the management positions from the available total of 205 management positions only 15 that are only 7.3% are held by female instructors and administrative workers which is very negligible figure. According to the data management positions in the university are dominated by male. This indicates women are still limited in subordinate’s positions. Despite the fact that there is progress being made in terms of total numbers of employed women, segregation of women in management positions or disparity between men and women in management positions is persistent problem that exist. Hence, this research examined the challenges that affect female instructors and administrative workers to ascribe management position in university. Therefore, based on the above statement; this study is able to assess the challenges of female instructors and administrative workers to ascribe management positions in university.

3. Objectives

The general objective of the study is to investigate the perception differences between female instructors and administrative workers as to the challenges to ascribe management positions in Debre Markos University.

Specific objectives: Specific objectives of the study includes: to investigate the extent to which females participate in management positions in the university, to explore whether there is perception differences between females instructors and administrative workers as to the challenges to ascribe management positions in the university.

4. Research Methodology

To achieve the objective of this study, data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. To select sample respondents from the total study population probability sampling methods-simple random sampling method were employed. From 927 total populations (female academic and administrative staff) who were working in Debre Markos University 280 sample has taken trough simple random sampling method. After determine the sample size Slovin’s sampling formula, the relevant data were collected through structured questionnaires. To achieve the objective of this research, descriptive statistics were used to describe the existing situation of women’s representation in management position and statistical tests would be performed based using Mann-Whitney non-parametric statistical tests to examine the perception differences between female instructors and administration workers of Debre Markos University.

5. Results and Discussions

5.1. The Extent of Women Participation in Management position

Table 1: Extent of Women Participation in Management position

No.	Questions	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	M
1	Women are sufficiently represented in leadership position.	11.1%(17)	34.6%(53)	1.3%(2)	52.3%(80)	.7%(1)	A
2	Women are posted/ represented uniformly across leadership position.	23.53%(36)	69.93%(107)	2.6%(4)	3.3%(5)	.7%(1)	DA

No.	Questions	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	M
3	Women leaders are active and exemplary model in making decisions.	16.3%(25)	71.9%(110)	3.3%(5)	7.2%(11)	1.3%(2)	DA
4	Women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions.	3.9%(6)	11.1%(17)	2%(3)	71.2%(109)	11.8%(18)	A

Source: Own Survey Data, 2019

NB.SDA-Strongly Disagree, DA-Disagree, N- Neutral, A-Agree, SA-Strongly Agree, M- Mode

As presented in table 1, about participation of women in management positions. Regarding women are sufficiently represented in leadership position 52.3 % (80) of the respondents agreed, 34.6 % (53) disagreed, 11.1 % (17) strongly disagreed. The mode is agree (80). Concerning uniform representation of women across leadership position 71.9 % (110) of the respondents disagreed and 21.6 % (33) strongly disagreed. The mode is disagree (110). However, few 3.3% agreed, 0.7% strongly agreed, and 2.6% remained neutral.

Respondents degree of agreement with the idea that women leaders are active and exemplary model in making decisions 71.9 % (110) disagreed, 16.3 % (25) strongly disagreed, 7.2 % (11) agreed and 1.3 % (2) strongly agreed. The mode is disagree (110).

As regard the issue that women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions, 71.2 % (109) of the respondents agreed, 11.8 % (18) strongly agreed, 11.1 % (17) disagreed. The mode is agree (109).

Women participation in leadership position analysis indicate that more than half of the respondents (52.3%) said women are sufficiently represented in leadership position, but with regard to uniform representation of women across leadership position majority of the respondents (71.9 %) disagreed with the idea. This indicates that women are participated in lower level position. Majority of the respondents (71.2%) agreed with the statement that women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions.

Women participation in management positions indicates, even though women are sufficiently represented in leadership position and women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions; women are not represented uniformly across leadership position and they are not active and exemplary model in making decisions.

5.2. Test Results Discussions

Table 2: Perception differences between female instructors and female administrative workers on participation

Participation	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U Test	
				Sig.	Result
1. Women are sufficiently represented in Academic Staff leadership position. Administration Staff	80	77.29	6183.50	.924	Not Significant
	73	76.68	5597.50		
	Total	153			
2. Women are posted/ represented uniformly across leadership position. Administration Staff	80	77.04	6163.00	.989	Not Significant
	73	76.96	5618.00		
	Total	153			
3. Women leaders are active and exemplary model in making decisions. Administration Staff	80	77.42	6194.00	.875	Not Significant
	73	76.53	5587.00		
	Total	153			
4. Women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions. Administration Staff	80	71.22	5697.50	.034*	Significant
	73	83.34	6083.50		
	Total	153			

Source: Own Survey Data, 2019

As indicated in table 2, the mann-whitney test results on female instructors and administrative workers perception as to women academic staffs and women administration staffs participation perception to ascribe management positions in Debre Markos University. The researcher tried to explore by taking into account four indicators like: women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions, women are posted/ represented uniformly across leadership position, women leaders are active and exemplary model in making decisions and women are sufficiently represented in leadership position. Based on survey data collected the result of Mann-

Whitney test indicated in table 2, female academic and administrative workers have statistically significant difference in one indicator that is women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions at 5% significant level indicating female administrative workers score higher mean rank as illustrated in table 2, implies female administrative staff believe that women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions. On the other hand, in the other participation indicators there is no statistically significant difference in the perception scores of female academic and female administrative staffs at 1% and 5% significant level implies all these factors affects equally female academic and female administrative staffs.

Table 3: Perception differences between female instructors and administrative workers as to organizational challenges that impede females towards ascribing management positions

Questions Related to Organizational Challenges	Professionals	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U Test	
					Sig.	Result
1. The University's culture support women's advancement towards managerial positions.	Academic Staff	80	79.06	6325.00	.493	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	74.74	5456.00		
	Total	153				
2. Women have active participation in the university.	Academic Staff	80	77.60	6208.00	.822	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	76.34	5573.00		
	Total	153				
3. The university leaders recruitment practices encourage women participation	Academic Staff	80	78.26	6260.50	.674	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	75.62	5520.50		
	Total	153				
4. There are more active and exemplary model women in the university management positions	Academic Staff	80	74.06	5925.00	.351	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	80.22	5856.00		
	Total	153				
5. There is attractive work environment in the university that encourages women to aspire managerial positions.	Academic Staff	80	78.31	6264.50	.627	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	75.57	5516.50		
	Total	153				
6. The university leaders are committed to improve women participation in managerial positions	Academic Staff	80	79.10	6328.00	.486	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	74.70	5453.00		
	Total	153				

Source: Own Survey Data, 2019

As presented in table 3, the mann-whitney test results on female instructors and administrative workers perception difference as to organizational challenges to ascribe management positions. The researcher tried to explore by taking into account six factors (the university's culture support women's advancement towards managerial positions, women has active participation in the university, the university leaders recruitment practices encourage women participation, the university leaders are committed to improve women participation in managerial positions, there is attractive work environment in the university that encourages women to aspire managerial positions and there are more active and exemplary model women in the university management positions). The result pointed out in all of these organizational factors there is no statistically significant difference in the perception scores of female academic and female administrative staffs at 1%, 5% and 10% significant level

implies all the organizational factors discussed so far affects equally female academic and female administrative staffs.

Table 4: Perception differences between female instructors and administrative workers as to social challenges that impede females towards ascribing management positions

Questions related to Social Challenges	Professionals	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U Test	
					Sig.	Result
1. Women are expected to have leadership role positions in the society.	Academic Staff	80	74.99	5999.50	.516	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	79.20	5781.50		
	Total	153				
2. Work is performed better if women lead.	Academic Staff	80	77.48	6198.00	.868	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	76.48	5583.00		
	Total	153				
3. Women are culturally encouraged to be leader.	Academic Staff	80	74.38	5950.00	.320	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	79.88	5831.00		
	Total	153				
4. Our religions support to empower women for leadership position	Academic Staff	80	72.73	5818.50	.178	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	81.68	5962.50		
	Total	153				
5. The society believe in Women can lead in challenging working environment.	Academic Staff	80	74.56	5964.50	.430	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	79.68	5816.50		
	Total	153				
6. Women are socially and culturally suffering from work stereotype and discrimination because of gender perception.	Academic Staff	80	80.48	6438.50	.239	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	73.18	5342.50		
	Total	153				

Source: Own Survey Data, 2019

As indicated in table 4, the mann-whitney test results on female instructors and administrative workers perception difference as to social challenges to ascribe management positions in Debre Markos University. The researcher tried to explore by taking into account six social factor indicators such as: women are expected to have leadership role positions in the society, work is performed better if women lead, women are culturally encouraged to be leader, our religions support to empower women for leadership position, the society believe in women can lead in challenging working environment skills and women are socially and culturally suffering from work stereotype and discrimination because of gender perception. Based on survey data collected the result of mann-whitney test indicated in table 4, in all of six social factors there is no statistically significant difference in the perception scores of female academic and female administrative staffs at 1%, 5% and 10% significant level implies all the six social factors indicators discussed so far affects equally female academic and female administrative staffs.

Table 5: Perception differences between female instructors and administrative workers as to personal challenges that impede females towards ascribing management positions

Questions related to Personal Factors	Professionals	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U Test	
					Sig.	Result
1. Women have confidence on their own for upward advancements to managerial positions	Academic Staff	80	80.78	6462.00	.210	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	72.86	5319.00		
	Total	153				
2. Women have motivation and interests towards managerial positions	Academic Staff	80	76.62	6129.50	.897	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	77.42	5651.50		
	Total	153				
3. Women are ready to accept responsibility of management Position in the University	Academic Staff	80	76.32	6105.50	.799	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	77.75	5675.50		
	Total	153				
4. Women are proactive towards managerial positions	Academic Staff	80	81.38	6510.00	.130	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	72.21	5271.00		
	Total	153				
5. Women believe in their competence and ability on managerial positions	Academic Staff	80	80.38	6430.00	.247	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	73.30	5351.00		
	Total	153				
6. Women believe in their adequate job knowledge (capability) to managerial positions	Academic Staff	80	82.11	6569.00	.086	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	71.40	5212.00		
	Total	153				

Source: Own Survey Data, 2019

As presented in table 5, the mann-whitney test results on female instructors and administrative workers perception as to personal challenges to ascribe management positions in Debre Markos University. The researchers tried to explore by taking into account six indicators under this category of challenges such as: women have confidence on their own for upward advancements to managerial positions, women have motivation and interests towards managerial positions, women are ready to accept responsibility of management position in the University, women are proactive towards managerial positions, women believe in their competence and ability on managerial positions and women believe in their adequate job knowledge (capability) to managerial positions. Based on survey data collected the result of Mann-Whitney test indicated in table 5, in all of six personal challenge indicators there is no statistically significant difference in the perception scores of female academic and female administrative staffs at 1% and 5% significant level implies all the six personal factors discussed so far affects equally female academic and female administrative staffs.

Table 6: Perception differences between female instructors and administrative workers on empowerment

Empowerment Indicators	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U Test	
				Sig.	Result
1. Women in our university have access to relevant training on leadership.	Academic Staff	80	85.74	.001**	Significant
	Administration Staff	73	67.42		
	Total	153			
2. The University has consistent plan to empower women as leaders	Academic Staff	80	80.66	.190	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	72.99		
	Total	153			
3. The University set sustainable motivation system for women empowerment.	Academic Staff	80	76.69	.921	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	77.34		
	Total	153			
4. The University leaders are committed to encourage women's overall development in leadership.	Academic Staff	80	83.52	.035*	Significant
	Administration Staff	73	69.86		
	Total	153			
5. The University encourages and values the women employees' creativity and contributions in leadership position.	Academic Staff	80	79.05	.495	Not Significant
	Administration Staff	73	74.75		
	Total	153			

Source: Own Survey Data, 2019

As presented in table 6 regarding perception differences between female instructors and administrative workers on empowerment among five empowerment indicators in two i.e. the university leaders are committed to encourage women's overall development in leadership and women in our university have access to relevant training on leadership indicates there is significant differences between female academic instructors and administrative workers perception on the indicators at 1% and 5% significant levels respectively. The mean rank of female academic staffs are higher than the administrative staffs in the university. This implies female academic staff believe that women have access to relevant training on leadership in the university and the university leaders are committed to encourage women's overall development in leadership. On the other three factors indicating empowerment i.e. the University has consistent plan to empower women as leaders, the University set sustainable motivation system for women empowerment and the University encourages and values the women employees' creativity and contributions in leadership position the Mann-Whitney test result shows there is no statistically significant difference in the perception scores of female academic and female administrative staffs at 1%, 5% and 10% significant level implies all these three empowerment factors influence equally female academic and female administrative staffs.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusions

Concerning extent of women participation in management position, the result of the study indicates even though women are sufficiently represented in leadership position and women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions; women are not represented uniformly across management position and they are not active and exemplary model in making decisions. Female administrative workers believe that women at different leadership positions are confident in decisions.

The result of this study regarding perception differences between females instructors and administrative workers as to the challenges that impede females towards ascribing management positions to ascribe management positions; the result shows that there is no statistically significant difference in the perception scores of female academic and female administrative staffs regarding organizational, social, and personal related challenges. This implies organizational, social and personal related challenges influence equally female academic and female administrative staffs towards ascribing management position.

6.2. Recommendations

Based on the result of the study and the conclusion above the following recommendations have been forwarded:

- It is important to create work environment that is suitable for women in order to improve uniform

representation of women across management position and to aspire managerial positions. And women who are in management position need to be active and exemplary model for others.

- It is important to work on solving challenges that impede women to ascribe management position, encouraging them and trying to change the social view that females are homemakers, mother, and they are not be leader.

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