ROLE OF GENDER EQUALITY ON LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE IN SOMALIA

Yasir Abdi

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Role of Gender Equality on Leadership and Governance in Somalia

[ID]1* Yasir Abdi
Somali National University, Mogadishu, Somalia.
Corresponding Author's E-mail:
abdiyasirabdi@gmail.com

Abstract

Purpose: The study sought to analyze the role of gender equality in leadership and governance in Somalia

Materials and Methods: The study adopted a desktop methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library.

Findings: The results show Gender equality in leadership and governance is an important aspect of a successful and sustainable society. This is because gender inequality in leadership and governance can lead to a number of negative outcomes, including decreased economic growth and increased poverty.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practices and Policies: The social constructionist theory, feminist theory and resource theory may be used to anchor future studies in the leadership and governance sector. The study results will also benefit other stakeholders such as the policy makers as well as researchers and scholars from different parts of the world. The top management of gender equality sector in the country will also use the study findings to improve leadership and governance performance in all their activities and programs. The study recommends that the adoption of effective gender equality policies in the leadership and governance will help to improve efficiency in their major operations and activities.

Keywords: *Gender Equality, Leadership, Governance, Somalia.*

INTRODUCTION

Gender is a term that generally refers to formalized social identities and practices affecting inter-actions between men and women in modern and contemporary societies. It is a historical and cultural concept that opposes the idea that differences between men and women can be denied in strictly biological terms. Gender relations therefore permeate the entire social life of a community and connect with other factors to compose a structured fabric of human relations (Sotiriadou, 2019). Each gender is not made up of a homogeneous group of people as there are natural overlaps with other social groupings and identity markers, such as class, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and age. Nonetheless, gender of itself often cannot ascertain social roles that generally place women at a social disadvantage and often expose them to violence. Gender inequality is particularly marked in political leadership.

Gender equality does not mean that men and women should have exactly the same roles, responsibilities, and abilities. Instead, it means that everyone should have the same opportunities and rights and that gender should not be a factor in determining how people are treated (Meagher, 2022). Gender equality means that men and women should have equal access to education, employment, health care, and other resources. This includes access to education and training, equal pay for equal work, and the right to participate in decision-making. It also means that men and women should be allowed to take on any role they choose, regardless of their gender. Gender equality in leadership and governance is a pressing issue in today's society. Gender inequality in leadership and governance has been a long-standing issue that has been perpetuated by existing power dynamics, cultural norms and the lack of representation of women in decision-making roles (Dhatt, 2017). In the past, these inequalities were largely accepted and even encouraged, but today, there is an ever-growing recognition of the need for gender equality in leadership and governance.

Gender equality in leadership and governance is essential for the growth of Somalia and the development of the country. Gender equality in leadership and governance can be defined as the equal participation of men and women in decision-making and in the development of policies and laws. This is a critical factor in the development of any nation and has been shown to lead to improved economic, social, and political outcomes (Kumuyi, 2017). The role of gender equality in leadership and governance in Somalia is particularly important, due to the fact that Somalia has a long history of gender inequality. This has resulted in a lack of gender equality in leadership and governance in Somalia, which has hindered the development of the country. This paper will discuss the role of gender equality in leadership and governance in Somalia and the importance of ensuring gender equality in the country.

Gender equality in leadership and governance in Somalia has been a constant struggle for the country. Historically, Somalia has been a patriarchal society with gender roles that favor men over women. This has created a culture in which men are seen as the primary decision-makers and women are seen as secondary and subservient to men. This has resulted in a lack of gender equality in leadership and governance in Somalia, which has hindered the development of the country (Mohamed, 2021). Somalia has experienced a long period of conflict and instability, which has further exacerbated the lack of gender equality in the country. During the civil war in the 1990s, many women were forced to flee their homes and seek refuge elsewhere. This displacement resulted in a large decrease in the number of women in the public sphere and a decrease in their influence in decision-making. Women were also denied access to resources, education, and

employment opportunities (Buck, 2013). This further weakened their position in society and led to a lack of gender equality in leadership and governance in Somalia. Despite the long history of gender inequality in Somalia, the country has made progress in recent years in terms of gender equality in leadership and governance.

In 2009, the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) established the National Gender Policy, which was intended to promote gender equality and empower women in the country. The policy includes provisions for women's representation in decision-making, access to resources, and equal opportunities in education and employment. The TFG also established a Ministry of Women and Human Rights in 2010, which is responsible for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in Somalia (Horst, 2017). This ministry has been working to improve access to education and health services for women, as well as to reduce gender-based violence and discrimination. In 2011, the Somali Constitution was amended to include gender equality as a fundamental right. The amendment also stipulates that at least 30% of public sector positions must be filled by women. This is a significant step forward in terms of gender equality in Somalia and is an important factor in ensuring gender equality in leadership and governance in the country. In addition to these legal and policy changes, there have been efforts to increase women's participation in decision-making in Somalia (Aidid, 2020).

Women are increasingly taking on leadership roles in the public and private sectors, and there are a number of organizations working to promote women's leadership in the country. These organizations provide training and support for women to help them become more effective leaders. Furthermore, gender inequality in leadership and governance can lead to the creation of policies that are detrimental to the advancement of women and girls, as well as harmful to the environment. For example, in many countries, women are not given equal access to education or political representation. This can lead to a lack of representation in decision-making roles and the shaping of policies and legislation that are not in line with the needs and interests of women (Khadka, 2014). Additionally, gender inequality in leadership and governance can lead to a lack of access to resources and opportunities for women, resulting in higher rates of poverty and gender-based violence. Gender inequality in leadership and governance can also lead to the perpetuation of cultural norms that further restrict women's rights and limit their ability to participate in the decision-making process.

Statement of the Problem

Gender equality in leadership and governance in Somalia is an extremely important and complex issue that needs to be addressed in order to ensure the advancement of the country as a whole. This can only be achieved by focusing on the need to improve the status of Somali women in achieving equal representation in political and public life, while also focusing on the need to eliminate gender-based violence and discrimination. Somalia is a patriarchal society where women are often seen as second-class citizens. This is in part due to the traditional structure of Somali society, which is characterized by an extreme gender imbalance. Women hold very few positions of power and authority, and are often denied access to education and economic opportunity. This lack of representation makes it difficult for them to have a meaningful say in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. Gender-based violence is also a major problem in Somalia. Women are routinely subjected to violence and abuse, particularly in rural areas where traditional attitudes are still prevalent. This violence can take many forms, including physical, psychological, and sexual abuse. Women who are victims of gender-based violence are often unable to seek

justice due to a lack of access to legal services, or due to fear of reprisal. The situation is further compounded by the fact that there is a significant lack of gender equality in positions of leadership and governance in Somalia. Women are significantly underrepresented in government and political parties, and are often excluded from decision-making processes. This is due to a number of factors including cultural and religious norms, as well as a lack of access to education, economic opportunity and political resources.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study will benefit from social constructionist theory which was proposed by Lev Vygotsky (1968), feminist theory by Mary Wollstonecraft (1792) and resource theory by Jay Barney (1990)

Social Constructionist Theory

The social constructionist theory suggests that gender equality in leadership and governance can be achieved through the active negotiation and construction of gender roles, identities, and expectations. This process involves the redistribution of power between men and women, as well as the recognition of the negotiation and construction of gender roles and identities. The goal of this process is to create a more equitable balance between men and women in decision-making processes (Lev, 1968). The theory suggests that gender roles and identities are not fixed, but rather are constantly in flux and subject to negotiation and construction. This means that gender equality in leadership and governance cannot simply be achieved through the redistribution of power between men and women, but rather must be actively negotiated and constructed through the power dynamics of different actors. This theory argues that gender equality in leadership and governance is not an inherent right or given, but rather is actively negotiated and constructed through the power dynamics of different actors. This means that gender equality in leadership and governance cannot be achieved through a single approach or strategy, but rather must be actively negotiated and constructed through a variety of approaches and strategies. Finally, the social constructionist theory suggests that gender equality in leadership and governance requires the recognition of the negotiation and construction of gender roles and identities within the broader social context. This means that gender equality in leadership and governance cannot be achieved in isolation, but rather must be achieved within the context of the broader social and political environment.

Feminist Theory

The feminist theory is a framework that seeks to understand the inequalities between men and women, and to promote greater gender equality. The theory suggests that gender inequality is rooted in patriarchy, a system of domination of men over women. This system of patriarchy is perpetuated through the unequal distribution of resources and power, and through the imposition of traditional gender roles (Horst, 2017). The feminist theory seeks to challenge the existing power structures and to promote gender equality. The theory suggests that the unequal power dynamics between men and women in leadership roles is due to patriarchy. This theory suggests that in order to achieve gender equality, existing power structures need to be challenged and the traditional gender roles need to be challenged. It also suggests that the unequal distribution of resources and power needs to be addressed in order to promote gender equality in leadership and governance.

Resource Theory

The resource theory suggests that men and women have different levels of access to resources and power, which can limit their ability to achieve gender equality in leadership and governance. The theory also suggests that the unequal distribution of resources can lead to gender inequality in leadership roles, as men are more likely to have access to resources and power than women (Jay, 1990). The resource theory suggests that in order for gender equality in leadership and governance to be achieved, the unequal distribution of resources needs to be addressed and gender gaps in access to resources and power need to be reduced. This theory argues that when women have equal access to these resources, gender inequality will be reduced. When looking at gender inequality in the workplace, the resource theory emphasizes the need to address the underlying causes of this inequality. This theory posits that gender inequality is a result of unequal access to resources, such as education, job opportunities, and political and economic power. This theory argues that when women have equal access to these resources, gender inequality in the workplace will be reduced (Aidid, 2020). The resource theory has had a significant impact on the way that gender inequality in the workplace is addressed. This theory has been used to inform policies and practices that seek to promote gender equality in the workplace. For example, many organizations have adopted measures to ensure that women have equal access to resources, such as education and job opportunities, and are represented in leadership and governance roles. Additionally, this theory has been used to inform the development of initiatives that seek to create a workplace environment that is conducive to gender equality.

Empirical Review

Mohammed (2021) established the influence of socio-economic factors on performance of community empowerment projects in Mogadishu, Somalia. The study adopted descriptive survey design targeting 130 project managers, project coordinators, project team leaders and community liaison officers from the Strengthening Somali Governance Project in Mogadishu City, Somalia. Primary data was collected. With aid of the questionnaire that was piloted to determine reliability. Content and construct validity was tested by the supervisor. The analysis of the findings was done supported by means and standard deviations, frequencies and percentages and regression analysis. The study concludes that socio-economic factors have significant influence performance of community empowerment projects in Mogadishu, Somalia

Raqia (2020) explored the influence of women's social characteristics on their participation in leadership, using a case of three private Universities in Mogadishu. The study adopted a correlational research design. Data was collected through self-reports (questionnaires and interviews) and correlations. The study concluded that family responsibilities have an influence on women's participation in leadership. These universities do not provide support for women with family responsibilities, for example, they do not cater for the needs of the women with family responsibilities. The study reached the conclusion that women's lack of involvement in academic activities has an influence on their participation in leadership, mostly owing to their under representation at senior levels in these private universities.

Abdulla (2019) established the influence of culture on women leadership on growe Puntland Somalia. This study will be used descriptive survey design to investigate the influence of culture on women leadership in Punt land of Somalia. Data was collected using questionnaires because it is cheap to administer since it does not require a trained researcher to distribute and collect the

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questionnaires. Findings showed that majority of the respondent 77% were said men and women have same opportunity when pursuing higher position. Finding also revealed that Majority of the respondent 73% agree the opinion that husbands feel threatened if their wives join. Majority of therespondent77% agree the opinion that Women see themselves as incompetent as leaders. Majority of the respondent agree the opinion that Women are especially inferior on leadership, Majority of the respondent agree the opinion that Leadership should be conducted by men. Findings revealed majority of respondent 48% agree the best tools to increase the number of women in leadership positions are mentoring, quotas, discussion, while 36% of the respondent were said strong agree.

Ahmedweli (2019) analyzed factors affecting women participation on political leadership in Benadir region, Somalia. Data was collected using questioners and interview responses from 167 respondents from Benadir region of Somalia. The reliability of the instrument was tested through techniques using statistical package for Social Science (SPSS. The study found out that only 12.6% are interested in vying for civic and political positions. Further analysis confirmed that factors understudy affected women participation by 69% while other factors account for only 31% of women participation. In the interaction with respondents, the study further found out that women's poor participation in political leadership was as a result of various factors including: religious interpretations that stop women from public involvement including politics, family responsibilities as mother and heading single parent families, and the cultures that have shaped attitudes to the effect that women are considered naturally weaker compared to men.

Awino (2018) analyzed the impact of gender inequality in the conduct of International Relations in Africa, a case study of Diplomatic service in Kenya. The research was carried out in Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade at the Kenya's capital of Nairobi and a mixed method research design with both quantitative and qualitative methodologies of collecting data was employed. The researcher used questionnaires and interviews for empirical data. Secondary sources such as books, journals, newspapers, and previous researched articles largely molded secondary data will be used for validity sake. The study found that the ratio of diplomatic workforce female to male employee in the international relation sector was one female to males. Myriad of factors contributed to gender Inequality in the Diplomatic Service, but notably female literacy and education, lack of female role models and inadequate opportunities, lack of leadership training and mentorship and empowerment, sexual harassment against women, too much concentration on feminized roles in the society and patriarch nature of the society.

Moira (2018) examined leadership skills required for senior management roles in vocational education training (VET); determine if the ranking of importance of skills differs by gender and if the ranking contributes to women not advancing to senior management roles. The methodology was based on the theoretical framework of the Leadership Skills Strataplex Model (LSSM). A quantitative study with data collected from an online survey completed by 100 senior managers employed in Australian VET, with an even distribution of men and women, identified leadership skills and ranked the importance of the skills. Results showed that both men and women identified that cognitive, interpersonal, business and strategic skills were required for senior management roles in VET; however, they ranked the importance of these skills differently. Men ranked business and strategic skills as the most important whilst women ranked cognitive and interpersonal skills.

Adamma (2017) analyzed the gender composition of academic female staff on leadership positions in ten tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The ex- post facto research design was used, the population

for the study comprised of all academic staff of the tertiary institutions. The main source of data collection was from the planning and statistics department National University Commission, Abuja. Frequency counts and percentage scores were used to analyze the data. The result revealed that there was gross inequality in the leadership positions in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The percentage of women in the upper echelon of the institutions was very low and representation of women at the academic management position was poor.

Dhatt (2017) examined gender and leadership in the health sector, pooling learning from three complementary data sources: literature review, quantitative analysis of gender and leadership positions in global health organizations and qualitative life histories with health workers in Cambodia, Kenya and Zimbabwe. The findings highlight gender biases in leadership in global health, with women underrepresented. Gender roles, relations, norms and expectations shape progression and leadership at multiple levels. Increasing women's leadership within global health is an opportunity to further health system resilience and system responsiveness.

Bayeh (2016) conducted a study to uncover the role of empowering women and achieving gender equality in the sustainable development of Ethiopia. To achieve this purpose, the researcher employed qualitative methodology, with secondary sources as instruments of data collection. Based on the data analyzed. Findings of the study show that the role of women across different dimensions of sustainable development is less reflected in the country. The use of a women's labour force in the economic development of the country is minimal. The political sphere of the country is, by and large, reserved for men alone. The place of women in society is also relegated to contributing minimally to the social development of the country. In addition, women's rights are not properly being protected in order for women to participate in various the issues of their country but are subjected to abysmal violations. Moreover, women are highly affected by environmental problems, and less emphasis is given to their participation in protecting the environment.

Kisiang`ani (2016) established the factors influencing the participation of women in the implementation of county government projects in Nairobi. The target population of this study included the government employees of select ministries, the Ministry of Planning and Devolution and the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services, who are 1100. The sample population of 92 respondents was staff and department heads of different departments in the selected ministries. The research instrument used was interview guides for department heads and questionnaires for employees. The study established that the government did little to create awareness among its employees on gender issues. The increased number of women political leaders had little influence in ensuring integration of gender into decision-making and planning of gender-responsive projects. There were gaps in terms of resource mobilization especially the allocation of human resources towards gender mainstreaming. It was established that patriarchal culture established male dominance and gender roles in the ministries.

Kurea (2015) investigated the specific challenges facing the implementation of the two thirds gender rule in the devolved government of Meru County and to identify social and demographic factors influencing perceptions on women and power among Meru people. This study used descriptive survey design to achieve these objectives. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 120 respondents. A response rate of 83.3% was achieved. Qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were used to analyze data. The study revealed that there is understanding on what the two thirds gender rule means. However, the results have shown that the two thirds gender rule has not been fully implemented. The study established that a number of

challenges are responsible for impeding women to go for political positions and attain the two thirds gender rule. These challenges include cultural challenges, fear to challenge men, male chauvinism, lack of education, fierce competition, discrimination, socio-cultural background, lack of resources, the electoral system and nature of Kenyan politics which is hostile and aggressive. The study established that in Meru, culture influence the perception of women in any political participation.

Toni (2014) examined the impact of gender quotas on gender equality in governance among boards of National Sport Organizations (NSOs) in Australia. The research design comprised a comparative case study of five NSOs with data collected mainly through semi structured interviews with directors and CEOs. The findings suggest that a quota of a minimum of three women was a first condition to advance gender equality in governance. It needed to operate, however, in conjunction with other gender dynamics to move toward equal participation by men and women in board decision making.

Muyomi (2014) established the challenges facing the implementation of gender mainstreaming in selected government ministries in Nairobi County. The study made use of closed ended questionnaires and interview schedule as instruments of data collection. Questionnaires collected data from employees while interview schedule collected data from department heads. Reliability was established through the split-half method. The study found out that the government did very little to create awareness among its employees on gender issues. There were also gaps in terms of resource mobilization especially the allocation of human resources. It was further established that male dominance is still evident in the ministries.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a desktop methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library

RESULTS

The results were grouped into various research gap categories namely as conceptual, methodological and geographical gap.

Conceptual Gaps

Studies by Mohammed (2021), Raqia (2020), Abdulla and Ahmedweli (2019), Awino and Moira (2018), Adamma and Dhatt (2017), Bayeh and Kisiang'ani (2016), Kurea (2015) and Toni and Muyomi (2014) had conceptual framework gap in addition, all the mentioned studies did not establish the challenges of gender equality on leadership and governance. The studies did not outline the challenges in a clear manner. Therefore, the current study seeks to address these conceptual gaps

Geographical Gap

Studies by Awino and Moira (2018), Adamma and Dhatt (2017), Bayeh and Kisiang'ani (2016), Kurea (2015) and Toni and Muyomi (2014) had geographical gap because they were not conducted

in Somalia. This implies that the results may be inapplicable in Somalia since the social economic environment of Somalia and other countries differ. The current study seeks to address this gap.

Methodological Gap

A methodological gap presents itself in this study, Raqia (2020) conducted a study to explore the influence of women's social characteristics on their participation in leadership, using a case of three private Universities in Mogadishu. The study adopted a correlational research design. Data was collected through self-reports (questionnaires and interviews) and correlations of collecting data to analyze data while our study will use a desk study literature review methodology.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

Gender equality in leadership and governance is essential for the development and progress of any nation, and Somalia is no exception. The long history of gender inequality in Somalia has hindered the development of the country, and it is essential that steps are taken to ensure gender equality in leadership and governance. Women do not have preference for political careers; their top priority is in other careers followed by family care. Women would not vie for a political office even if they had resources because of the high risks associated with the campaigns for political leadership as well as the risk of losing their life The legal and policy changes that have been implemented in Somalia in recent years are a positive step forward, but more needs to be done to ensure gender equality in the country. Organizations and initiatives that are working to promote gender equality in Somalia are essential and must be supported. Only through ensuring gender equality in leadership and governance in Somalia can the country progress and develop.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Gender equality in leadership and governance is an important issue in today's society, as it can lead to a number of negative outcomes. In order to promote gender equality in leadership and governance, it is important to employ strategies such as the promotion of gender-sensitive policies, the development of gender-inclusive leadership models, and the implementation of quotas and other affirmative action measures. There are a number of strategies that can be employed in order to promote gender equality in leadership and governance. These include the promotion of gender-sensitive policies, the development of gender-inclusive leadership models, and the implementation of quotas and other affirmative action measures. These policies should take into account the needs and interests of both genders, as well as the cultural context of the society in which they are being implemented. Gender-sensitive policies should also be aimed at eliminating any gender-based discrimination that may exist in the workplace.

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