Redressing Gender Inequality in Academic Rank and Leadership at Addis Ababa University

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Abstract: This study was aimed at assessing the status of gender inequality in academic leadership positions and academic rank in Higher Education institutions of Ethiopia with a focus on Addis Ababa University, and it then suggests interventions in view of sustainable development. A descriptive survey design with qualitative and quantitative approaches was employed. The total number of participants consulted was 444. Of these, 43.2 per cent were women. The data were collected from all colleges and two institutes of technology through questionnaire and semi-structured interview guides. Purposive sampling was used to select top-level and central academic leaders, colleges and institutes which have female leaders currently, while availability sampling was used to select middle and first-line management and women leaders. A stratified sampling technique was employed to select instructors for the study. The subjects were selected randomly based on the willingness of leaders and instructors. The data collected were systematically organized and analysed. The findings indicated that women's engagement in academic leadership was low, and the majority of women faculty remained as lecturers or assistant professors in their academic careers. Women's academic advancement (progress to higher qualification and rank) and leadership positions were impeded by a lack of appropriate information to make decisions. Institutional, societal and individual factors were found to hinder women faculty members' engagement in academic leadership positions and career advancement. Gender equality is far behind the policy intentions and achievement of sustainable development goals. It is suggested that the University as the oldest and established flagship university should reinvigorate by developing new sets of values and innovative strategies towards achieving the sustainable development goals, and play a leading role for the higher education sector. Revising policies and re-designing strategies and special programs and initiatives including doctoral and post-docs, carrying out rigorous gender main-streaming implementation and institutional transformation are suggested.

Key words: Gender, inequality, academic leadership, academic rank, empowerment

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Introduction

There is a general understanding that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Consequently, more people are becoming aware of the importance and benefits of educating girls. Worldwide enrolments have increased manifold in the past 2-3 decades, and a large part of this is due to women entering higher education. Women have fairly equal access to HE in the more developed regions where they comprise more than 52 percent of tertiary students. In developing regions, only 27-30 per cent of women reach the tertiary level. According to the World Economic Forum (2020), Ethiopia ranked 108th out of 137 in terms of the global gender parity index in tertiary education. The percentage distribution of male-to-female academic and research staff in Ethiopian universities was 79.2 per cent to 20.8 per cent (Ministry of Science and Higher Education/MoSHE, 2021).

As per the data from the same source, the percentage of women in Ethiopian universities' leadership positions in 2020 was 30.2 per cent of university board members, 10.6 per cent of top management (presidents and vice presidents), 15.0 per cent of middle-level academic leadership positions, and 38.1 per cent of the leadership position of administrative wings (MoSHE, 2021). Although the gender composition in the institutional hierarchy varies, the consistent pattern is that few women were recruited to occupy academic leadership positions at all levels. One possible reason among others is that poor access to higher education has contributed to the under-representation of women in academic leadership positions and higher academic ranks. In the administrative and support leadership positions, there are women and they occupy managerial positions that can be taken as gender-based and suitable for women to lead such as departments/units related to student welfare, human resources management and other supportive functions.

It is believed that female academia can bring about a different level of knowing, poses different questions, and share different experiences from their male counterparts. Unfortunately, female academics' experiences have not yet been factored into public policies and decision-making (Mainah, 2015). The level of education of women is not high enough by itself to explain the inequalities. The gender inequalities go beyond and are related directly to the labour market which is more important than differences in education. More importantly, it should be viewed from the general aims of economic and social development of the society (UNESCO,1993).

According to Bass (1990), the vast majority of noted leaders have been men. As Yukl (2010) indicated, throughout the twentieth century, gender-based discrimination was supported by age-old beliefs that men are more qualified than women for leadership roles. The implicit theories and gender stereotypes are also influenced by cultural values for gender egalitarianism. There is no empirical support for the belief that men are more qualified than women to be leaders. However, the anti-discrimination laws were based on the premise that men and women are equally qualified to hold leadership positions. There is also a more modern popular view that praises the superiority of women in leadership positions (Book, 2000; Helgesen, 1990).

Overviews of Institutional Gender Policies and the Context of Addis Ababa University

The pattern of male prevalence in senior leadership positions is visible in countries with diverse policies and legislation for gender equality. Davies (1996) observed that women enter adjunct roles but do not attain the most senior organizational positions and senior academic rank. The absence of women from senior leadership is a recurrent theme in studies in the global north (Bagilhole et.al, 2010). Women are often considered inferior to their male counterparts even though recruitment, appointment and promotion policies are often

stressed based on gender dynamics. The gender equality interventions reported have led to affirmative action that promoted an equity-driven political agenda.

The higher education sector needs to develop more female leaders facing external factors that may affect their resilience, internal challenges produced by university cultures (where community/clan and hierarchical/control dominant type), gender stereotypes and imbalances in leadership positions that continue to hold back the efforts of gender equality (Alomair, 2015). According to NICHE ETH-015 University Leadership and Management Capacity Development Project (2014) aimed at providing equal opportunities for people who want to learn relevant skills and gain valuable experience. The fact that the challenges women face in the universities is a combination of factors, including both tangible and intangible ones, negative attitudes and norms towards women's public roles and their capacities to perform are strong and pervasive. They undermine the opportunities granted to women academics, female leadership, and low women's self-esteem. These factors affect the time women have for their academic work. Further, the misconceptions of affirmative action undermine many women who do not need additional points or fulfil the lower entry requirements to be placed or appointed as lecturers to access scholarships or obtain leadership positions.

Since higher education institutions can ensure and enhance the participation of women in leadership and managerial positions through different strategies, accordingly, Addis Ababa University has also developed and promoted Gender Policies (AAU Gender Office, 2015) and services to advance gender issues. The policy stated the challenges of low female participation in academic leadership and academic rank advancement. The status of women in university management is attributed to challenges such as discouragements over career advancements, personal circumstances, and invisible rules within institutions. Thus, Gender and Gender-related policies

such as harassment policies (AAU Gender Office, 2015) came to the forefront. Based on national law and policies, guidelines for affirmative action were developed to help avoid unfair discrimination in the selection of leaders. In particular, AAU Senate Legislation (2019: Article, 9.4.2) states that gender shall be considered in constituting the various standing committees of the Senate. However, the *members shall be selected on the basis of gender parity membership*. As per some studies, to increase the number of women in higher education leadership positions, there is a need to prepare female academics and administrators to successfully take on leadership roles (Madsen, 2012a, 2012b; White, 2013).

The Higher Education Proclamation (2019) and the AAU Senate Legislation (2019) acknowledge diversity and maintenance of gender balance. Accordingly, governance-wise, in AAU Governing Board there are two female representatives. The governance structure was hierarchical with three tiers system; the senior management/top executive comprising a president and vice president positions, where two of the vice presidents were women. While, the three chief executive director positions for the College of Health Sciences, and two Institutions of Technology (with the rank of Vice President) are led by men. The university consists of 10 colleges, 4 teaching institutes, 8 research institutes; 55 departments, 20 schools, 22 centres, and 2 teaching hospitals. The majority of the middle-level academic administration and the frontline leadership are dominated by males. Addis Ababa University as the oldest and largest higher learning institution aspires to maintain the flagship Research University in the country. In light of its age and aspiration, the university is at a low stage in its female academic profile.

According to the AAU Registrar report (2021/22), AAU has 83 undergraduate programs with a total enrolment of 32,497 students, of these 38.3 per cent were females. In graduate programs (234 masters and 23 speciality programs) of the total 18,954 students, 40.1 percent were females. The proportion of females out of the total

2,086 in 118 PhD and 42 sub-speciality programs was 13.3 per cent. As per the data from the human resources management office, 35.9 per cent of the total 8478 staff was academic staff. Among them, the proportion of females in academia is only 21 per cent of the total academic staff.

In line with the expansion of academic programs to meet the growing demands for educated personnel in the country and as per AAU Senate Legislation (2019) and directives, some initiatives that focus on women including female scholarship at graduate programs with a view to increase the pool, recruiting top scorer/outstanding female graduates per programs to raise the number of women in academia, and gender policies and services were implemented. Moreover, the university has instituted a gender office - a structure to support gender equality, to contrast gender biases in the evaluation and recruitment, to enhance gender perspectives in teaching and research processes as well as to monitor existing discriminations. The effect of the policies and strategies implemented were not assessed and still women's representation in leadership and career advancement is minimal. Thus, this study was conducted to assess the practices of women academia engagement in academic leadership and career advancement in view of the sustainable development in Addis Ababa University in 2021.

Statement of the Problem

Gender is a social construct which asserts that the expectations, capabilities and responsibilities of men and women are not always biologically determined. The gender roles assigned to men and women are significantly defined structurally and culturally in ways which create, reinforce, and perpetuate relationships of male dominance and female subordination. Gender inequality manifests itself in a number of spheres within the family, labour market, politico-judicial structures and in cultural-ideological production. It has been the practice that male behaviours and characteristics in

leadership roles have been the standard against which women leaders are assessed. Universities are critical actors for change when it comes to gender equality - through their teaching, research and outreach, they can have a transformational impact on society.

On the basis of the Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, and Goal 5: Gender equality and empower all women and girls), Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions are undertaking a series of benchmarks and targets related to gender equality that have concentrated on establishing gender offices, creating policies and services that support women's advancement. It is evident that despite the expansion of higher education in Ethiopia, women remain chronically under-represented. The universities should ensure those measures including a gender office entrusted with gender issues are properly documented, promoted and implemented. It is therefore important to assess the progress towards gender equality and how gender disparity in higher education will be eliminated by 2030.

According to the Addis Ababa University Gender Policy of 2015, the major problem confronting higher education institutions is the low participation of women in academic leadership although the Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamations (FDRE, 2009; 2019) state that *the universities should include in their five years strategic plan measures to increase the proportion of senior position held by women*. The increasing trend in the number of female students has not been supplemented by growth in the number of women in leadership roles in the university. The limited number of women academic staff in the university the negative attitude of some faculties and leaders, and the time limitation of women leadership roles could be some of the factors contributing to the under-representation of women. In addition, as a University Leadership and Management Capacity Development Project (2014) study shows, women are weakly represented in leadership and

management positions, with one or two of the public university presidents being female, and most of the management positions held by men.

Besides the initiatives established to advance and support the development of women in higher education, women who hold academic positions in the university are fewer than their male counterparts and they tend to dominate supporting staff (non-academic positions) at the lower ranks. Representation of women in academic leadership at all levels is insignificant and in academic committees follows a similar pattern. This under-representation reflects not only continued inequalities between men and women, but missed opportunities for women to contribute to the future development of the university, and it can be considered as a wastage of skills and talent wastage. This study was initiated in 2021 with the aim of taking stock of the current gender situation in AAU - how the policy and services pertaining to gender equality are implemented, and changes revealed due to initiatives in place to increase females in the academic leadership and their academic rank development. Moreover, the study was meant to critically analyse the policies and devised strategies to enhance diversity of staff through affirmative action for staff recruitment, appointment and if these promotions have positive and remarkable effects, and whether the gender research is keeping adequate track of the evolving situation of women in the knowledge economy.

In specific terms, the purpose of this study was to explore trends in gender equality, the existing gender gap in academia, women's engagement in academic leadership position and their leadership effectiveness, factors that hinder women from joining academic careers and progressing in the selected profession, and measures that can be taken to enhance gender equality and women empowerment for the achievement of sustainable development. Therefore, the following basic questions were set given the context of the Addis Ababa University -

- What are the women academic leadership practices in the University?
- What are the challenges that impede women academia in exercising leadership and advancing their career?
- What measures are envisaged to raise the number of women in leadership and their career advancement?

Definition of Terms

Academic rank: importance and power of individuals in academia; the standard academic ranks are Graduate Assistant, Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor

Gender: socially constructed attributes, opportunities and relationships associated with being male and female.

*Gender equality***:** equality between women and men and refers to the equal enjoyment by women, girls boys and men of rights, opportunities, resources and rewards, with the premise that women and men should be treated equality.

*Gender inequalities***: the** disproportionate difference between men and women faculties as reflected in levels of participation and engagement in academic leadership and academic career development; qualification and ranks. Gender inequality is indicated by the gender gap, the opposite of gender equality.

*Redressing***:** making compensation or reparation for an unfairness, or imbalance, or to correct or reform and make the situation fairer and equal. Redressing gender inequalities in academic leadership and career development (qualification and academic rank).

Review of Related Literature

The gender stereotypes based on historical roles, often lead to a substantial bias against women and present a major problem for those trying to function as leaders in an organization (Moran, 1992). The studies on gender differences in leadership behaviour involved task and relationship behaviour. These values, skills, and behaviours were always relevant for effective leadership but now they are more important than in earlier times because of changing conditions in work organizations. The application of different leadership styles is an increasingly important issue in higher education organizations. The primary difference was for individualized consideration, which includes supportive behaviour and efforts to develop subordinates' skills and confidence. Women's life experiences suggest that they desire a different approach to leadership and management. Their approach relates closely to the notion of transformational leadership processes and the likely problems involved in the implementation of changes (Maddock, 1999:42). For the past two decades, gender differences in leadership style have been the most intensely studied topic in the field of leadership. Women used slightly more contingent reward behaviour and men used slightly more passive management by exclusion. According to Moran (1992), the stereotypical view is that women as leaders are more concerned with relationships than with task accomplishment. But the strongest difference found was that women tended to be inclusive, and adopt a more democratic or participative style, and men tended to adopt a more autocratic or directive style (Gray, 2001; Briskin, 2006).

According to Northouse (2013), one set of explanations focuses on women's lack of human capital investment in education, training and work experience. The growing demand for new professors encouraged the capacities of the universities to produce PhD degree holders. Although the number of educated women holding PhD degrees has been increasing from year to year all over the world,

the available leadership posts and professorship ranks have not increased as much. Increasing competition and greater scarcity of positions have also affected women's hopes for an academic career increment (Yukl, 2010; Northhouse, 2013).

As Yukl (2010) summarized, most comparative studies reporting male-female differences do not control for the type of infectivity. Women and men with the same educational qualifications reach different levels in occupational status; the men having easier access to formal sector employment, managerial and technical jobs or entrepreneurship. Moreover, widespread discrimination is evident in the few number of women who hold important, high-level leadership positions in most types of organizations (Yukl, 2010). The reason for discrimination relates to many men's vested interest in holding onto power and authority rather than sharing the power with women.

Leadership opportunities for women tended to be limited to all female organizations and female institutions of education, even the presidents of women's colleges were almost men (Bass, 1981). Some of the reasons for limited leadership opportunities for women include traditional professions favoured offering gender segregation in the work place, nursing and clerical work. The participation rates for women in science and technology were also low for many years; and women were less successful in professional courses at the doctoral level (Hamel, 2008).

Moreover, current practices of recruitment and promotion require urgent investigation in order to understand the barriers to women's progress and to identify strategies to bring about a fairer gender balance based on professional equality. To understand women's career course and development as academic leaders, a systematic reflection exercise should be structured to focus on strengths and weaknesses (UNESCO, 1993). Since career management involves taking the necessary steps to achieve the plan on which the organization can foster an employee's career development, women

are likely to need more career encouragement than men to reach senior and top management positions because they have substantial barriers, unlike men, in the face of barrier (Burke and Mattis, 2005).

Research Design and Methodology

Design, Data Sources and Sampling

In this study, a descriptive survey design was employed. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to secure data from the respondents. The data collections were from multiple sources for in-depth analysis. The primary data sources were the former and current female leaders serving in various positions of the university, and the faculties. The data were collected from 10 colleges and 2 institutes running both undergraduate and graduate programs.

From both academic units male and female faculties were selected and included in the study. In addition, middle and first-line management positions leaders from these academic units, and top-level leaders (president, vice presidents) and directorate offices of the central administration officers/directors were consulted. The secondary data sources were Addis Ababa University Organizational Handbook, Academic Staff Profile (documents prepared by the University) of 2019/20, Addis Ababa University Senate Legislation, Five Years Strategic Plan and Institutional Review Reports.

Furthermore, gender policies, strategies and guidelines of the Addis Ababa University were used. Sample-wise, 20.3 per cent of the total academic staff (620) were consulted. About 599 faculty members were randomly selected and contacted through the questionnaire for the study. Of the total distributed questionnaire, the rate of return was 70.6 per cent (Table 1).

Table 1. Respondent Distribution in AAU Colleges and Institutes by Gender

College/Institute	Total	Respondent		Total	Per cent
	Sample Size	M	F		
College of Health Sciences	190	72	49	121	28.6
College of Natural and Computational Sciences	73	37	29	66	15.6
College of Education and Behavioral Studies	8	4	2	6	1.42
College of Social Sciences	29	16	5	21	4.96
College of Business and Economics	52	9	6	15	3.54
College of Humanities, Lang. Studies, Journalism & Communication	32	15	7	22	5.20
Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Cons. & City Develop.	47	13	21	34	8.04
College of Performing and Visual Arts	19	9	6	15	3.54
College of Development Studies	11	3	6	9	2.13
College of Law and Governance Studies	11	5	3	8	1.89
Addis Ababa Institute of Technology	89	57	17	74	17.50
College of Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture	11	6	3	9	2.13
Central Academic Administration	26	6	17	23	5.44
Total	599	252	171	423	100.00

Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instruments were the questionnaire, interview and checklist. The questionnaire was used for all academic staff. The questionnaire designed consists of respondents 'background information, female academic leadership practice and effectiveness, status of female academic rank in their careers, factors that affect female academic staff participation in leadership positions and academic rank, intervention mechanisms to increase the number of

female academic staff in leadership position and their academic rank, some general issues, and open-ended questions. In general, 35 items in five sections of the questionnaire were included and the reliability test in Cronbach alpha was 0.80.

A semi-structured interview was used to solicit information about female leadership practices, challenges and empowerment interventions. The interviews were conducted with 21 individuals (one top management, four middle and four first-line management female leaders who served at various academic leadership positions in the university, and twelve women faculty members). About 8-10 items were used for interviews that were run for 90 minutes to get specific information and to triangulate the data with other information sources. Checklists were used to collect data from secondary sources such as plans, reports and policy documents.

Data Collection Procedure and Analysis

The data collection was carried out with the permission of the heads of the concerned work units and the willingness of the respondents. The questionnaires were distributed both manually and online. The quantitative data were analysed by using percentages, and graphs and the qualitative ones were narrated thematically for inferences.

Results and Discussion

Women Academic Rank and Trends of Engagement in Academic Leadership

The number of women academic staff and their academic rank were reviewed and compared with their counter males as depicted in the following Graph 1. As per the data of 2021/22, the percentage of women academic staff constitutes only 21 per cent of the total academic staff.
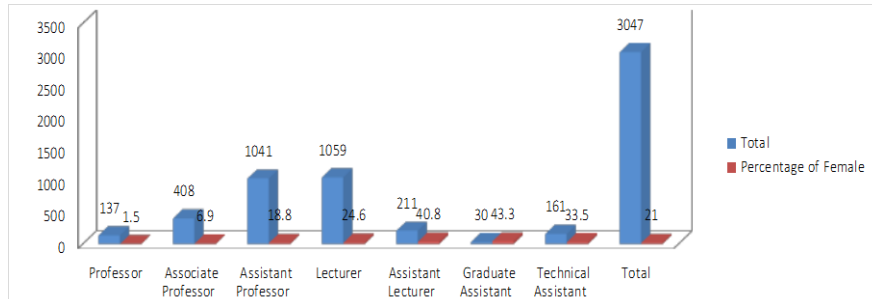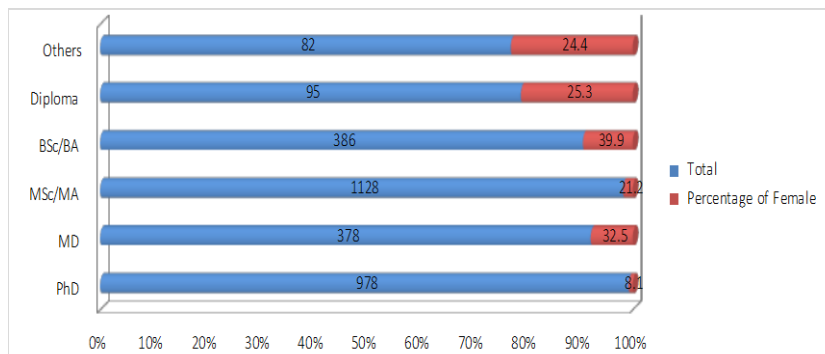
Source: Addis Ababa University staff profile unpublished document/2021/22

Graph 1: Addis Ababa University Academic Staff by Gender and Rank

As can be seen from Graph 1, 1.5 per cent of the professorship, 6.9 per cent of associate professorship and 18.8 per cent of assistant professorship were women. The proportion of women with a rank of graduate assistant, graduate lecturer and lecturer was 43.3 per cent, 40.8 per cent and 24.6 per cent respectively. The gender mix of the academic staff shows women are highly under represented both in faculty member size and in academic rank.

Graph 2 below depicts the academic staff distribution by qualification and gender. In terms of academic qualification, 32.1 per cent of the total academic staff had a PhD and among this, the proportion of women with a PhD was only 8.1 per cent.

Source: Addis Ababa University staff profile unpublished, 2021/2022(2010 E.C)

Graph 2: Addis Ababa University Academic Staff Qualification by Gender

The qualifications of the majority of women were Masters and Bachelor degrees. Graph 2 indicates that 32.8 per cent of female academia had MD, 21.2 per cent of female academia with MSc/MA degrees, whereas 39.9 per cent of female academic staff were BSc/BA degree holders. The rest 25.3 per cent and 24.4 per cent of female academic staff have diplomas and others respectively.

The unsettling question is how Addis Ababa University as a flagship research university be competitive with the human resources profile of 32.2 per cent terminal degree/PhD (8.1 per cent women) and 40.2 per cent (27.2 per cent women) with a rank of assistant professor and above of the total academic staff compared to the best research university in the region and/or in the world? The majority of the academic staff were Master's degree holders, where the proportion of women academic staff in this qualification and rank was significant (Graph 2). Although AAU has an institutional opportunity, the set mission to be the research university and the availability of many graduate programs run by the university, more than 50 per cent of the academic staff favour remaining Master's

degree holders and lecturers in rank. Specifically, the share of women who remained holding Master's degrees and lecturer rank is high, and this calls for special interventions to raise women's motivation for the PhD degrees and academic rank advancement and capability.

The trend of women's engagement in academic leadership for the last 10 years was reviewed and compared with that of their counter males as shown in Table 2. The academic leadership positions in this case are leadership positions in managing the missions of the university through its academic units (that is, the departments, schools, institutes, colleges, and central administration including senior management). Although the focus is on the academic leadership positions, all senior management positions were included to see the proportion of women representation. As can be seen from Table 2, the representation of women in senior leadership positions from 2012 to 2021 varied in number from 1 to 2. In 2015 and 2017, there was no women representation in senior leadership positions. Since the end of 2019 to the third quarter of 2023, two of the senior leadership positions (vice presidents) were occupied by women. It was only from 2012 to 2014 that a woman was represented in leading research institutes. Of the total 37 leadership positions under the offices of senior management, the proportion of women was 8.1 per cent (3) to 13.5 per cent (5).

Table 2. Addis Ababa University Leadership Distributions from 2012 to 2021 Academic Year

Academic Year	Sex	P/VP	DRI	DP/VP	Dean /CED	ASD for Research	ASD for GP	ASD for UGP	DC
2021(2013)	M	3	9	32	11	12	10	8	111
	F	2	-	5	1	-	1	3	14
2020(2012)	M	3	9	34	11	12	10	9	112
	F	2	-	3	1	-	1	2	12
2019(2011)	M	3	9	34	11	12	10	9	112
	F	2	-	3	1	-	1	2	12
2018(2010)	M	4	9	34	12	12	10	9	112
	F	1	-	3	-	-	1	2	12
2017(2009)	M	5	9	33	12	12	10	9	84
	F	-	-	4	-	-	1	2	11
2016 (2008)	M	4	9	33	12	12	10	9	116
	F	1	-	4	-	-	-	2	8
2015 (2007)	M	5	9	34	12	12	11	9	118
	F	-	-	3	-	-	1	2	7
2014 (2006)	M	4	9	34	12	12	11	9	114
	F	1	1	3	-	-	1	2	6
2013 (2005)	M	4	7	34	12	11	10	9	113
	F	1	1	3	-	-	-	1	7
2012 (2004)	M	4	7	34	12	11	11	6	91
	F	1	1	3	-	-	-	1	3

(P/VP: president, vice president, DRI: Director for Research Institute, DP/VP: Director under President and Vice President Offices,
CED: Chief executive Director, ASD: Associate Dean, GP: Graduate Program, UGP: Under Graduate Programs, DC: Department Chair)

In college leadership positions, since 2019 to up-to-date only one woman has assumed deanship. Of the total 36 associate dean's positions at the college level, the maximum women representation was in 2021, which was about 11.1 per cent (4), and the number varies between 1 and 3 from 2012 to 2020. College-level academic leadership positions are critical areas where women are highly under-represented. It is important to note that women are not represented in research management as indicated in Table 2, except in research institutes where only a woman has tested in a leading research institute in 2012-2014, there is no single woman at

all with the rank of associate dean for research. This might demand special attention to bring women on board.

Departments, schools and centres are the most important academic units of the university and the leadership is at the fore-front at this level. The number of these academic units has grown from 94 in 2012 to 125 in 2021 over the last 10 years. Of the total leadership positions at these academic units, the percentage of women in leadership positions was 3.2 per cent (3) in 2012 and this rose to 11.2 per cent (14) in 2021. Overall, the academic leadership position of Addis Ababa University has shown slight growth from 185 in 2012 to 221 in 2021. Women's representations in leadership positions over the last 10 years are depicted in Graph 3.
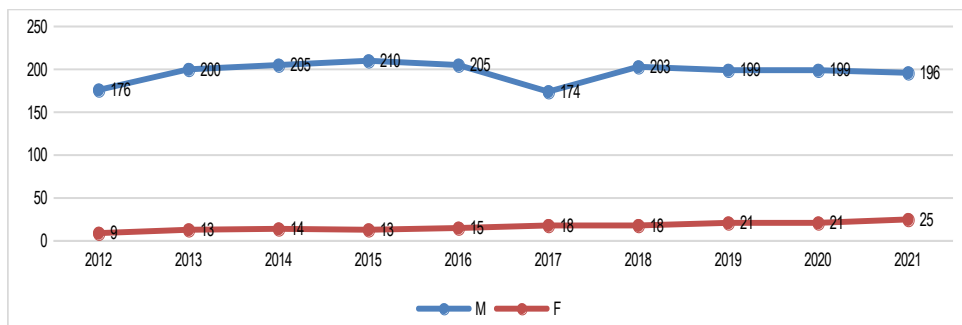
Graph 3: Women Leadership Engagement in AAU

The total number of women's engagement in leadership positions for the last ten years has shown a slight increase - from 9 in 2012 to 26 in 2021. This figure is much better than the years before 2012, where male engagement including the senior leadership position was dominant. This slight improvement might be attributed to the recruitment of female graduates and the positive policy environment created after 2012.

Women Academics Practices and Challenges in Leadership Engagement

An assessment of women's academic practices and their leadership effectiveness was conducted using nine items shown to the respondents to indicate their agreement, and the responses were organized as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3. Women's Academic Practice and Effectiveness in Leadership Participation

Items	Gender	Disagree		Neutral		Agree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Creating opportunities for others to	Male	24	9.8	62	25.2	160	65.0
participate in making key decisions	Female	14	9.4	29	19.5	106	71.1
Focus on achieving the	Male	17	6.9	63	25.6	166	67.5
organization's vision and plan	Female	18	12.1	22	14.8	109	73.2
Expressing self-confidence in the	Male	22	8.9	56	22.8	168	68.3
job done	Female	14	9.4	17	11.4	118	79.2
Providing feedback on performance	Male	22	8.9	65	26.4	159	64.6
	Female	18	12.1	15	10.1	116	77.9
Can be easily approached in her	Male	22	8.9	41	16.7	183	74.4
task	Female	14	9.4	27	18.1	108	72.5
Handle conflict situations and	Male	21	8.5	42	17.1	183	74.4
different viewpoints	Female	10	6.7	20	13.4	119	79.9
Encourage collaborative work and	Male	21	8.5	38	15.4	187	76.0
delegation	Female	16	10.7	21	14.1	112	75.2
Show commitment &willingness to	Male	19	7.7	30	12.2	197	80.1
take risks	Female	7	4.7	16	10.7	126	84.6
Demonstrate leadership skills and	Male	20	8.1	33	13.4	193	78.5
knowledge	Female	12	8.1	27	18.1	110	73.8

As shown in Table 3, for item 1, 65 per cent (160) male and 71.1 per cent (106) female respondents agreed that female leaders create opportunities for others to participate in making key decisions. The majority of the respondents agree that women leaders are good at creating opportunities for others in key decision-making processes. Similarly, the majority of the respondents, 67.5 per cent (166) male and 73.2 per cent (109) female respondents have shown agreement that female leaders focus on achieving the organization's vision and

plan. The interview results also support this view. Although women leaders are few, once an opportunity is given and encouraged to take up a leading role, they bring staff members together to attain the organizational goals, create awareness despite staff differences and bring staff to work together for a common goal, and this ensures engagement of colleagues. One of the interviewees says

…I observed that women in leadership positions are better at performing as per the plan. I feel that leadership for women is a matter of time management since they have double roles; academic management at institutions and homework. To carry out these two responsibilities, time management and proper planning are significant for female leaders.

It is noticeable that most female academic leaders believe in team working and consult experiences and senior faculties in important decision-making. However, to play the leadership roles, there should be a suitable working environment that enables to execute of the short and long-term plans.

As can be seen from Table 3 item 3, 68. 3 per cent (168) male and 79.2 per cent (118) female respondents agreed that female leaders exhibit self-confidence in their performance on their job. Nevertheless, in an open-ended question, the respondents' view was summarized as; encouraging female staff to take the responsibility of leading and getting a large number of competent female staff is significant for the institutions. The family background and the environment in which female leaders live make it difficult for women to convey self-confidence in their performance. If there is a personal need to assume the leadership position, then, there is no resistance from the institution. It all depends on what the woman wants and she should not be treated differently if she possesses the same or equivalent qualifications as department members, school and college should present their plan on how they will work on providing opportunities for women to advance in leadership.

For item 4 of Table 3, the majority of the respondents, 64.6 per cent (159) males and 77.9 per cent (116) females have agreed that women academic leaders provide feedback on individual and institutional performances. This shows that females in their leadership engagement can provide feedback to support colleagues' performance improvement towards the achievement of institutional missions (teaching-learning, research and community engagement).

Regarding the approachability of women leaders, 74.4 per cent (183) male and 72.5 per cent (108) female respondents agreed that they are approachable while performing their tasks. The implication is that women in leadership and managerial positions can easily provide support and encouragement to staff, followers and the like. In addition, the interview results regarding women leaders in engaging followers to meet organizational objectives indicate that women leaders are guided by the rule of law and fairness, and have a strong side in terms of balance and staff involvement. Research findings also support the views of the respondents that women leaders have many strengths; such as coaching or motivating, progress-focused and inspirational, humble and protective, authoritarian and result-focused, autocratic and delegating, but also being supportive, innovative and helpful etc. Besides women learn to be leaders not only when it comes to leadership; the idea of motherhood and sisterhood is something they learn from their mothers in the beginning; so, they don't have much trouble in entering the organizational structure and working with staff.

Female leaders can properly handle conflict situations and different views at the workplace were agreed by the majority of the respondents, 74.4 per cent (183) male and 79.9 per cent (119) female respondents. This implies, that women in managerial positions have personality traits that enable them to be the best negotiators who can achieve institutional objectives, and most women in managerial positions propose developmental assignments and transparent work experience to the institution. In most cases,

women work in tandem with colleagues to create environments that will encourage and motivate everybody to give their best leadership through delegation with accountability. In support of this, in an interview on how women leaders treat followers and handle different problems and interests to meet organizational objectives, one of the respondents indicated that

…leaders carry out the objectives of the organization for which they are responsible; also need to guide the underprivileged employees on how to achieve the goals of the organization, besides these female leaders ensure engagement of colleagues. In addition, women manage things modestly and in a motherly way. Women are passionate and programmed in their job. It is possible to note that women leaders can do better in leadership positions as we can see from their dedication to their job and managing homes. What is needed might be to upgrade women's participation through extra leadership to enhance their leadership effectiveness. Since women have a greater sense of responsibility for their performance, improving, and advancement of women within the professorial ranks will be essential.

Regarding the view female leaders can perform encouraging collaborative work and delegation, 76.0 per cent (187) male and 75.2 per cent (112) female respondents have indicated their agreement. This is an indication that women play a significant role in collaborative leadership, which suits the university context, and delegate the staff to complete the institutional task. Women leaders engage employees to suit work environments. This is to mean women leaders follow the participatory or democratic leadership approach, and they are good at delegating. In addition, as open-ended and interview responses show, women leaders have the best performance for sharing office tasks and delegating responsibilities to colleagues.

Pertaining to women's leadership commitment and willingness to take risks in their responsibility, the majority of the respondents; 80.1 per cent (197) male and 84.6 per cent (126) female have asserted. Commitment and risk-taking are indications of good leadership qualities. In complement to this, responses from an open-ended question and in interviews indicate most women leaders are so keen and committed to fulfilling institutional responsibility, and women leaders do not need provocation inherent through practice. Furthermore, the interview reveals that women leaders and male leaders' communication styles are different. Female leaders are responsible for regulating intimacy and paying more attention to others than male leaders.

Of the view that women leaders demonstrate leadership skills and knowledge in their leadership engagement, 78.5 per cent (193) male and 73.8 per cent (110) female respondents have shown agreement. This might be from the observation that those few women in leadership and managerial positions demonstrate the skills and knowledge needed to lead the institution. The interview results also support that female academics can lead and are effective in their job. Although female academic staff engagement in leadership is minimal except in small social gatherings held at the university, those few in leadership positions are relatively effective. In sum, as most interviews and replies to open-ended questions reflect on women's leadership effectiveness in the university, there is a consensus on less engagement and representation of women academic staff in leadership. It is noted that effectiveness depends on personal capacities and most women's academic staff can fulfil their responsibility. Although, there are few women in leadership positions they are more effective because they are determined to do their tasks and fulfil their responsibility.

The Status of Women Faculty Academic Rank

The data on women's academic qualification and rank indicates that most women academia remain at Masters' degree holders and lecturers or assistant professors. The findings indicate the existence of various barriers that have limited women's performance in assistant, associate and professorship careers. For this purpose, six factors that have a significant effect on women's academic careers were shown to respondents for rating. Accordingly, four of the factors rated high effect by the majority of male and female respondents as depicted in Table 4. The variety of stereotypes' contribution to women faculty academic rank was rated high effect by 50.9 per cent (96) male and 51.0 per cent (82) female respondents. The responses from interviews on perspective regarding most female academia rank remains as a lecturer and assistant professor reveal that similar factors that hold women from participation in leadership positions hold women from academic promotion.

Table 4. Respondents' View on the Status of Women's Academic Rank

Items	Gender	Low Effect		Moderate		High Effect	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
The variety of stereotypical contributions to female academic staff remains	Male	50	29.8	82	33.3	96	50.9
	Female	35	27.1	41	27.5	27.5	51.0
Female faculty can't upgrade their rank due to determination on current position	Male	60	29.5	54	22.0	132	55.5
	Female	43	28.9	47	31.5	85	56.0
Women have less time to participate & devote to research	Male	38	15.4	67	27.2	125	51.2
	Female	56	37.6	37	24.8	86	55.5
Women in academia need institutional support to upgrade their academic rank	Male	56	22.8	70	28.5	121	50.7
	Female	28	18.8	33	22.1	88	59.1
The hostility from colleagues who do not recognize female authority and lower recognition	Male	71	28.9	73	29.9	104	42.3
	Female	49	32.9	34	22.8	71	47.3
The gender-based violence including sexual harassment and stalking	Male	128	52.0	65	26.4	53	21.5
	Female	58	38.9	34	22.8	57	38.3

These include multiple responsibilities, lack of networking, the inability to travel for fellowship and other opportunities, lack of role models and mentors, and lack of pro-activeness on the part of female academia themselves. According to one interviewee:

…when you hold a position it is likely that you will be more aware of the promotion requirements and processes to motivate females to apply for promotion. In some cases, it could be the reverse, occupying leadership positions may deprive women of the time required to publish and get promoted, especially because women are likely to take their responsibilities seriously and take more time to accomplish their tasks. I feel women are busy with academic exercises/teaching-learning and at-home requirements and lack motivation for higher degrees and research woks.

The item *female academic staff cannot upgrade their academic rank when they are assigned to the administrative position* was rated high effect by 55.5 per cent (132) male and 56 per cent (85) female respondents. This implies women do not show much effort to upgrade themselves and seem satisfied with the assignments they are given by the administration and with their current academic rank. In an open-ended question, the respondent indicates slight progress in seeing women representation in senior management of the university and a dean in college, male domination and in rare cases women are observed struggling for career advancement. Career advancement and promotion for high academic rank require the fulfilment of many tasks including leadership, research, and social and community engagement.

The effect of less time devotion and participation of women in research was rated high by 51.2 per cent (125) male and 55.5 per cent (86) female respondents. According to the majority view, women devoted less time to research work and this resulted in few research practices. In an open-ended question, respondents indicate that women have low research participation, partly due to

their engagement in many home and social activities and the societal culture itself does not encourage women to undertake field research work.

Women in academia need high institutional support to upgrade their academic rank as reported by 50.7 per cent (121) male and 59.1 per cent (88) female respondents. The implication is that encouraging women in academia for upgrading and laddering requests should be supported and creating awareness is also important to eliminate different negative views about women's academic rank. The institution is expected to raise the number of women academic staff to a high rank through upgrading opportunities, encouraging women's professional development, and other mechanisms. Definitely, there should be no resistance and negative discrimination from the institution as far as women want and fulfil the threshold requirements, as far as appropriate and timely information focusing on women is available. In this connection, one of the interviewees indicated that:

…women usually do not take part in informal social gatherings due to dual responsibility. This practice is highly hampered by a lack of the right information.   This slows down their work and makes them lack confidence in making decisions, in situations where the university management and academic environment are dominated by males. There are no support mechanisms or programs for women academics entering management positions and research publication activities.

In another interview conducted regarding institutional support given to female academic staff to participate in leadership in the University, one of the interviewees replied:

…female academics are few in number. They don't have a support system where the females get together and share challenges and positive experiences.   There is gender influence in the university

because most of university higher positions are covered by male staff. Low number of female academics on the position is also one of the sign of exclusiveness in the university.

The factor that female academic hostility from colleagues who do not recognize female authority and lower recognition given to women was relatively rated high effect by a significant number of respondents; 42.3 percent (104) males and 47.3 percent (71) females. To some extent, there is the antipathy of subordination of women academics in leadership by women themselves. This seems women faculty receive lower recognition than do men faculty. Then women faculty should be continued to show different kinds of career development from that of men. Prevailing negative attitudes towards women in leadership are more likely to uphold ethical practices, which may disrupt the existing network. In interviews, respondents indicated that lack of participation in community services has deterred women academia from applying for promotion and upgrading themselves. That is engagement in community service is one of the criteria for promotion. In an open-ended question, respondents also replied that the lack of a transparent selection system has limited women to apply for promotion.

Concerning the effect of gender-based violence including sexual harassment and stalking, respondents have divergent views, where the majority of male respondents 52.0 percent (128) and significant number of female respondents; 38.9 per cent (58) have rated low effect. The implementation of gender-based polices and legislation might have a positive effect.

Challenges to Women Academic Leadership and Career Development

Several research findings indicate institutional, social and personal factors affect women's leadership and their academic and professional development. In the context of higher education,

institutional factors are those related to the management of the institution and implementation of institutional programs. Institutional factors may not have the same effect in all organizations and differ according to working area and working characteristics. Some of them are exposed to a lack of policy formulation, some emanate from policy implementation, and others are caused by mismatches of government policies with the labour market situation.

In view of these, Addis Ababa University has policies and strategies such as Senate Legislation, Gender Policy and Strategic Plans on the bases of government policy and Education Sector Development Programs (ESDPs), Sustainable Development Goals, and Higher Institution Affirmative Action that support women in leadership engagement. An attempt was made to examine the institutional factors that affect women academia in leadership based on what male and female respondents replied as depicted in Table 5.

The first item, women remain under-represented in leadership participation was rated high effect by majority; 50.4 percent (183) male and 50.5 percent (100) of female respondents. The responses reflect the reality, women engagement in leadership practices is quite a challenge by itself and the environment/climate and the culture might not be attractive for women to be leaders. In an interview to search for the cause for the low participation of female academic in leadership, one of the interviewees reported that:

…a lot of academic, social and personal reasons and challenges, no sufficient pool of women to draw from to compete for leadership positions and develop professional careers. The social responsibilities women are given or have taken upon themselves also discourage their aspiration to participate in leadership positions. Women are primarily responsible for the care activities in their immediate as well as extended families. The other reason is that there are individuals in most societies who think that women are incapable of leading, and there are individuals who prevent them

from taking responsibility. There are also men who try to get women to take the lead. The family background and the environment in which we live make it difficult for women to take the lead.

Table 5. Respondents' Opinion on Institutional Factors Affecting Women Academic Career &Leadership

Items	Gender	Low effect		Moderate		High effect	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Women remain under-represented in leadership participation	Male	26	10.0	34	13.8	183	50.4
	Female	15	10.1	34	22.8	100	50.5
Lack of university leaders' intervention to facilitate women's lives in the workplace	Male	39	12.6	67	27.2	140	45.4
	Female	27	16.1	37	24.8	85	35.0
Lack of mentoring to advance the career of women	Male	38	12.6	47	19.1	161	48.2
	Female	21	9.4	34	22.8	94	40.9
Limited leadership development support for female academic staff	Male	38	12.6	43	17.5	165	49.9
	Female	19	10.1	29	19.5	101	50.6
Male domination in higher positions thus women have no access to sponsorships to connect to senior position	Male	47	15.4	55	22.4	144	46.9
	Female	28	10.7	35	23.5	86	35.5
Lack of models to encourage female academics	Male	39	13.8	28	11.4	179	50.0
	Female	33	16.8	16	10.7	100	50.5

The other perspectives obtained from an open-ended question indicate that women are not under-represented; the institute is a teaching/research institute where both men and women have equality of opportunity, as far as requirements for job fulfilment and motivation exist. The leadership appointment (selection or election) on the basis of merit is expected; however, the point to be noted is whether equality of opportunity has been created and whether the space is equal and fair. On top of these, a lack of leadership development schemes could contribute to the under-representation of women in leadership engagement. Lack of university leadership interventions in facilitating women's life in the work place was rated high effect by 45.4 per cent (140) male and 35.0 per cent (85)

female respondents. In support of this view, data gathered through open-ended questions indicate a lack of top university leadership who support and facilitate women in leadership participation and advance their academic careers.

The effect of female academics lacking mentoring to advance their career and leadership engagement was rated high by 48.2 per cent (161) male and 40.9 per cent (94) female respondents. The implication is that female academics lack mentoring to advance their career and to upper leadership positions. Besides this, the responses gathered through open-ended questions indicate that women themselves refrain from taking managerial positions which they think is very difficult and take their time for their family. The level of awareness among women themselves on gender equality issues and resource allocations to address gender inequality in every area is weak or knowingly admitted to be laissez-faire.

Limited leadership development support for female academic staff was rated major effect by 43.9 per cent (165) male and 37.6 per cent (101) females' respondents. In an interview question, *Have you faced any problem based on gender leadership?* one of the interviewees reported that

…leadership position for women could be challenging due to various factors. The most challenging encounter is the family-related and social roles, which take away time from activities that would have contributed to academic promotion. This may not necessarily relate to any outside factors, but it may be because most of us are raised to give priority to our reproductive roles. I feel it is an opportunity to bring out our potential, to face challenges, to grow, to support other women to come to leadership positions and to contribute what we can to a society that requires every bit of support. The higher position of the institution being dominated by men as a result of which women have no access to sponsorships to connect to senior positions was rated major effect by a significant number of

respondents; 32.9 percent (144) males and 25.5 percent (86) females. Responses gathered through open-ended questions support the view that there is no sufficient pool of women to draw from to compete for leadership positions within the university, someone explicitly pointed out 'there is male dominance in leadership position in the university system'. Affirmative action principles have not been implemented properly and the university management support was missing.

The lack of models that can encourage female academia as a factor for leadership and academic career was rated high effect by 38.2 per cent (179) male and 42.20 per cent (100) female respondents. A significant number of the respondents felt that the lack of models had a major effect on female academic careers and leadership. Role modelling is very important for women to be motivated to upgrade their academic rank and be attracted to leadership positions. Junior female academia wants a model to follow, collaborate on research, experience sharing and for further academic advancement. The other institutional factor considered was the willingness of the senior management to implement and practice the policy including affirmative action, work/life balance and family-friendly interventions. In interviews with women regarding the problem encountered with leadership positions or roles, the feeling was that

…most of the time female academics are not appointed for the position. Resistance is there to participate in leadership roles and to accumulate leadership experience. Female academics did not have recognition of their leadership position. Often, the female leaders were criticized by the boss as well as by followers because of female leaders.

It is essential that policies should be accompanied by strategic implementation plans in support of women engagement in leadership and career advancement. Social and organizational cultures are also factors that hinder female academics in leadership.

In an attempt to analyze the social factors, the respondents have rated the effect of six items as depicted in

Table 6. Respondents' Opinion on Societal Factors Affecting Women's Academic Career and Leadership

Items	Gender	Low effect		Moderate		High effect	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
The work of women is considered less valued than the work of men	Male	75	30.5	50	20.3	121	50.2
	Female	30	20.1	35	23.5	84	56.4
The resistance of women themselves against women in leadership position	Male	78	32.0	64	26.0	100	43.4
	Female	47	31.5	40	26.8	62	41.6
Negative attitude of male colleagues towards female leaders	Male	77	31.3	51	20.7	118	48.0
	Female	41	27.5	23	15.4	85	57.0
Mostly our community prefers male leaders to women leader	Male	46	18.7	34	13.8	166	67.5
	Female	24	16.1	25	16.8	100	67.1
Preferring men over females for research work participation	Male	63	25.6	50	20.3	133	54.1
	Female	22	14.8	34	22.8	93	62.4
Mostly our culture by itself has resisted women's holding a leadership position	Male	47	19.1	24	9.8	175	71.1
	Female	18	12.1	29	19.5	102	68.5

The factor that the work of women is less valued than the work of men was rated high by 50.2 per cent (121) male 56.4 per cent (84) female respondents. Most of the male and female respondents felt that the work of women is considered less valued than the work of men. In support of this, the responses obtained from an open-ended question reveal that the earlier negative socio-cultural perceptions contribute to discounting the value of women's work.

The resistance of women themselves against women in leadership positions was rated high effect by 43.4 per cent (100) males and 41.6 per cent (62) female respondents. Although the degree varies, women resisting women in leadership positions, and lack of acknowledging women leaders by women themselves are factors affecting women's leadership and career development. The negative attitude of male colleagues towards female leaders was rated high

effect by 48.0 per cent (118) male and 57.0 per cent (85) female respondents. Most respondents feel that this factor has a major effect. Moreover, the interview and open-ended results indicate society's belief that women cannot lead and cannot be good leaders. Only a few women could join higher education as well as have successful completion.

Whether our community prefers male leaders to women leaders, was rated high effect by 67.5 per cent (166) male and 67.1 per cent (100) female respondents. The majority of male and female respondents have a feeling that the community prefer male leaders to women leaders. The interview and open-ended information obtained also show that our culture does not have a method of encouraging women for leadership. Most people thought that women were burdened with childcare and home management. The community does not appreciate the potential of female leaders.

Regarding the preference of men over females for research work participation, the majority of respondents, 54.1 per cent (133) of males and 62.4 per cent (93) of females, have rated high effect. In the interview, it was reflected the university management itself considers women as incapable researchers and low participation is taken as normal. Leading research is assumed as "male territory". The general feeling seems that females cannot be successful in research work. Some respondents felt that women have a lot of responsibilities at home thus it would be hard to add more work at their workplace.

The effect of culture such as knowledge, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours by itself resists women's access to leadership positions and was rated high by 71.1 per cent (175) male and 68.5 per cent (102) female respondents. This indicates that the majority of the respondents believe that our culture repels women's access to leadership positions. This might emanate from the fact that women are not able to access relevant information due to their

limited social interaction in the university and are unaware of opportunities.

As per the research findings (e.g. Gelashe et al, 2015), low academic qualification and lack of experience are also the personal factors which hinder women from participating in leadership. Other personal factors, which affect women's participation in leadership, are a lack of role models and poor confidence in women in their performance. In this connection, five items regarded as individual factors affecting women's academic careers and leadership were exposed to be rated as depicted in Table 7.

Table 7. Respondents' Opinions on Individual Factors Affecting Women's Academic Career and Leadership

Items	Male						Female					
	Low effect		Moderate		High effect		Low effect		Moderate		High effect	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Lack of confidence to be a leader	55	22.4	47	19.1	144	58.5	39	26.2	24	16.1	86	57.7
Load of family responsibility to do more research work	54	22.0	43	17.5	149	60.6	36	24.2	18	12.1	95	63.8
Lack of interest to be a leader	56	22.8	55	22.4	135	54.9	45	30.2	30	20.1	74	50.5
Fears of political commitment to be a leader	32	13.0	62	25.2	152	61.8	36	24.2	26	17.4	87	58.4
Lack of initiation for professional development support	64	26.0	55	22.4	127	51.6	27	18.1	26	17.4	96	64.4

Lack of confidence to be a leader was rated high effect by the majority of the respondents -58.5 per cent (144) males and 57.7 per cent (86) females. Female confidence is a matter of family background and the environment in which they live and work. Moreover, reasons such as women's lack of capacity and experience, lack of networking with the staff lack of management

reflection, research and publication, and not giving training and education on leadership and professional development could contribute to women's confidence lose.

The effect of family responsibility to do more research work was rated high effect by 60.6 per cent (149) male and 63.8 per cent (95) female respondents. The majority of respondents replied family load responsibility competes with time to be devoted to research and leading an institution. Research undertaking, leadership and managerial assignments demand time scarification, which competes time for family responsibility, thus a limiting factor for women's leadership and career advancement. One of the interviewees indicated that family responsibility should not be taken as a serious factor limiting women's engagement in leadership and professional development:

…serving as a leader is a matter of time management. If women can use their time efficiently; it would be easier for them to engage in managerial responsibilities and involve in research work. What is needed is motivation, developing confidence, taking all aspects of institutional responsibilities is expected.

Women lack of interest in being leaders was rated high effect by 54.9 per cent (135) male and 50.5 per cent (74) females' respondents. Lack of interest is a limiting factor for women engagement in leadership. This might be reflected during recruitment and selection, after appointment most of them are eager to fulfil the responsibilities as witnessed in interviews conducted.

Females' fear of political commitment, that is, fear of persevering acts of politicians which ensures that they are achieving the policies, rules and regulations that they have drafted, created, and passed are properly implemented, rated high by 61.8 per cent (152) male and 58.4 per cent (87) female respondents. In addition, as some interviewees' reports indicated, the fears of political commitment and

stereotypes are considered Addis Ababa University's institutional culture. Then most women faculty members show a lack of interest and competences required for leadership positions, and the culture in the society that women cannot become good leaders affects women's leadership and their career advancement.

Lack of initiation for professional development support of female academic staff was rated high by 51.6 per cent (127) male and 64.4 per cent (96) female respondents. The implication is that the majority of the respondents felt professional development schemes, which are supposed to be facilitated by the institution are lacking and this factor limited women in leadership engagement and career advancement.

As can be noted from the above data and discussions pertaining to Addis Ababa University, women engagement in leadership and their career advancement were constrained by different institutional, societal and individual factors. The majority of the respondents rated those institutional, societal and individual factors as having high effects in limiting women engagement in leadership and in their academic career advancement.

Strategies Enhancing Female Participation in Academic Leadership

Addis Ababa University Senate Legislation, Gender Policy, Gender Office and system of main-streaming and the Five years Strategic Plan envisages the enhancement of females' academic career advancement and participation in leadership. The discussion below revolves around how the structure functioned and policies and strategies implemented to enhance women participation in academic advancement and leadership.

The interview results and document reviews regarding the roles of the Gender office on female academics' career advancement and on female leadership participation indicate that the Gender office could

do a lot of work such as ensuring the implementation of the gender policy, ensuring the creation of a conducive environment for female academia to progress, the establishment of day care, organizing women in associations to create networks and supporting systems, mobilize resources to organize personal development workshops, academic workshops, organize experience sharing travels, etc.

All these interventions have positive contributions to women engagement in leadership and their career development, however, the effects were not maximized. Subsequently, policy implementation has resulted minor changes in increasing the number of women in academia, their engagement in leadership and raising their career development.

The strategies and interventions implemented to enhance women engagement in leadership and career development may not achieve the desired goals due to poor design, lack of appropriateness or relevance or not backed with adequate resources. Table 8 below depicted the views of 423 respondents on eight strategies implemented to enhance women participation in leadership.

Of the eight strategies that enhance women participation in leadership, more than 71 per cent of the respondents have replied to seven of them as appropriate. The advantage of equal opportunities for women to be involved in leadership positions was replied appropriate, that is equal distribution of leadership positions is significant. The fact that leadership is not born, is a matter of experience, training and development.

Table 8. Respondents' opinions on the strategies enhancing female participation in leadership

	Inappropriate		Neutral		Appropriate	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Advantage of equal opportunities for women to be involved in leadership	28	6.6	38	8.9	357	84.4
Encourage female academic staff by providing financial incentives for the position	236	55.8	59	13.9	125	29.6
Encouraging women's related to professional improvement	27	6.4	50	11.8	343	81.1
Encourage female academic staff to participate in different committees	52	12.3	25	5.9	318	75.2
Making provision to balance gender differences in leadership role	22	5.2	51	12.1	332	78.4
Making different provisions to balance gender differences in academic rank	53	13.4	59	14.9	283	71.6
Giving recognition to female academics in leadership positions	24	6.1	38	9.6	333	78.7
Encourage female academic staff related to research work	27	6.9	33	8.4	334	78.9

The provision of financial incentives for leadership positions encourages female academic staff was replied inappropriate strategy by the majority of the respondents; 55.8 per cent (236). Respondents felt that inappropriate to allow extra payment for the position of females in leadership participation. If females equally perform academically, they could also excel in their performance as leaders.

Encouraging women related to professional improvement intervention mechanisms and participating in different committees was felt appropriate. Most respondents support female leaders' professional development in their careers. The question is how to encourage. The interview results indicate that the institution should create networks, put in place mentorship programs, create opportunities for various capacity-building activities including professional development, organize forums for discussion of various relevant issues and experience sharing, help to take part in individual and team research, encourage the female to apply for both promotion and leadership positions.

The other strategy that can ensure female academic participation in leadership positions is making provisions to balance gender differences in leadership roles. Intervention mechanisms that can balance the number of female academics in academic rank and leadership positions require a conscious effort of the top management and institutional strategy. Each department, college, and school should present their plan on how it will work to provide opportunities for women to advance in leadership, and the top management should support it. Recognition of women leadership as a strategy to enhance in increasing women engagement in academic leadership is significant as they stay in their positions and can be promoted to senior positions. Moreover, the provision of research grants and research incentives, working with senior researchers as mentors and coaches could encourage women's participation in research and their academic careers. Those attempts to raise the number of women representation in the university senate and senate standing committee could enhance participation. Moreover, those women who assumed the leadership position, the maximum they serve only for one term, and their contribution to leadership positions have no continuity. In general, the strategies implemented seem appropriate, but the results or the effects in transforming the institution maintaining equality and ensuring sustainable development by 2030 are far away.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Depending on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drown: The findings of the study revealed that for the last ten years (2012-2021/2004-2013 EC), females' academic leadership involvement at Addis Ababa University was low, although limited and slight progress has been recorded over the past years. One can conclude that the increase does not show continuity. In reality, women academia in leadership participation at university is low. It is clearly indicated that from the available number of females in

leadership positions, women in academia can perform as effectively as men, and fulfil the responsibility and duty assigned for.

In general, women remain under-represented in academic leadership and higher academic rank. There is a lack of models that can encourage female academics. There is also a lack of models to advance the career of women as of the major challenges for women academician in leadership participation. On top of this, cultural bias and resistance where the community prefers male leaders over women contend in leadership is the major challenge of females for 0academic leadership participation. As a result, the number of females who attain in leadership positions is very low. Such leadership positions are male-dominated.   Moreover, fears of political commitment and lack of confidence to be a leader are the major challenges of female academics in leadership participation.

It is suggested that AAU should conduct a gender impact assessment, audit and review the existing policies and gender mainstreaming strategies (regulations and governance, core activities, management process, support process, students, employees and the surrounding society), revise and redesign the policies, strategies, programs and initiative, then carry out more rigorous implementation of the gender policy and gender mainstreaming with incentives and institutional transformation. Create conducive environment for female academia equal opportunities to involve in leadership positions, and take initiative and in place support mechanisms and empowerment to enhance women's confidence and self-esteem, and encourage them to be more competitive, assertive and risk-taking.

Legislative or policy and infrastructure support such as book project to publish all aspects of women's life, journal of women in academia, and capacity building. Allocation of special awards and scholarships to women is one of the concrete ways of creating a larger pool of women academia. There is also evidence that special measures

which improve the conditions for postgraduate studies help women achieve a greater rate of success and completion, and then take the initiative to recruit more female academic staff. Thus, developing special programs such as 'Honor Degree Programs' (where highly competent female students could directly continue from undergraduate to PhD), and post-doctoral programs.

Creating and strengthening academic women's networks and fora; women's networks undertake a range of initiatives to help promote their members. These include holding workshops, seminars, meetings, leadership development programs, publications and training materials, and advocacy. Moreover, the network/forum could be coordinated by establishing a Hub that can provide a holistic experience through academic courses, research, on-the-job training and community engagement activities to support women as change agents and future leaders within higher learning institutions and outside it. Further, the Hub could serve for the realization of SDG within higher education institutions and an indication of the timeliness of strengthening the empirical and conceptual understanding of how SDGs can be achieved through higher education.

Leadership and management development programs with the inclusion of gender in management development programs and professional improvement schemes for women academia empowerment, thus represent an important strategy for enhancing their knowledge about higher education, as well as sharpening their skills and competencies in a range of activities such as research and management which are valued in higher education. A useful mode of mentoring is work-shadowing, which encourages female participation in leadership positions and committees. Mentorship or the re-distribution of organisational and professional knowledge and social capital has been perceived as a charming mechanism for women's career development. Mentor programs report some outstanding successes with a number of mentees gaining

sponsorship, research grants, higher retention and promotion rates, higher average research grant amounts and more scholarly publications.

Strengthening gender and women's studies; promoting an institution for 'Women and Development' that can play an important role as a catalyst in enhancing the participation of women at all levels of the education system and other sectors.

Strengthening a synergy of vibrant and robust cooperation among universities, government, non-government organizations, privates, development partners and other stakeholders to support the efforts undertaken to date; promote women in academics, research, leadership and management.

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