POLICE WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN ETHIOPIA: OROMIA IN PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to assess police women’s empowerment in Ethiopia with emphasis on Oromia regional state police commission. More specifically, it aimed to assess factors affecting police women’s empowerment to assume a leadership position. That is aimed to examine gender difference in decision making position. To this end, a sample of 160 police women respondents were drawn from the region’s police. In order to determine the sample size probability simple random sampling method was employed. Then next, self- administered questionnaires and interview guides were used to gather data. The data were fed into SPSS version 20.0 followed by analysis and interpretation using descriptive statistics. The findings showed that police women’s are highly underrepresented in higher level leadership positions. This is mainly due to some major factors such as education, sociocultural antecedents; organizational culture and police commission recruitment and promotional practices. As such, the police women found difficult role model and less confidence for the leadership position. This research ends by forwarding a recommendation that in order to minimize the existing gender difference at the level of decision making, the Oromia police commission needs to implement affirmative action such as quota system for police women at entrance stage as well as clearly entrenching supportive criteria while assigning police officers at higher positions.

Keyword: police women empowerment, women empowerment, Ethiopia

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Law enforcement and order maintenance are generally viewed as the two main duties of the police force. In addition to these two duties, the police are also frequently requested by the public to deliver social services (Reid, 2001; Cox, 1996; Magenau & Hunt, 1996). As one of the law enforcement statutory service teams, the police are expected to provide immediate aid and care to the public along with compulsory, regulatory, control, and defense practices. Provision of public services is one of the most significant roles of the contemporary police. Studies have shown that the police spend most of their time providing police services to the public (Greene &Klockars, 1991).

Global policing is greatly evolving on a daily basis. This has led to the enlistment of women in policing as compared to early ages where the profession was only meant for males. In U.S.A., research has revealed that in entering police work, women have encountered enormous difficulties primarily as a result of the negative attitudes of the men, Oruta, Lidara & Gauyas (2016). Quoted Brookshire, 1980; Block &Arderon, (1974) and Melchoire, (1976) in discussing about the difficulty that women encounter in policing. According to these authors; Male officers anticipate women failing they doubt women police can equal men in most job skills they do not see women police officers as doing "real" police work and they continue myths about women's lack of emotional fitness has pointed out that the biggest challenge facing women police officers is the resistance displayed by male officers in their attitudes toward women in policing.

As a reflection of women’s traditional position in the society, however, women's profile in number and quality within the police structure is very low. Culturally, women are associated with maternity and the role they play in a family (Lindsey, 2005; Walby, 1990). The role of women in procreation said to have created basis for their discrimination (CEDAW: 1979). Therefore, this study aims to examine factors that influence police women’s empowerment effort of the government in Oromia police commission. To this end, the study assesses Gender Empowerment Measures (GEM) (UNDP,
2000) on the actual level of participation and status of the Oromia police commission police women shows the level of existing disparity. Finally, the study was elaborates on opportunities enjoyed or challenges faced by police women’s and on the way forward and informs decision-makers on what to do to boost achievements of the targeted goal of empowering police women in Oromia police commission. Hence, this paper has the following objectives;

A. To assess the major barriers that hinder police women’s Empowerment of Oromia police commission.
B. To evaluate the effect of gender difference on police women’s Empowerment in Oromia police commission.
C. To analyze trends of police women’s empowerment in Oromia police commission.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Empowerment

Empowerment that is, enhancing an individual’s or group’s capacity to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes (Alsop and Heinsohn, 2006, p 5). It is increasing an individual’s ability to shape his or her life (Narayan (2006), defines empowerment as the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives. The key elements determining the ability are stated to be internal constraints, particularly individuals’ perceptions, preference, and aspirations; external constraints, such as discrimination and the family, economic, social, cultural and political context, and assets, including human capital (Stern, Nicholas et al., 2005).

External obstacles, they elaborate, may prevent individuals from taking advantage of economic opportunities and participating in growth. These obstacles range from discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, caste, religion, or language to corruption, cronyism and capture of the state by powerful groups that exclude poor people from the benefits of public policies. The dynamics of empowerment are largely about reducing and overcoming these obstacles and promoting the acquisition of assets (Stern, Nicholas et al., 2005).

2.2. Factors that Affect Women’s Empowerment

2.2.1. Social or Cultural Factors

Wasis (1991) culture is that which surrounds us and plays a certain role in determining the way we behave at any given moment in time. By no means a static, concept defines culture and is both defined by events that are taking place both locally as well as regionally and internationally, it is shaped by individual events as well as collective ones, and it is a feature of the time or epoch we live in. Because it is so vast, culture is also often used as a tool to validate all manners of actions not, all of which may be acceptable to all concerned and are often intimately, connected to issues of identity.

2.2.2. Organizational Culture Barriers

The values, which support the great majority of organizations, and thus define success, often include money, power and status. As McKenna (cited in Mbugua, 2007) the corresponding behaviors include working long hours and putting in face time (as proxies for productivity), competitiveness and a willingness to put work above all else. These values and behaviors, which some authors define as being masculine, have come to dominate organizations for historical and socio-economic reasons but are increasingly being challenged by women, and many men, who want to 'work to live' rather than 'live to work'.

The organizational and managerial values in some organizations tend to be characterized by stereotypical views of women's roles, attributes, preferences and commitments. These in turn influence decisions about who is suitable for particular positions, which is seen to have potential and so forth. When women find themselves selected or assessed on the basis of group membership rather than on their experience and abilities, they experience gender discrimination. According to Eagly & Johannesen (as cited in Miller, 2006) leadership and management continue to be the domain of men that is ‘thinks manager, think male’.

2.2.3. Gender Stereotype Factors

Gender stereotypes are generalized beliefs about the characteristics and qualities attributed to men and women in a society. In general, men are characterized as aggressive, risk-taking, decisive, and autonomous (a genetic attributes), whereas women are characterized as kind, caring, relational, and humble (communal attributes) (Collins & Singh, 2006; Sikdar & Mitra, 2008).
The differences may have arisen not just from biological differences but also from sex role socialization during childhood and the way in which men and women develop psychologically. Gender stereotypes have consistently demonstrated that men are generally seen as more agent and more competent than women, while women are seen as more expressive and communal than men (Duher and Bono; Sczesny and Stahlberg, as cited in Ginige, 2007).

2.2.4. Work Place Policies

Women are not the same as men; they have particular biological functions that make them different, which in turn make their work experiences different. To this end, treating men and women the same has effectively created a systemic form of indirect discrimination for women.

Mbogua (2007) asserts that pregnancy is a workplace issue that starts well before conception and ends long after birth. It is impossible to separate pregnancy and family responsibilities.

Anecdotal evidence suggests assumptions that women were resigning when they have children are still widespread and continue to form the basis for not hiring women among some employers.

Large number of women report significant difficulties when they return to work due to the lack of supportive policies and practices in workplace. Issues like childcare, breastfeeding, flexible working hours and part-time work are still very current issues for most working women. (Mbogua, 2007)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research approach

In this study, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches of doing research was employed. However, it was used sequentially. The quantitative data collection was followed by qualitative data collection. Only police women’s were part of the quantitative data collection. Since the study was on the police women’s empowerment, initially the study was tried to find out the views of police women’s and men police leaders on the police women’s empowerment. The qualitative data collection was a follow-up to this to understand what practice of police women’s empowerment and what are their suggestions and recommendations to overcome the existing barriers. According to recent recommendations (e.g. Mark et al., 2009; Creswell, 2009) mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches give the potential to cover each method’s weaknesses with strengths from the other method. Many researchers who use both methods gain the best of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches (Kothari, 2004).

3.2. Research design

Research design selected for this study was descriptive. This was an ideal methodology when collecting information about people’s attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of social issues Orodho and Kombo (2002). The reason for using descriptive research as research design is that to describe the existing practice and identify the major hindering factors of police women empowerment.

3.3. Study population, sample and sampling techniques

The source populations were police women of Oromia police commission, head quarter, zonal and town administration police departments’ leaders and gender directorate director and vice directors under the regional state. This organization is believed to be places of high probability for government gender equality and women empowerment laws, policies and strategies implemented properly to facilitate and promote the general change programs of the region.

The sample size of this research is calculated by using Taro Yamane (Yamane, 1967) formula with 93% confidence level. (According to Oromia Police Commission official report of December, 2017 the total population from selected zones was 646.) The calculation formula of Taro Yamane is presented as follows:

\[ n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \]

Whereas:

\[ n = \text{sample size}, \]
\[ N = \text{population size}, \]
\[ e = \text{level of precision given that 93% confidence level and } P = \pm 7\% \text{ are assumed}. \]

\[ n = 646 = 155 \]
\[ 1+646(0.07)^2 \]
The researcher used 155 respondents as a sample. In addition, selection of respondents was made by simple random sampling (probability sampling).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source (Place)</th>
<th>Total no. of female police offices</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head quarter</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East shewa zone</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0.1068</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arsi zone</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>0.1207</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East wollega</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0.125538</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West shewa zone</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>0.1269</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finfinne surround Oromia special zone</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0.1114</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimma zone</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0.1052</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adama Town</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.0464</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebeta Town</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.0309</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dukem Town</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.04179</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nekemte Town</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.03715</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shashemennee Town</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.034055</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>646</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>155</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources, type and Data collection methods

**3.3.1. Data source**

The data sources were primary and secondary. The most important data for this study was primary data from the respondent which was collected by questionnaire and data that was obtained through Key Informant Interviews (KIs); In order to assess the police women’s empowerment in Oromia.

**3.3.2. Tools of Data Collection**

The researcher was use data collection tools including questionnaire, Key informant interview guide, and document analysis.

**3.3.3. Data Analysis**

The quantitative data, which was collected via questionnaires, was presented using tables and charts to describe in relation to the research questions. The findings of the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics was used by feeding the quantitative data in to statistical software program SPSS (version 20) and analyze it in frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, to examine the occurrence and variation by chart and table.

The qualitative data obtain from the documents, and semi-structured interview was transcribed, edited and organized around the subtopics derived from the research questions. Furthermore the data from the interview and documents was triangulated, checked against the quantitative ones. Besides this the findings was discussed and interpreted in relation to the relevant literature.

**4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**4.1. Rank**

As Oromia police regulation no. 191/2017 and criteria for leader ship positions implemented in 2014 police rank was one criterion. When we see their rank level, out of the 160 respondents, the
majority of them or 123(76.87%) were above the rank of Sargent.

**Table 2 Respondents’ rank**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of rank</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistance Sargent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Sargent</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sargent</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Sargent</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ass. Inspector</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>93.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dep. Inspector</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>96.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspector</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Inspector</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>98.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dep. Commander</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>99.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commander</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>160</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: researcher’s field survey, 2018*

4.2 Leadership positions mostly occupies by women police in Oromia police commission

**Table 3 Leadership positions/job field/ occupied by women police**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crime prevention</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While asking a question what leadership positions are most women police officers are assigned in the Oromia police commission as compared to male? The above table shows that out of 160 respondents 113(70.6%) were confirmed most women in decision making positions are located in the support supportive staff positions. On the other hand, 31(19.4%) of respondents have replied in the crime prevention that most leader women have occupied. While 16 respondents 10% of the respondents assert that crime investigation was where more leadership women’s were positioned.

This shows that police women in crime investigation and crime prevention were very small or insignificant. However, the crime investigation and crime prevention the largest police members were placed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No .</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Commissioner general</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Dep/commissioner general</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Director general</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>V/Director general</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Directorate director</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Zone command chief</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Zone process owners</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>V/directorates</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Division heads</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Coordinators</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Woreda police chiefs</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Woreda police process owners</td>
<td>1,537</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Team leaders</td>
<td>2,623</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OPC annual report (June, 2018)
14. Deputy team leaders | 3,100 | 43 | 3,143
Total | 8,315 | 306 | 8,621

Source: OPC annual report (June, 2018)

According to the table above; Out of the total Oromia police commission occupational positions in the year 2017/18, 96.32% were held by male police while the total position held by women police were only 3.68% (OPC Annual report, 2018). This shows that most of leadership positions hold by police women’s were supportive positions.

4.3. Career Development

The following table states about plan of career development, upgrading police women’s potential, organizational objective, management development and opportunity of police women’s to increase their knowledge in OPC.

| Table 5 Career development |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No . | Item | N | Level of agreement |
| | | | Strongly dis agree | Dis agree | Neutral | Agree |
| | | | F | % | F | % | F | % | F | % |
| 1 | Selection, employment and promotion procedures are free from bias against police women. | 160 | 94 | 58.8 | 56 | 38 | 9 | 5.6 | 1 | 0.6 |
| 2 | Female police are given career development, job related skills training and capacity building opportunities to empower them. | 160 | 104 | 65 | 43 | 26.9 | 1 | 1 | 6.9 | 2 | 1.3 |
| 3 | My organization supports personal effort for career development and rewards like position change and promotion are automatic upon completion for women police. | 160 | 103 | 64.4 | 50 | 31.3 | 7 | 4.4 |
| 4 | Recognition of worker’s abilities is gender neutral with in the police commission. | 160 | 124 | 77.5 | 30 | 18.8 | 6 | 3.8 |
| 5 | Effective remedial measures are put in place so that work and domestic responsibilities of female police officers do not affect each other. | 160 | 6 | 3.6 | 56 | 35 | 7 | 9 | 49.4 | 19 | 11.9 |

Source: Field Survey, April 2018

As it can be observed from Table 4.7 item 1, 58.8% of the respondents strongly disagree that OPC design a well-planned and easily understood police women’s career development path ways, selection and promotion procedures; while 38% of the respondents disagreed on design the career growth pathways of police women’s but 5.6% of them neutral and only 0.6% agreed on continuous
practice of well-planned and easily understandable career growth path way. From this result, it can be possible to infer large numbers of the respondents stated as there is no applicability of career growth path understandability. Career path or development is a technique that addresses the specifics of progressing from one job to another in the organization (Byarsa & Rue, 2004).

According to item 3 of Table 4.7, 64.4% of the respondents strongly disagree OPC on the organization supports personal effort for career development and rewards like position change and promotion are automatic upon completion for women police, while 31.3 % of the respondents disagree organization supports personal effort for career development and rewards like position change and promotion are automatic upon completion for women police, but none of them agreed or strongly disagree on continuous organization supports personal effort for career development and rewards like position change and promotion are automatic upon completion for women police potential upgrading. From this result, it is possible to infer that the OPC must work hard in order to have a well-designed and understandable career growth pathways as well as to improve potential of police women’s.

### 4.4. Factor for Low Participation of police Women in leadership Position in the Oromia police commission

Police Women’s participation in decision-making and leadership was highly determined by political, socio-economic, cultural and psychological factors. These can adversely affect the participation of police women unless adequately managed and seriously considered. Oromia police commission is one of the public organizations that placed a few women police office in leadership position as compared to men. The factor affecting for low representation is educational-gap, socio-cultural attitude, and HR recruitment and promotion practice and organizational values.

But police women’s can prove to be a valuable resource and an asset for the country’s police organization with the abilities like handling multiple tasks simultaneously, which might not be that easy for male police officers (Standing, as cited in Afroz, 2010 & Chalchissa and Emnet, 2013). Thus women’s are efficient and effective in their assigned position while they have many challenges on one side to meet the organization goal on the other side to fulfill the three major gender role such as productive role, reproductive role and community role. Regardless of the fact police woman’s tends to be excluded from top leadership position in OPC and there are many contributor factors for less number of police women in leadership position. Thus the major factors are the following:

### 4.4.1. Educational gap:

Educational gap is one of the major factors for law participation of police women in leadership position, while in the organization male are dominating in number on the necessary fields for police organization operation and where also more staffs are found.

However numbers of women who are working on main process are low as compared to the other supportive process due to their educational status. For example: from 16,113 police members of crime prevention and crime investigation, women constitute only 454 which are only 2.817% of total operational members. As it is described in the Beijing declaration and Platform for Action (1995), literacy of women is an important key to empowering women to participate in the decision-making processes and competition in the labor market. This implies educating women is one of the basic tools for getting decision making position and empowering women as well it is one of the factor in the organization that hinder women from moving up to the managerial position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Educational status</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MA/MSc</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BA/BSc</td>
<td>1,021</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1,095</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to shown on the above table, the educational status of police women’s in Oromia police commission is very low. According to Werner, & DeSimone (2009), human process-based interventions are directed to improving interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup relations. The two common strategies are survey feedback and team building, which focus on improve a workgroup’s problem solving ability and effectiveness. From this viewpoint the area under study is not spirited in practicing human process based intervention. The inference is, unless OPC improves the practice of survey feedback and team building intervention, it would be difficult to improve police members’ problem solving ability and effectiveness.

On the other hand, while the researcher conducted an interview with HR development directorate (on 27/05/2018), on the argument “the other education gap is that most police women are not eager to update their educational status especially after getting their formal job” he respond that:

“Education is one of the factors that hold back police women’s from promotion since most of OPC police women are not willing to improve their educational status once they are being an employee of the organization and this is the basic factor for the organization’s low participation of women in decision making position”. As Werner, & DeSimone (2009), organizational transformation interventions efforts focus on articulating a new vision for an organization with the purpose of redefining the desired organizational culture, mission, and strategy. From the above result, most of the respondents agreed on the absence of organizational transformation intervention and improving educational level of police women’s, this implies that the Police commission should focus on organizational learning or continuous improvement program. In addition, managers and employees must learn a common language for improvement, learn new tools and techniques, and learn to take the initiative in improving work outcomes.

Therefore, lack of education and the inability of making decision on the part of police women’s make them unable to manage their life the way they wanted to be.

4.4.2. Socio-cultural attitudes:

This is also one of the factors for low participation of women in leadership position in OPC. As we know the society give less value to women to compete with men at all levels and places (be it at formal sector, informal sector, in the community, at religion place and even at the childhood level). So according to OPC Women’s Affair directorate response (on May 23, 2018 3:20PM) because of that less attitude given for police women’s from male police officers side, from male leaders, supervisors, officer side and from female police officers themselves, police women’s are infrequently representing in decision making position of the Police commission:

4.5. The Major Problems Affecting Participation of police Women’s in the decision making Position of the Oromia police commission.

The researcher is trying to answer this question through interview method. While conducting an interview with Women’s Affair Directorate (on May 23, 2018), she responded to the question the researcher posed as follows: What are the major problems that hinder police women’s from moving up to the decision making position in Oromia police commission as compared to men police officers?

“The representation of police women’s in the OPC is very few as compared to men not only in leadership position but also at the members’ level too. There is a number of reason contributing to less representation of police women’s in decision making position in the OPC. Among them, lack recommendation while the OPC is assigning the leadership position through recommendation and
most of the time both male and female leaders are recommending male police officers. The other is lack of delegation positions, educational-gap, male dominancy in the organization, lack of women confidence and lack of information is the major ones even though their degree varies”. While elaborating all the respondent reasons:

4.5.1. Lack of recommendation:
One of the reason for low representation of police women’s in higher level of leadership place of Oromia police commission is lack of recommendation i.e. the commission has a rule, policy and procedure to leadership positions through competition. But the implementation was not constantly by competition. And that the vacant posts are filled up by competition and promotion policy does support police women’s by implementing affirmative action. However at zone police department head and directorate levels, promotion is based on the recommendation which mean that the police commission assigning their leadership position only through recommendation rather than competition. This create huge gap for low representation of police women’s in leadership position because the majority of police leaders and senior officers are making their recommendation for male police offices than that of female police officers; in addition to that the recommendation is subjective by its nature.

4.5.2. Lack of delegation:
The delegation plays a vital role in Oromia police commission to become a leader or process owner. When police officer who has worked most of the time in delegation of the position, he /she has a chance of getting the leadership position because it is considered as he/she has an experience or exposure for the position. However, most of the time leader and process owners are delegating male police officers rather than female police officers. This problem is compounded by police members’ assumption that police women’s, unlike men police officers, are not able to devote their full time and energy to paid work because of their family responsibilities and ability. Due to this reason police women’s are losing a chance of being leaders in the police commission.

4.5.3. Male dominancy:
Women tend to be excluded from the informal networks dominated by men at the workplace, which are vital for career development. The problem is compounded by employers’ assumption that women, unlike men, are not able to devote their full time and energy to paid work because of their family and social responsibilities. Since most of OPC leaders and officers are male, they are automatically recommending male employee and they have also an opportunity to form an informal group (boys club) to discuss freely regarding the position. According to Lewin (as cited in Blau & Ferber, 1992, p. 211) these “social” clubs are, in fact, places where influential people meet, relationships are developed, and deals are made; they are not simply places where weary businessmen go to relax and socialize. Therefore, male dominancy and an informal group (boys club) has been creating an impact in gender roles and achievement as well as a factor for less number of police women’s in decision making position in the Oromia police commission.

4.5.4. Lack of information:
One of the ways of participation is exercising the right to have access to information. Police officer has the right to know all the available information. Transparency is built on the free flow of information. Transparency assumes that authority decisions whether routine or matters relating to worker importance, are transparent to the police members as they may either benefitted or be adversely affected by such decisions. However in OPC all decision making positions in the organization are not filled by formal notice of vacant post or not assigned by competition rather it is by recommendation without the awareness of the entire police members. And besides sometimes male colleague do not want to share the information, this makes police women’s have no information regarding vacant positions. Due to this police women’s cannot get information to apply for the positions; and males officers have more chance to get it, this as well gives competitive advantage to male police members. The other interviewee replied that, the reason for low participation of police women’s in leadership position is, the number of police women’s in the OPC as a whole is low as compared to male police members and this might be occurred during entrance time or at recruitment level i.e. the OPC is not giving equal chance to female police candidates at recruitment stage (recruitment and selection guide line of OPC, 2017). If we see the total number of police members in the OPC, it accounts to 29,447 and from this women as a
whole constitute 3,780 in numbers which is only 12.84% of OPC police members are female, so due to this most positions are occupied by male police members (OPC HR statistics report, June 2018). Therefore according to the respondent this is the basic reason for women underrepresentation in leadership position since the leadership positions in the OPC are assigned from that of the total available police members.

4.6. The Impact of Gender Gap (difference) in Leadership

In fact, women’s active participation in decision-making is not only important for ensuring equality, but also for establishing their right. This is through addressing their problem and challenges they faced in their workplace as well as social life which help as effective management tool in decision making. In the same way, active involvement of the women members’ body in decision making could be detrimental to every organization’s welfare and the growth, sustainability and survival of the organizations.

Thus participation in leadership and decision making position accelerate the social, economic and political advancement of countries in general and the daily lives of women and their communities in particular. However, different studies show that the participation of women in decision making and political leadership was insignificant in the country; along with this OPC is the one which represent low number of police women’s in leadership position. This underrepresentation is creating an impact on leadership as well as on police women’s attitude, success and intention, moreover on the Oromia police commission goal.

One of the impacts that are created due to low participation of police women at leadership position is lack of role model from police women side in top positions. If the OPC is continuing to give more chance for men police members than police women in top position, the female police members are in difficult position get a role model in decision making places and this makes aspiring to an upper-level position untenable. As a result, the OPC loses the opportunity to capitalize on the skills and talent of a portion of their workforce and besides to this it also creates discouraging environment for women police members to achieve at top leadership positions since most decision makers are male.

While conducting an interview with Women’s Affair vice directorate of Oromia police college (on July 10, 2018), what are the impacts of gender gap (difference) in leadership? She replied that; besides to the lack of police women role model in police leadership place, it also makes difficult to achieving the goal and objective of the OPC as well as the growth and development program of a country because half of population is not being used and utilized effectively.

In view of the fact that women in most of the time are wonderful in what they are doing, they do things with care, honesty and in most efficient way. In addition to that, women are more responsible and they also show their commitment to their job at a great extent.

The other impact is almost all decisions are made only in one angle (male part) since women are out of the decision making places, which makes unable to express their idea or issue from the different women angle. Therefore, almost all the decisions are made from male point of view.

Moreover it creates inferiority for both police women who are already in leadership position and the overall police women’s of the OPC, along with this they are lack of confidence and unable to express idea freely. Furthermore, police women can be deprived of exposure to perform the challenging task and decision making issues, even though police women have strong interpersonal skill which is very important and one of the necessary skills to be a good leader or decision maker. Further, when police members perceive a lack of police women in upper leadership position, they may form ideas about the implicit values and culture of the organization, such as being an “old-boys club,” or discriminatory in its hiring and retention practices.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

This research was intended to assess the practices of police women’s empowerment of Oromia Police Commission. It was concerned with the practice of empowering police women’s, career development and legal frame work on current empowerment practice and identifying its main barriers. Descriptive research method was used as it was the appropriate method which enables the researcher to assess and describe the police women’s empowerment practice in Oromia Police
Commission. Along with both qualitative and quantitative research approach were applied.

Therefore, concerning to the findings inferred from the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

The research results revealed that currently the commission’s police women’s empowering practice is not emphasized and it is mostly done informally by individual police women. Moreover, most of the respondents stated that there was no continuous practice of formally planned police women’s empowerment program.

The Oromia police Commission has a total number of 29,447 police members and from this 25,667(87.16%) of member’s are male whereas only 3,780 which accounts 12.84% of member’s are female. This shows that most of Oromia police commission police members are male. On the other hand the representation of women is considerably low as compared to total members of the police commission. Therefore, Oromia police commission has not given equal chance to women candidates at recruitment and selection stage which violates the international agreements ratified by Ethiopia as an integral part of the law of the land and the constitution of the FDRE (1994). In addition to this, the proportion of women police members in different leadership position such as lower level (vice team leader) to top level leadership positions from 8621 leadership positions only 306 (3.68%) of females police had been assigned in this leadership position; however no women police member are delegated in vice commissioner general position and assistant commissioner rank. Among Despite the government’s encouraging policy for participation of women in leadership and decision making positions, and affirmative action for promotion, the numbers of female police members in leadership are not considerably the same as those of men members in the OPC. Thus female police members are underrepresented in top decision making and leadership positions in the police commission.

The study result identified that there are factors for low participation of women in decision making position in the Oromia police commission; such as police women’s at OPC level are less as compared to men, lack of recommendation, lack of delegation, educational gap, socio-cultural attitude, male dominancy and lack of information are the major ones that hinder police women’s from moving up to top decision making position in the Oromia police commission.

The other finding was the trends of empowering police women’s on decision making position in Oromia police commission was low. Since police women are excluded from decision making place in the police commission, it creates an impact of gender gap (difference) in leadership and one of the impacts is police women’s are incapable to get role model in leadership position which discourages of women police members to achieve at top leadership positions since mostly decision makers are male. It is also unable to achieve the goal and objective of the OPC as well as the growth and development program of a country because half of the population is not being used and utilized effectively.

The other impact is almost all decisions are made only in one angle (male part) since police women’s are out of the decision making places, which makes unable to express their idea or issue from the different police women angle. Moreover it creates inferiority for both policewomen who are already in leadership position and the overall women police members of the Oromia police commission; along with this they lack confidence and unable to express idea freely. Therefore low participation of women in leadership in OPC can adversely affect the participation of police women’s as well as the police commission unless effectively managed and seriously considered.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions drawn on the police women’s empowerment practice, the following recommendations have been forwarded:

➢ First and foremost, police women’s empowerment practice of Oromia Police Commission should get highest emphasis since the participation of police women results in producing more competent, satisfied and committed female police members who will play a great role and contribution for the development and effectiveness of the police commission.

➢ Since, mostly women in Ethiopia have more burdened in their home, social relation and working area, than men. This bring that they can’t exercise their potential as expected. So in order to make police women’s to be
competent enough in the Oromia police commission, and bring them to leadership position; fair quota system should be valid even if it appears controversial in every case but no doubt it is significant as a strategy to ensure police women participation in the form of representation in Oromia police commission. Evidently, where quotas have been implemented, the organizational culture as gradually proved the importance of police women’s taking part in decision-making.

➢ The Oromia police commission is required to putting target number of police women in the staffing plan. It should also comply with its strategic plan (i.e. affirmative action of equal chance to police women candidate at the recruitment stage) to be practical and should follow up its accomplishment based on the plan.

➢ The affirmative action policy should be promoted in all positions if they are capable and competent to the position, since affirmative action is not implemented in top decision making position to participate. The Oromia police commission should give great emphasis to bring police women in leadership and decision making position because women’s empowerment is a human right issue that lies at the heart of development and the achievement of the SDGs. In addition to this, there are no clear criteria while assigning of leadership positions in the OPC. So OPC should state the criteria clearly for all police members, thus every members has awareness about the criteria and able to compete with confidence.

➢ Planned capacity building opportunities with the required amount that entail basic change in police women’s human capital should be created with special attention to women police members who serve under the semi-professional, clerical and fiscal and other lower stratum position, which account for more than half of the our region population. Empowerment efforts that exclude the majority would not yield targeted results. Create conducive environment that supports mentoring and personal career development and capacity building efforts of the police women; work environment that rewards special contributions of police women at each level. Police women’s shall qualify themselves and go with the existing modern working standard of OPC to compete in each leadership position especially in the field of crime prevention and crime investigation since the police organization needs more on the stated area for accomplishment of its operational work. And they should empower themselves through knowledge and skill in order to be successful in their assigned positions and they have to show their real abilities.

According to the Oromia police commission HR policy and promotion criteria up to the directorate level the promotion policy does support women by implementing affirmative action but at strategic levels, promotion is based on the recommendation. So the police commission needs to establish transparent and fair position assignment policy to increase police women in leadership since recommendation is also a disadvantage to women police members of the OPC due to its subjective nature of the criteria.

REFERENCE


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