

International Institute of Social Studies



What is empowerment for her? Education and Choice in Post 1991 Ethiopia

A Research Paper presented by:

Betelehem Fikre Beyene
(Ethiopia)

**Major: Social Policy for Development
(SPD)**

Members of the Examining Committee:

Kristen Cheney
Mahmood Messkoub

The Hague, The Netherlands
December 2013

Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

Inquiries:

Postal address:

Institute of Social Studies
P.O. Box 29776
2502 LT The Hague
The Netherlands

Location:

Kortenaerkade 12
2518 AX The Hague
The Netherlands

Telephone: +31 70 426 0460

Fax: +31 70 426 0799

Contents

List of Appendices	iv
List of Acronyms	v
<i>Abstract</i>	<i>vi</i>
Chapter 1 1	
Women’s empowerment, education and choice: An introduction	1
Strategic life choices in the lived experiences of women	6
Chapter 2 9	
Theoretical Background: Choice and capability in lieu of ‘education as empowerment’	9
Women’s Empowerment: Education as a tool	9
Making Strategic life choices	13
Chapter 3 18	
Women’s empowerment in Ethiopia: The legal regime and politics of participation	18
National Policy Of Women In Ethiopia And Other Policy Frameworks	18
Gender Mainstreaming And Women’s Political Participation	21
Gender Mainstreaming Challenges In Ethiopia	22
Putting Women’s Participation In Perspective	22
Putting the Ethiopian Women in National Organs	23
Chapter 4 26	
Education Burdened By Social Construction Of Women’s Role In Society	26
The Education Versus Resources For Empowerment Idea	27
Women’s Empowerment Among the “Uneducated” Circles	30
Marriage As Social Mobility: Education As A Vehicle	32
Motherhood and Strategic Life Choice of Women	35
<i>References</i>	<i>44</i>

List of Appendices

Interview questions

1. General background

- Where did you grow up?
- Who do you currently live with?

2. Educational background

- What is your highest educational achievement?
- Why do you think it's important to get an education?
- If did you go to university, how did your choice what you wanted to study? Has someone influenced your choice study?
- What kind of advantages do you have because you're educated?
- What are the disadvantages of not holding higher education qualifications ?

3. Work

- Does holding higher education help you to get a job?
- Is it difficult to get a job without holding higher education ?
- What kind of job you want to do? And why do want choice to do it?
- Does your education qualification impact the salary you earn?
- What do you feel about your job?
- Why do you think it is important to have a job?
- Did you able to accrue after you started working?
- Were you allowed to do things differently after you finished your education ,which you were not allowed before ?

4. Relationship

- What is your relationship status?
- When are planning to get married?
- How did you meet your boyfriend?
- What kind of man you're looking for?
- Why did you decide to get married /live together?
- Why it's important to be in a relationship or getting married?
- Does your family has influence on what kind of to marry?

5. Based on decisions topic related

- What is empowering for you or how do you understand empowerment?
- What is the most important thing you should have in your life to feel are successful?

List of Acronyms

EFA	Education for All
EPRDF	Ethiopia People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front
ESAA	Education Statistics Annual Abstract
ESDP	Education sector development programs
EU	European Union
FREME	Federal Republic Ethiopian Ministry of education
GM	Gender Mainstreaming
GTP	Growth Transformation Plan
JP GEWE	Ethiopian Joint Flagship Programme on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
NAP-GE	National Action Plan for Gender Equity
NPWE	National Policy on Women in Ethiopia
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
UN	United Nation
WAD	Women Affairs Departments
WAO	Women’s Affairs Office

Abstract

The paper analyzes the conception and practice of women's empowerment in relation to education in Ethiopia and argues that the spirit and understanding of the notion of empowerment is still marred with the social construction of women as caregiver. Education is taken as the main pointer to women's empowerment that promotes women's participation in formal jobs and decision making organs. The legal frameworks dealing with the education of women are mainly concerned with access to education and the political participation of women is more influenced by the agenda of the party-state. The educated women in Ethiopia still understand their educational achievement in relation to becoming better wife and mothers in the future. The notion of women's empowerment in Ethiopia is explored both at the legal regime and lived experiences of women in Addis Ababa. Building on the concepts of 'choice' (kabeer 1999) and 'capability' (Sen 1999) approaches, the research uses qualitative research methodology mainly relying on life history interviews and official documents.

Relevance to Development Studies

My paper adds to the understanding of women's empowerment in relation to education going beyond creating access to education and formal job market for women. The paper points out, legal frameworks, policies and strategies that deals with women's education should take local contexts into account and should aspire in bringing the notion of strategic life choices for women in education. By unpacking the essence of legal documents, women's participation in politics and the role of education in bringing women's empowerment the research paper calls for a better contextualization of the significant part of any society in development efforts and beyond. It further contributes to the understanding that women's empowerment faces the challenge of the legal, political and social impositions of societies at large.

Keywords

Women's Empowerment, Education ,Choice, Capability ,Ethiopia

Chapter 1

Women's empowerment, education and choice: An introduction

Changing women's position in society has remained the engagement of scholars and institutions for a number of decades. Beginning from the 1980s the idea of women's empowerment appeared in various forms to transform power relations by bringing gender equality between man and women (Cornwall, 2016). It was emphasized, women's empowerment is not something that can be done by external actors rather it is a process of change that should be done through creating consciousness about power relations (Ibid). In order to bring this consciousness there should be structural change that could contribute to a greater equality (Batliwala 1994; Rowland 1997; Sen 1997). A structural change that is based on a social consciousness has in many instances and local contexts remained a daunting task.

It is argued that power relation is not only about the control over substantial assets or academic resources but it is also an achievement of control over the basis of resources (Batliwala 1994). Women's empowerment is not only about individual's self-realization but changing operational foundations of gender inequality (Carnwall 2016.) Thus, women's empowerment is a practice of gaining power from two dimensions dealing with 'the personal' and 'the ideological' (Baltiwala, 1994). Thus, going beyond the material basis of women's empowerment, Baltiwala calls for changes in consciousness. The personal dimension is about women's improvement in terms of financial and educational gains while 'the ideological' entails questioning and viewing things from different perspectives. This interpretation brings in the feminist conceptualization of empowerment especially in relation to 'making strategic life choices' (Kabeer 1999). The 'ideological dimension' of women's empowerment is, therefore, intrinsically linked to the understanding and changing power relation in society and enable women to make decisions regarding their own life.

Education is taken as a fundamental tool to bring women's empowerment. As Stromquist (2015) points out, education gives women "a set of knowledge,

skills and conditions that women must own to understand their world and act up on it”. This is, in essences, a feminist perspective of women’s empowerment, which deals with the internalized oppression that women face in their everyday life. That is why; women’s empowerment has to focus on power relations that exist in the society (Cornwall 2016). Similarly, Batiwala (1994) calls for women’s empowerment to bring both personal and ideological improvements, change in perceptions to questions of beliefs, value and attitudes in society.

In addition to giving the consciousness required to unpack power relations in societies, education is taken as the main pointer to bring about changes in the material basis of women’s empowerment as well. Therefore, it is not difficult to see that education is at the center of the ‘personal’ and the ‘ideological’ dimensions of women’s empowerment. I argue that, though education has taken the center stage of women’s empowerment, it is so far unable to bring about both the personal changes and ideological consciousness in the Ethiopian context. To support this argument, I investigate issues of women’s empowerment in post-1991 Ethiopia at two levels. First, I look at the legal regimes and politics of participation to grasp how women’s empowerment is taken and implemented in the various legal documents and practiced in decision-making organs. Secondly, I analyze the lived experiences of women in Addis Ababa.

In terms of legal perspectives, in the past four decades, gender equality has been one of the crucial universal concerns in attaining women’s empowerment. A number of initiatives were dedicated to gender equality and women’s empowerment and many of which have been introduced by a number of organizations at national and international levels (Arnot & Fenell 2007; Unterhalter 2007). Improving girls and women access to education has been one of the major goals of these national and international initiatives. Further, the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 was a vital initiative to poverty mitigation, enhanced access to education and gender equality in education based on the view of Education For All (EFA) (Arnot and Fennell 2008).

It is emphatically argued that, through the years education has become a driving force in achieving better living standard and social status (MoE 2010; Oga-

to 2013; JP GEWE 2013, JP GEWE 2015). So, limited participation in education has exposed Ethiopian women to assume low societal status in the country. A number of scholars suggest that women's empowerment increases with education and better economic status (Upadhyay & Karasek 2010; Kabeer 2005; Woldemicael 2009). Obviously, Ethiopian women have a significant contribution to the overall economic development through both remunerated financial and unpaid domestic activities. In spite of this, they have had inadequate access to employment opportunities in comparison with men (Cherinet & Mulugeta 2003). It is argued, limited access to education, particularly poor educational achievement has influenced women's access to formal jobs, which eventually is the main reason for women to be in low paid jobs with limited career prospects. Furthermore, the burden of household chores, lack of exposure and contacts, limited access to information and traditional attitudes are also some of the causes that limit women's aspiration (Ibid). Therefore, Ethiopian women are economically, socially, culturally and politically marginalized from benefiting equal rights, accessing opportunities, decision making powers, and recourses (Ibid).

The government of Ethiopia has taken significant measures towards improving gender concerns since 1993 by taking different sorts of policy measures towards empowering women in sustainable growth and poverty alleviation efforts (UN 2002; MOLSA 2012; JP GEWE 2013). After the Beijing conference of 1995 Ethiopia acknowledged five priority areas that need to be tackled in order to ensure gender equality. One of the measures taken was promoting the importance of education at every level for better return on education for girls and women (MoE 2010; MoFED 2014). This is a crucial measure as education for girls is one of the most important and effective investment to women's empowerment.

The current regime, which came to power in 1991, has come up with Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) by 1994. The program is now integrated with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and 'Education for All' with a focus on the comprehensive development of education. All ESDP programs (ESDP I to IV) aim to enhance the quality of education and expand access with special emphasis on primary education as well as the promotion of

education for girls(FREME 1996; FREME 2002 ;FREME 2005;FREME 2010). At ESDP II additional emphasis was given to higher education due the 2000 Ethiopian higher education reform to expand higher education in all parts of the country, which continues until ESDP IV, the main objectives include gender equality to promote equal access and success for girl's/ women's education and training opportunities at all levels of education (FREME 2010;MoE 2010).

According to a UN report, the Ethiopian government has improved women's situation in the country by working towards closing gender gaps in all education levels which includes creating access and equity in the schooling system at all levels including higher education, technical and vocational schools (UN, 2002). When the current regime came to power there were only two public universities and sixteen self-regulating junior colleges in the country. Currently, due to the massive expansion of higher learning institutions, there are 37 public universities and colleges and several private higher education institutions (Yizengaw 2007, ESAA 2016). In general the enrolment of students for higher education and for undergraduate schools increased by 92 percent between 1996 and 2015, even though majority of the increment was by males. However, the improvement of access to higher education contributed to increased women's participation in higher education in Ethiopia.

One of the main agenda of the regime is to contribute to the economic development of the country and to eradicate poverty (Saint 2003). In addition, it aims to close the gender disparities in higher education to increase the participations of women in higher education in order to eradicate women's poverty and to change society's perception of women as only involving the household task and as caregivers (Saint 2003; MoE 2010 ;Ogato 2013). For Saint (2003), overall, the main purpose of higher education is not only to contribute to the economic aspects but also to create democratic, peaceful and enlightened society. In other words, participation of women could reinforce the other aspects of empowerment by changing women's position within the household and beyond.

In her critical analysis of the third Millennium Development Goals, Kabeer (2005) points out, access to education, paid work (especially in non-agricultural

sector) and political representation significantly contributes to gender equality and women's empowerment. This gives women the ability to make choices, which were denied before. The two main indicators that have been considered for women's empowerment in this context were holding higher education qualification and employment. These two indicators have been adopted from the MDGs by the Ethiopian government as pointers to women's empowerment.

I argue that, much emphasis was given for women's empowerment through education that leads to women's economic and political empowerment by ignoring how young educated girls understand their empowerment at an individual level. This made me question how education is conceived and implemented especially in relation to bringing awareness on power relations on top of the economical outcome that women get. According to UN Women preliminary gender profile of Ethiopia in 2014, women's participation in politics is increasing year by year which apparently is related to the participation of women in decision-making. Again, this makes me wonder how all these women participating in political processes could bring empowerment for women at micro level. These are the concerns of the paper that prompted me to study how young educated women understand their empowerment at individual level in relation to their education.

There is sufficient legal regime ranging from the constitution to women focused legal frameworks designed to empower women in Ethiopia but the problem is how empowerment is conceptualized in those legal documents (basically they leave out the 'ideological' aspect of empowerment) and how the existing ones are translated into practice in the local context. Beyond the legal framework, the other problem that I am interested at is how women understand empowerment at the individual level. My main objective is to analyze the notion of empowerment in government policy documents and women's take of empowerment using empirical data. In order to critically analyze how women's empowerment is understood in the policies and strategies of the government in Ethiopia, and examine how women define or understand their empowerment in relation to their education the paper compares competence and autonomy of women in deciding on matters that affect their lives by taking two groups - women who have higher education and those who does not.

Strategic life choices in the lived experiences of women

The methodological approach of the research paper is qualitative. The paper benefits from intensive, in-depth interviews as it employs a life history interview method. Life history interview helps to investigate a personal outlook and understanding of the broad scope of topics or issues that individuals experience and tells how things happened and why they happened in that specific way (Gubrium and Holstein 2005). That gives an idea on how people construct their life's principles (Ibid). The outcomes of life history interviews give an understanding of the individual's values and their places in the social order by confirming the experience depending on the social context of a given situation. Furthermore, it provides evidence about the social reality that currently exists. This can help to explain how the situation is socially constructed, seeing the individual's perspective of social events that happens surrounding them (Bertaux 1981; Rosenthal 1993; Stewart 1994). In this specific context, it helps to see how women define empowerment in their own perspective in relation to their educational accomplishment. This helps to see how women make different kinds of "strategic life choices" and what influence that choice.

An effort was made to understand 'what is empowerment for young, educated and 'uneducated' women in the household and beyond'. In total, 18 individuals were interviewed, among whom 10 respondents were young women who hold a higher education qualification, whilst the remaining 8 were who do not have higher education qualification. Using these two groups helps to draw the similarities and difference between those women with respect to their educational status. The interviews were conducted through snowballing method; by giving them a call to ask if they were willing to be part of the research. Those who were willing provided the times they were available and their nearby locations for the interview. All participants were from the capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. Most of the interviews took place in local cafés and also in the women's residences and mostly it was after work hours for those who were employed, depending on their availability and how long they were willing to stay for interview. Individuals were interviewed for a maximum of 4 hours with two meetings and a minimum of two hours, which was ended in one meeting.

The most important advantage of doing life history interview is that, people choose what they want to tell. This gives an opportunity for the women to tell their story and give more voice to them and to know their own unique perspective of their education in relation to empowerment. The interview questions were organized in four topics based on the definition of making strategic life choice that they make in their lives. The first set of questions enquires the women's current living situation if it impacts on the kind of choice they make. The questions that were asked during this conversation include, where do you grow up? Who do you live with currently? What is your family's economic status? and so on. The second category asks about the women's educational background which helps to differentiate the experiences and why did they make that kind of choice in their life. The main questions asked were, what is your highest educational achievement? If they study in university or not? What kind of study did they chose to do? What is the advantage of holding higher education and what about the disadvantages of not holding? Furthermore I ask why they think it is important to get education.

The third set of questions were related to work which cover question like if holding higher education help them to find job, what kind of resources (financial/social) they manage to accrue. Fourth, the above three decisions leads the conversation into asking about their personal life in relation to relationships by asking question like if they are in relationship or not, what kind of relationships they are looking for, when they are planning to get married, and why that is important, what kind of influences their family has on the kind of person they want to get married with, and what their relationship looks like after they started working and finished their school. Finally, the discussion ends with asking what women's empowerment for them is or how they understand empowerment.

Based on the interviews, most respondents understood empowerment as being successful in their life by getting married and starting family. Those who hold higher education qualification education help them to be competitive in the labor market comparing to those who do not. On the other hand having education and employment increase the expectations from family and community

regarding what kind of life the women will have in the future which somehow pressures or enforces them when they make their strategic life choice.

In addition to interview, I have gathered and analyzed documents that include policy documents, proclamations, manuals and secondary literature dealing with higher education, women education and empowerment in the context of Ethiopia. The study and investigation of the written documents helped me to uncover how women empowerment is understood by the regime in power. The documents that I have paid a particular attention to include, the national constitution, education policy, labour proclamation, and proclamations and manuals that deal with gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

Next to this introductory chapter, the rest of the paper is organized into three chapters. In the second chapter, I discuss the interrelationship between concepts that look at 'education as a source of empowerment', 'first and second order choices', and 'capability approach'. The conceptual framework I devise in this theoretical chapter thus centers on the significance of choice and capabilities in contrast to 'education as basis of empowerment'. In the third chapter I present the empirical data in reference to the legal regime in women's empowerment and gender equality in Ethiopia. In addition to the legal framework, the chapter highlights the politics of women's participation in decision-making. The involvement of women in decision-making organs and their possible role is discussed, as it informs how empowerment is being implemented in the Ethiopian political landscape. The last chapter presents and analytically evaluates how women understand empowerment in the Ethiopian context.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Background: Choice and capability in lieu of ‘education as empowerment’

In this chapter, I discuss the conceptual framework that informs my study. The framing of my study begins with a reflection on the idea of education as a tool for women’s empowerment. The notion that ‘education empowers women’ is taken as an important tool and put into practice in many national women’s empowerment endeavors. This notion needs to be questioned in view of its contribution to the agenda of women’s empowerment. In this conceptual apparatus, I propose to analyze the context of women’s empowerment in Ethiopia using the conceptualization of empowerment in relation to making choices based on Nalia Kabeer’s framework and Amartya Sen’s capability approach.

Using ‘choice’ and ‘capability’ approaches is suggested here to analyze how young educated women understand their empowerment in relation to strategic life choice that they make in their lives. Strategic life choice is manifested through first and second degree choices. The first degree choice impacts second degree choice in their life. In addition to that, empowerment from the choice perspective entails the existence of disempowerment first. This indicates that empowerment brings the expansion of choice to women who were denied before. Hence, education and financial capability influences the kind of choice women make and the sort of choices they make. This in turn, helps to explore the level of autonomy for decision making.

Women’s Empowerment: Education as a tool

The idea of empowerment is related to social change in many development spheres especially in reference to changes related to positions of women in a society. The most common way to empower women is providing schooling. It is assumed that, lack of schooling is the main factor for the subordination of women, because of the fact that lack of schooling is directly linked to lack of resources (Aikman and Unterhalter 2005; Stromquist 2002). In other words, economic empowerment is considered as the main way to create equality for

women. Thus, in countries like Ethiopia, women's empowerment is seen as part of a means of eradicating poverty. It is believed that the empowerment of women is a solution for social and economic problems (Cornwall and Edwards, 2014). This brings the notion of empowerment as means to increase capacity to make the best of their lives. Here, empowerment is taken as implying that when women are educated and have the means to access capital they build confidence in the way they live their lives (Stromquist 2002).

The idea of building confidence is in many ways relates to the idea of a freedom to choose. This brings in the concept of capability of Sen (1999). For Sen, capability is the freedom to enjoy valuable functions. Functions such as undertaking activities that people value and have reason to value. A person with different choices can have more options in their life paths (ibid). In addition, capabilities can be defined as the existence and solid possibilities open for a given person (Comim et al, 2008). Functions are, therefore, achieved outcomes and capabilities are the potential to achieve these functions. In this specific context, education can be considered as capabilities to achieve functioning. For example, education can bring enhanced well-being and freedom to individuals by working as means to get paid job in the labor market. Hence, education shouldn't only be taken as the end to achieve these freedoms rather it is a means to the end (Sen, 1999). Sen gives the example that knowledge on various matters gives people the confidence to participate in conversations with others, which helps to get respect from others. In simple terms, the more someone advances her/his education, the more capability will s/he have (Ibid).

Sen's capability approach looks education as a means to acquire recourses and human capital, which in turn helps to exercise personal agency (Sen, 1999). He point out that, "people are not passive recipients of change; they are active agents of change and do things they want to do in their life" (Ibid: pp). The assumption is that, educated women will have the ability to decide on her own personal matter and leads her life in a way she wants to. He emphasizes that, the existence of the freedoms in making informed choices is about having a life she/he has a reason to value (Comim *et al*, 2008). In this case, he did not differentiate the kind of value since in certain culture there is harmful value as

well which can impact individual choices and differ from place to place depending on the culture and community they are living with (Alkir 2005; Co-mim *et al* 2008). Cultural and community factors, therefore, affects what kind of things people value in their life. In other words, choices can also be influenced by family, friends and community from their surroundings. All things considered, in the conditions under which choices are made by individuals themselves, Sen does not focus on gender related issues and did not gave explanations how individual agency can be practiced in their life (Stromquist, 2015).

The idea of choice being influenced by factors such as culture and community leads to the understanding of feminist perspective of women's empowerment that brings out the internalized oppression that women face in their everyday life. According to this perspectives, women's empowerment has to focus on power relations that exist in society (Cornwall, 2016). Batliwala (1994) argues empowerment should be understood as a way to bring both personal and ideological improvements, change in perceptions of beliefs, value and attitudes. And, education is taken as means to bring these changes. Stromquist (2015) points out education is "a set of knowledge, skills and conditions that women must own to understand their world and act up on it". She argues for women's empowerment to happen, both personal and collective action should be considered - which means providing education and employment for women. She stressed that expecting structural and social change from individual efforts is a hard task to carry out but change is rather a process that everyone should be part of, to change women's position in a society.

It is argued, education gives women the chance to cross the boundaries between private and public spheres, which will affect the power relations that women have in their surroundings (Kabeer, 2005; Stromquist, 2015). In her critical analysis on the third millennium goals Kabeer (2005) points out that, access to education, paid work and political participation of women are the main positive outcomes for women's empowerment. In simple words, educated woman will have more access to knowledge and information which can give her capacity to question and the means to change power relation within and outside the household. It is claimed, when women are educated and economi-

cally empowered, there is higher probability of gaining personal independence and delay marriage and childbirth. Furthermore, when women participate in the politics she could be able to bring legislative change through bringing women's perspective in the policy making process. This, in essence, can contribute to decrease the institutional discriminations towards women, which was believed to be one of the sources of inequality.

There is a claim by the Ethiopian government that women's education is advocated not only for economic empowerment and eradicating poverty but also to give women the freedom in their life (Ogato 2013; UN Women 2014). According to a 2011 demographic survey, women with secondary school education are most likely to be in sales or services, and those from higher education are most likely to be in in professional, technical and managerial occupations (Macro and Measure, 2011). Yet the gender inequality still persists - the women holding second degree that work in the civil service in Ethiopia today accounts only 10.2 percent while men make up of 89.8 percent (ESAA 2014). The report points out in 2010/11 the women who hold bachelor degree account for 16.7 percent while those who hold PhD qualifications made up 7.7 percent. Whereas for men for the same year, it was 92.3 for first degree and 93.2 percent for PhDs.

In the work front, even though they are employed, the wage scale for women is lower. Those who earn more than 4000 Birr (166 euros) per month is only 10 percent of the work force whereas those who earn 500 birr (20 euro) per month is 53 percent (ESAA 2014). In terms of decision making power from among the women who are married and employed, 36 percent have their own decision making power on their earnings while 55 percent decide together with their husbands and 9 percent don't (ibid). As far as the wage gap among the spouses is concerned, only 10 percent of the women earns more than their husband and 67 percent of them earn less and 20 percent earn the same. The report also points out that women who live in the urban areas, with their better education and wealth, have more decision making power over their use of income (Ibid). According to UN Women report, women's unemployment contributes to limit decision-making opportunities, increased workload in the

household, which is transpired into the cultural perceptions about women's role in the society (JP GEWE 2013; UN Women 2014; JP GEWE 2015).

In Ethiopian women's empowerment is understood in relation to changing traditional role of women as caretaker rather than as main contributor of the household economy, and for the development of the country. In order to change this, the government has been implementing different kinds of policies and programs that can create gender equality and women's empowerment. In order to bring these changes the main goal were taken from the MDGs such as closing gender disparities at all education level, employment and political participation, which is also stated by Kabeer (2005) as main contributor to women's empowerment. At the national level changes have been witnessed with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment specifically in relation to women's participation in education, in the formal paid work and in politics. Yet it is crucial to see how these progresses are interpreted in women's personal life. In order to explain how education and employment has brought more than personal improvement in those women's life, it is necessary to investigate the 'ideological improvements'. This in essence is, to view education and employment not only in the creation of access to resources but also transforming social change.

Making Strategic life choices

Kabeer (1999: 436) emphatically claims that, "one way of thinking about power is in terms of the ability to make choices: to be disempowered, therefore, implies to be denied choice". She argues when someone is empowered he/she will have the ability to make choices in his/her life. But in order to articulate about empowerment at the first place someone has to be disempowered (Kabeer 1999). This means in order to consider someone is being empowered s/he have to make choice that were denied before due to various reasons. Sen's capability approach entails that the more someone is educated they will have more choice this means those women who have higher level of education have better capability compared with those who does not. According to World Bank, empowerment is "the process of enhancing an individual's or group's capacity to make purposive choices and transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes" (Alsop & Heinsohn 2005:120). Cornwall and Edwards

(2014) argue that all outcomes does not mean are the consequence of choices, since choice might come from their own self-interest or adopted from rules, norms and customs. As Kabeer (1999: 440) points out, “gender often operates through the unquestioned acceptance of power”.

This means just being women can have an impact on the kind of strategic life choice they make regarding what kind of education level or financial status women wants. In different circumstances women’s face inequality which can reflect the kind of choice they make. In addition, the women may internalize the position from the inequality, which are perceived as women’s “choice” in their life, which indicate power relation not only shown by agency and choice rather by taking the kind of choices they make into account. The theoretical explanation is that, in order to say real choices exist there has to be two considerations (kabeer, 1999). First of all, there should be some other possibility to compare the choice with. Here, she brings in the relation between poverty and disempowerment and how poverty curtails the ability to make a choice. This simply rules out the capacity for meaningful choices. This especially affects women than men due to gender inequalities that are constrained by different norms, beliefs, customs and values. Secondly, the possibilities of choices not only exist but also are exercised (Ibid). This brings again the power relation in gender subjugation and how choice can be made in the hidden and normalized ways. In other worlds, the level of women’s empowerment can also depend on the class or caste, ethnicity, relative wealth, age, and family position (Mosedale 2005). In her conceptualization of choices, Kabeer (1999) explains about first and second orders of choices. She argues,

First order choices are those strategic life choices, such as choice of livelihood, where to live, whether to marry or not, who to marry, whether to have children, how many children to have, freedom of movement and choices of friends, which are critical for people to live the lives they want. Second-order and less consequential choices which may be important for the quality of one’s life but do not constitute its defining parameters (Kabeer 1999: 437).

Thus, the kind of choice people make in their life has different degrees depending on the kind of impact it might have on their life. This leads to making a distinction between the first and second order choices. This further explained in relation to the ability to make strategic life choice (Kabeer 1999). This helps to understand how their first degree choice shapes the other kind of choice in their life.

Empowerment as discussed by Kabeer (1999) has three components, i.e. resource, agency, and achievements. Resource refers both to 'access to resources' and 'control over resources'. Education might increase employment opportunity, which in turn may increase access to certain resources, but 'accesses do not automatically translate to control'. 'Control' over resources may be guided by socio-cultural norms and values and at times outside the realm of 'negotiations'. It is difficult to empirically measure 'control' (Kabeer 1999). For Kabeer (ibid) resources are not only financial but could be other forms of resources that can affect the ability of making choices. As Sen discussed in the capability approach, education is a means to get functioning. This means being educated and employed in non-agricultural sector not only brings financial resources but also social resources. It has been argued that ownership and control of property is the most essential contributor of closing the gender gap by ensuring economic well-being and social status of women (Robeyns 2003). The most frequent indicator to measure 'agency' is 'decision-making' but not all areas of decision-making are of equal significance. Some aspects are trivial and some significant. In operational terms, there is therefore a need to select decision areas that can be used as powerful indicators of empowerment (Kabeer 1999).

Achievement, as the third component in Kabeer's conceptualization of empowerment is difficult to measure. She points out, measurement of 'achievement' can be easy in terms of the immediate outcome, but extremely difficult in terms of 'transformational role'. For example, employment can be considered as an immediate outcome of education for young women. Yet, whether education is the most likely to be empowering if it gives women's sense of independence, rather than simply meeting basic needs can be considered as 'transformational function'. This means 'empowerment' translates itself not only to an immediate outcome, but bears the responsibility of broader societal transfor-

mation and betterment (Kabeer 1999). One of the main problematic situations for not changing the immediate outcome to transformational functioning is the unrealistic interoperation of the role of education for women's empowerment in many contexts.

Firstly it is related to the way Sen argued about how education can be the means to empowerment for girls/women. By ignored the kind of discrimination girls/women face in the school in different ways from the curriculum from books and kind of harassment they experiences from teachers in different occasions (Stromquist 2002). Secondly, it has been argued that ownership and control of property is the most essential contributor of closing the gender gap by ensuring economic well-being, social status of women (Robeyns 2003). The main contribute for this is related to education is women's participation in the formal paid job that were purposed by MDGs. The central assumption behind this is having economic resources for women are one way of exercising agency in the household and also beyond the household. Yet still it does not cover how education can be empowerment beyond its economical outcome and decision making power through political participation.

It is pointed out that in many cases the main problem is that, there is no clear differentiation between schooling and education (Unterhalter 2008). Schooling is more of system based that relates to academics but education is broad concept that entails that someone can learn things from not only from school but also from their surroundings (Anderson-Levitt 2005). Empirical research shows that the gendered division of labor in the household has been the main reason in the construction of gender inequality in societies (Cohen 2004). Women tend to spend more time than men in the household work but those kind of issues are very difficult to negotiate since it is reproduced by mothers as their sexual division of labor among the children which in turn contributes to the statuesque of women. Research shows that comparing between man and women even in advanced countries like US and the Western world, family formation, marriage and childbirth contributes to the inequality of women's academic position and advancement. Thus, the household should be considered as the major target to start change in a society (Stromquist 2015).

The social construction of women as caregiver that feminist scholars identified has remained has remained the stumbling block for women's empowerment (Stromquist 2015). Such social constructions maintains that educated women would become better wives and mothers as the education increases their opportunity of finding a suitable husband (Kabeer 2005). Caregiving is an important part of women's but it is also a foundation for their degradation and marginalization in the society that perpetuates division of labor between women and man in the society (Schildberg 2014). Moreover, these kinds of gender expectations that are constructed in the household as perpetuated by mothers contribute for women's power relation possibilities (Stromquist 2015). Findings of studies on income inequality in highly industrialized countries show that women are still involved in the household task and caring responsibility of the household (Cohen 2004; World Bank 2011). The main reason for this is that, schooling fails to address central gender related knowledge through the curriculum. The general focus of curriculums is in producing workers, which only considers the economic aspects. Additionally, the other reason is more attention is given to science and technology than the social skills. Schooling in general does not have any means to reflect and question the gender relation in society (Stromquist 2015).

Chapter 3

Women's empowerment in Ethiopia: The legal regime and politics of participation

In this chapter, I focus on the conception and implementation of issues regarding women's empowerment, gender mainstreaming in education and available legal frameworks on empowerment in Ethiopia. This is an important part of the study in a sense that it helps to see how empowerment is understood and put into practice at the national level. Local and international actors have hailed the participation of women in decision-making organs such as the national parliament as an important indicator of the empowerment of women. Yet, a proper investigation of the essence of this participation, and the role of these 'women in power' for the rest of fellow women is lacking. Thus, I attempt to critically review how women's empowerment has been taken by the various regulations, how women manage to go up the ladders of power in regional and federal organs of government and whether they play important role in women's empowerment.

National Policy Of Women In Ethiopia And Other Policy Frameworks

Ethiopia has been promoting gender equality by adopting agreements and implementing policy frameworks in different sectors that can change women's marginalization. Many of the policies and strategies with regard to women were based on the first National Policy on Women in Ethiopia (NPWE) in 1993. This begun from the change of perspective of the 1950s women's participation development which views woman as only child raising, known as "welfare approach", the main objective of which was to bring better mothers and wives. By making note of women's reproductive role that leads to all those planned development process that create awareness regarding women's efficient potential for the country's future growth (Demessie & Yitbark, 2008).

The main tenets of the NPWE were three: first, it gives emphasis on increasing women's access to health care, education and employment opportunities. Secondly, the policy focuses on the importance of abolishing all forms of discrim-

ination of women which can be experienced in the labour market, in the work place and by traditional customary practices. Finally, providing financial assistants for women in institutional support mechanisms to benefit women. After 8 years of implementation, the NPEW puts into action in 2001 by incorporating the Beijing platform to promote gender equality and women empowerment. The plan of action mainly deals with five critical areas for women in Ethiopia - poverty reeducation and economic empowerment; education and training of women and girls; reproductive rights and health of women; human right of women and elimination of violence against woman's right; and institutional mechanisms for advancement for women's in decision making. This again supported by implementing the national development goals that focus mainly on gender equality and women's empowerment (Demessie and Yitbark 2008; MoE 2010; MoLSA 2012; UN Women, 2014; UN 2015).

Furthermore, Ethiopia implemented the MDGs in 2000 which outlines gender mainstreaming by ensuring universal primary education for all and the elimination of gender disparity at all levels of education, increasing the share of employment of women in the non-agricultural sector and increasing the number of women participation in the politics (Ibid). Ethiopian national policy on women was formulated to promote the creation of equal opportunity for women to participate in political, social and economic spheres of the country (Demessie and Yitbark, 2008; MOLSA 2012). In addition to that, the government has incorporated several article in the national constitution, and other proclamations since August 1995 in relation to gender equality. For example Article 14 in the constitution¹ gives equal rights for women and men, boys and

¹ The FDRE constitution mainly depicts women's right from access perspectives. It specifically mentions, in its article 35 about gender equality and goes on to explain how access is provided for women. These includes taking affirmative action that promotes women's participation in education and employment. In addition the provision under the same article calls for abolishing traditional harmful practices such as early marriage and genital mutilations that undermines the lives of women. Article 35 (3), stipulates "the historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by women in Ethiopia taken into account, women, in order to remedy this legacy, are entitled to affirmative measures. The purpose of such measures shall be to provide special attention to women so as to enable them to compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in political, social and economic life as well as in public and private institutions". It also further stipulates on access in relation to family planning education

girls to access education (UN, 2014). These rights have been incorporated within the different development programs, the growth and transformation plan for 2010/11-2014/15, education and training. Especially, the aim of the education sector development program (ESDP IV)² and the recent Growth and Transformation Plan is geared towards promoting the vision of Ethiopia to become a middle-income country (MOLSA 2012; JP GEWE 2013a, 2015b; UN 2014). The main issues, in this regard, are promoting gender equality by providing more attention to women, especially in employment, marriage, property and land ownership. By identifying the traditional women's discrimination that creates inequality, it provides affirmative action for women to battle the predominant inequalities that limit women's participation in political, social and economic life (MoE 2010; Yasin, 2013; JP GEWE 2013a, 2015b).

The objective of the national women policy is to establish strategy for women's empowerment through policy framework and gender equality structures within the government. The structures also included in the decentralizing national structures of the federal, regional and sub-regional level (Demessie and Yitbark 2008; JP GEWE 2013a). Therefore, women's Affairs offices (WAO), women Affairs departments (WAD) and women's Affairs Bureaus (WAB) respectively framed in the hierarchical structures of the government. The Ministry of women's Affairs office implemented the national action plan for gender equity (NAP-GE) from 2006 to 2010 to support the implementation of the Beijing platform for Action. The action plan was again included in the government's five years development programs named Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP). In addition to that, the Ministry of Women's Affairs also launched the women's change and development package

and the right to health access for at the time of pregnancy. Article 42 (D) specifically states "women workers have the right to equal pay for equal work" (FDRE, 1995).

² ESDP-I in 1996 mainly focuses on creating general access to education, quality, efficiency and equity in the education system; ESDP-II of the 2002 emphasizes more girls in schools by creating awareness of the importance of girl's education; ESDP-III of the 2005 give more focus to women's participation in the education through establishment of counseling services and tutorial for women's; ESDP-IV of 2010 brings more emphasis on equal access and success in education and training for women and girls at all levels of education. ESDP III and IV emphasizes for higher education and gender mainstreaming that deals with affirmative action to have more women in higher education.

in 2007, the main goal of which is women's empowerment. Furthermore, in 2011 the government started to advocate National Gender Mainstreaming (GM) in its various programs and strategies (MOLSA 2012; JP GEWE 2013; JP GEWE 2015). The main reason for this policy focus is to create a gender sensitive policy framework in all levels of government offices. In addition it is used for monitoring and evaluating mechanisms by the ministry. According to the UN Women report (2014), the project has faced implementation gap, mainly because the people working in the policy evaluation on the project does not have gender awareness and lacks the understanding of how the gender sensitivity should work in the policy framework. The understanding of gender sensitive and gender mainstreaming was limited to in the perspective of creating access (UN 2014).

Gender Mainstreaming And Women's Political Participation

Since 2011 gender mainstreaming has become the most visible way of addressing gender equality in the policy making process mainly due to the involvement of international organizations that are promoting the agenda are influential like UN, and European Union (Daly 2005;Verloo 2016). As a theory gender mainstreaming draws from feminist perspective of gender inequality by aiming to revise and further develop key feminist concepts and approaches (Daly 2005). This approach more focuses on politicalizing the gender issues in the policy strategy in terms of framing the policy approach (Ibid). The critics raised in relation to the gender mainstreaming approach are two. First, the way gender inequality is understood and set out to address social change in the gender mainstreaming approach. Gender mainstreaming approach takes gender inequality issues at institutional levels by implanting gender sensitive practices and incorporating norms in structures in the process of making public policy (Daly, 2005).

The second critic is in relation to the lack of the incorporation of the three approach of equal treatment, women's perspectives and gender perspective in the gender mainstreaming. It is pointed out, gender mainstreaming should move beyond creating equal opportunities (Daly 2005; Devlin & Elgie 2008). The setback in the approach is related to the role of gender mainstreaming in bringing transformative change to the status quo. The critics argue that, sufficient

attention should be given to the institutional and structural changes to bring viable change in the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

The most common problem raised in the implementation of gender mainstreaming in practice include, firstly the gender mainstreaming does not advance an understanding of gender inequality as a structural problem. Secondly, the other common problem is that, the main motivation for gender mainstreaming is putting it as policy objective rather than creating the real gender equality. This means, gender mainstreaming does not take the discourses on how gender inequality exists for long in the society consideration into consideration. Considering all the factors not only the discourse of gender mainstreaming is important but also to considered where is the mainstreaming is happening, who are involved in the policy making process remains vital (Daly 2005; Devlin & Elgie 2008).

Gender Mainstreaming Challenges In Ethiopia

The critic on gender mainstreaming in the Ethiopian context is related to two main issues. The first one is that the Ethiopian gender mainstreaming to empower women is very much copy pasted from MDGs and Beijing platform gender mainstreaming goals. The limitations of both policies were that they give too much emphasis on creating access. For example the MDGs goals that call for girls/women formal schooling were taken as the main way for creating gender equality set very narrow target that ignores other factors in their surrounding (Unterhalter 2005). The focus was implementation in relation to the objectives rather than questioning these objectives if they can be realistic for that specific context. The other good example is the way that political participation by women in Ethiopia is taken as women empowerment by ignoring the political context of the country.

Putting Women's Participation In Perspective

The notion behind advocating women's participation in politics is to bring women's perspectives in discussions in addition to incorporating the issues with policies and strategies that can contribute to change structural and institutional discrimination of women. Women's political participation mainly calls for feminist perspective in the policy-making processes (Devlin & Elgie 2008).

Studies related to women's participation in the politics relates to a Western perspective that cannot be applied in other contexts (Ibid). For example women's participation in UK and Scandinavian countries influences the policy outcome regarding family, gender equality and social policy. Women's participation especially in the Scandinavian countries is not only about gender equality rather it is also about creating complete democracy that involves everyone equally (Ibid). On the other hand, participation of women in African parliaments has been substantively different. For example, women's participation in Namibia, Mozambique, Uganda and many other African countries has not been translated into significant women's centered or feminist policy initiatives (Devlin & Elgie 2008). Rwanda's women parliamentarian is 48 percent, which is the highest representation in the world (Powley 2005; Devlin & Elgie 2008). In most cases women's participation is based on quota system which in mostly are controlled by dominant party that forces women to be loyal to the party line even at the cost of promoting gender issues (Ibid).

Putting the Ethiopian Women in National Organs

In developing countries like Ethiopia, gender equality and women empowerment are understood as one way of alleviating poverty and bringing sustainable development (Ogato 2013). It is pointed out that, since 1993 Ethiopia has been engaged with gender issues to improve women's position in the society (UN 2002; MoLSA 2012, JP GEWE 2013; JP GEWE 2015). Closing the gender disparities in all levels of education, which could increase labor market participation in the non-agricultural sector, and increase the number of women in political participation were the main pointers of gender equality and women's empowerment in Ethiopia (Ibid). Surely, in Ethiopia, women's participation in politics has been improving. The main objective stated in the policies were to increase women's participation in the political sphere is to give women power for decision-making. In 2005, women in the executive body were only 13 percent, currently its 16 percent. Similarly, women in the cabinet in 2005 were only 7 percent and it has increased to 13 percent in 2014. Additionally, women holding seats in the house of federation were 18.75 percent in 2009. According to UN report (UN Women 2014) in 2010, women in the state bureaucracy were 14.8percent, 20 percent commissioners and 11.3 ambassadors.

Some studies show that Ethiopia is progressing towards achieving MDGs through incorporating the goals in national policies and strategies and ratifying international conventions that improve the situation of women accompanied by improving the employment status of women and women's participation in decision making, which is not only limited to the house hold but also in public spaces as well (MoLSA 2012; Ogato 2013; UN Women 2014). It is pointed out that, though one party has led the country for the last twenty-five years, the participation of women is rising (ibid).

The UN women report on the Ethiopian's gender profile in 2014 puts political participation as one of the inductors for women empowerment in Ethiopia (Ibid). Since one of the indicators for gender equality for women empowerment is political participation in the country (Ogato 2013). Women's participation in politics is considered as an empowerment for women; it gives them an opportunity to become part of policy making process that addresses their issues and questions. Yet Ethiopian politics is very much dominated by one party, Ethiopian Peoples 'Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). Most of the time, political decision-making process happens outside the parliament behind closed doors which this does not involve everyone. The parliament is a rubber-stump for the decisions taken by the politicians in the executive branch (Ab-bink 2006).

In addition to that, most people who are in the position from higher to lower echelons of power are mostly from trusted circle because of the loyalty they have for the party (Ibid). Those women who are in a position of power are politically appointed without considering qualification they hold to address women's issues. The political process in post-1991 Ethiopia clearly shows that the women in a position of power are concerned only to the party goals without being responsive women's real questions outside the party agenda. In addition, the kind of power they hold is symbolic since in most cases the relationship is very hierarchical. This raises the issue of how women's participation in politics can be a way to empower them in the micro level in Ethiopia context.

It is argued that, increasing political participation of women mainly consists of giving women her voice and should consider both micro and macro level of women empowerment (Stromquist 2015). In other words, women's political

participation is one aspects of empowerment but it works well when those women participating in the political arena present the voice of the women by bringing in women's issues to the policy framework. Women are given so-called decision making positions in legislative organs of the federal and local governments and executive offices that deal with women's equality and empowerment but they are merely political appointees who only follow party lines and their power is pretty much symbolic (Bisewar 2011).

The women in these decision-making positions in Ethiopia are selected by the ruling party just to show gender balance in these bodies. These women are known to be unqualified and politically voiceless on women's issues (Bisewar 2011). This in essence, implies that bringing in feminist approach to policy making has remained a daunting task at many levels. First, the women in the position of policy making lack the qualifications of technicalities of policy making in comparison to the male decision makers. Secondly, the women lack the knowledge that could equip themselves on issues of women empowerment and gender understanding of issues. Thirdly, political and policy discussions are dominated by the agenda of the ruling party where the women are only there to fulfill as expected in the party's strict discipline. Therefore, the conception, the policy-making environment and implementations of women's empowerment in Ethiopia is problematic.

Chapter 4

Education Burdened By Social Construction Of Women's Role In Society

This chapter addresses the question of women's empowerment as explained by the lived experiences of educated and "uneducated" women in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital. In this chapter I argue that the 'achievement' that Kabeer (1999) proposes has not been realized among the educated respondents of my research. The achievement that the women in my study point out has still been marred within the societal imposition that perpetuates women as a good wife and caregiver. To make my points clear, first I discuss the relationship between education and empowerment as put in practice in Ethiopia and investigate if the education of the girls/women empowers them. This in away, calls for an analytical reflection on the lived experiences of the women and their view on empowerment. Secondly, analyzing the choices that my respondents make using the conceptual framework of 'choice and capability'. This is the central chapter of my study that discusses the empirical data using my conceptual apparatus.

Participation of women in higher education is the main pointer to women empowerment, which in itself leads to other aspects of empowerment (Murphy-Graham 2012). Along this line of argument, I attempted to find out if education has empowered my respondents and how they understand empowerment. Before doing that, I looked into policy documents that specifically deal with girls education and empowerment. There is sufficient legal regime ranging from the constitution to women focused policies and proclamations designed to empower women in different aspects of their lives but little has been done to deeply embrace the conceptualization of empowerment in these documents. The laws speak of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, policy-makers utter words of empowerment in workshops and press conferences.

The 2015 UN report on MDGs applaud Ethiopia's endeavor to women empowerment. The report discusses that Ethiopia is meeting the MDGs in terms of promoting gender equality and women empowerment by 2015 but it mainly

deals with closing the gender gap in all education levels including tertiary education. It is believed, the emphasis given to education is the better way to meet the other two goals – closing the wage gap in the nonagricultural sector and to increase women participation in politics by giving more seats in the parliaments. According to the UN report (2015) Ethiopia has showed remarkable progress in meeting the other MDG goals but still has to work more on gender equality and empowering women.

The main assumption behind promoting gender equality in higher education is to increase opportunities to participate in the formal sector that in turn leads to women's economic empowerment in terms of giving them control and access over productive resources. Yet, economic empowerment is not sufficient to promote women empowerment but it is creating awareness and consciousness towards women's role in the society matters most. The next section delves into how the young, educated women understand empowerment in Ethiopia based on in-depth interviews conducted in Addis Ababa in July 2016.

The Education Versus Resources For Empowerment Idea

The women who interviewed understood their empowerment as 'accomplishment' in their life rather than helping them make 'choice' in their life. For them, attaining higher education help them get paid job and put them in a better economic position for the 'marriage market'. This means, they view their education as a way to get suitable partner. This way, most of them consider themselves accomplished in their life.

Most of the women whom I interviewed are not familiar with the meaning of empowerment in their language, which makes it difficult for them to explain what empowerment is meant for them. My respondents have heard about empowerment in their everyday life in work places, from mass media discussions in relation to policies and projects that call for women participation. For example one of my respondent pointed out that she had an opportunity to participate in a workshop related to women's empowerment in the agricultural sector in Ethiopia. She emphasized that, the participants of the workshop were from different levels and background but the coordinator was using the word empowerment throughout the whole time, which she thinks that it might be difficult to understand for all those women who were participating. She understood

empowerment as having power in the literal sense and have not understood empowerment in relation to her life.

According to Sen, people with capabilities have more freedom to choose what they value the most in their life and education can be one way to get the freedom of choice (Sen, 1999). It is stated, women's education can lead to participation in a formal paid job that will be materialised into financial autonomy, which can give women freedom and the capability to make a choice. The main critique around this presumption is that, education is only focused on the market outcome that does not consider the gender aspect of making choice and 'freedom is social product rather than individual'. On the other hand, studies have proven that a mere economic autonomy does not solve inequality in women's experiences. In other words, women's not only should get access to resources but they should also have access to the means to control over resources which can help them change power relations (Batliwala 1994; Mosedale 2005).

In other words, education should not only bring economic empowerment for women but also a way to look things in different perspectives to reflect on the inequality they experience, which can bring social change by addressing structural and institutional discrimination. The more educated the woman is, the more empowered she will be. According to MDGs, years of schooling is one positive contributor for women's empowerment comparing to men. This means Higher education is one way to be more empowered and a means to get paid job (Murphy-Graham 2012). A resource is meant to exercise agency. The argument is that, since women are dependent on the family to get access to resources, then the kind of strategic choices they make in life is restricted (Kabeer, 2005). Thus, a woman have more choices when she is independent, which brings resources and agency that gives her the ability to make strategic life choice which was denied before.

In order to see how these aspects work in real life, I will take two examples from my respondents, Mekdelawit and Tihitina who graduated from higher education and are currently working in the private sector in Addis Ababa. Mekdelawit is 26, born and raised in Addis Ababa. Her parents were originally not from the capital city but moved to the city after they got married to give their children better chance of quality education. She grew up with other 3 siblings,

one brother and two sisters. Since she was the first-born in the family, she has the responsibility to be a good example of her siblings. Most importantly by pursuing higher education, but that is not enough. Nowadays people may easily join University in Ethiopia compared to her parents' generation. At this point of time, not only graduating from the university, but also getting a job is very important. She studied accounting at Addis Ababa University and is currently working as an accountant in the private sector. Thus, she manages to take care of her expenses and, regularly contributes to her family in the best way she can. This has helped her gain respect from her family while her siblings are following similar footsteps.

Mekdelawit believes her parents are open-minded except in one particular issue; where her parent's point of view is different as compared to her friend's family who happens to hold similar background like her with good education and currently employed. This is with regard to her current relationship with her long-time boyfriend. She believes it is now time for her to get married. However, before pursuing marriage, she wants to understand if they are compatible to live under same roof since they always meet in public place like cafés or restaurants. This is important for her because she does not want to face problems that can lead to divorce in the future. Yet her parents does not allow her to do so. Her parents were of the view that if she does so, then she can lose her 'value as a woman'. In addition to that, she can also be an embarrassment to the family. Mekdelawit is aware that she has to get married sooner or later though her parents will never allow her to do this.

Tihitina 29, works in the banking industry. When she first joined the company, she had only a diploma but now holds a bachelor's degree, which helped her to get a promotion at work. Also, the current place she holds as Credits and Saving Approval officer in the bank that lets her meet with different kind of people, especially those who have the potential to help her start her business in the future. In addition, her current position makes her see her supervisor less frequent. Her supervisor harasses her by commenting on the way she dresses and asks to go out with her. Tihitina prefer not to take the issues to the upper management since she believes that it will not make a difference. According to her, to be in that kind position at her age she has to have good ties with the

right people. So instead, she handles the situation by not wearing colorful clothes that can make him easily visible.

Women's Empowerment Among the "Uneducated" Circles

The "non-educated" women category is a group that didn't join higher education. The case of Selam helps to explain the situation of girls who just stopped school at grade 10. In relation to their situation in terms of access to recourse and what kind of transformative change they manage to bring without higher education. Selam, is from the capital city, currently she lives with her parents. She has two older brothers and recently lost her father. Her two brothers are the sources of income for the family. Selam took the national exam of grade 10 but she couldn't join university. She was only 15 at the time when she took the exam and now she is 19. After being unemployed over a year, with the help of her brother she managed to get job as sales person in the clothing shops around 'Merkato', which is the biggest market in the city. She earns between 800 and 1000 Birr per month (33 to 42 euro).

Selam thinks with the kind of effort she makes for her job, she deserves salary rise, but her employer is of the view that there are a number of people looking for the kind of job she is doing. So, she has the choice of keeping her work even though the salary does only barely covers her basic needs. She is aware of the situation that it is difficult to get a job without any kind qualification while everyone has seen her as a failure, which makes things very hard for her. Other young women who were interviewed who works in shops aspire to start their own businesses before they get married if they ever get the opportunity to get start-up capital but getting that kind of support from anyone is very difficult. This implies not having higher education qualification put them in a very difficult situation, especially in terms of access the labor market. They are at a very disadvantaged position to access both the financial and social resources.

"It is good for a women to be with man": a social imposition?

The idea of access to resources and its role in bringing transformative changes in terms of 'agency' and 'achievement' should be questioned. Holding higher

education and employment in the formal sector could be one source of empowerment to make strategic life choice. Mekdelawit, has both financial and social resources and agency to question for the mobility which is not very common in the society. Her mobility is restricted, regarding her financial status. Unless otherwise she has the protection of a man when she gets married but this does not mean she is disempowered. On the other hand, my respondents agree that it is not appropriate to live alone by themselves, though they are financially independent. The main reason for that is related to how it can be risk for women to live by herself or it makes her disadvantages in the marriage market since people consider them as less disciplined. This implies that even if a woman is educated and financially independent she has to be protected by a man. This is a problematic issue, rather than solving the concerns of women, it perpetuates the domination of men and the subordination of women.

My data shows that, even though women are financially independent the societal imposition has continued to play a significant part to subordinate women and how women should live their lives. This understanding of 'a woman should live with a man' has very much been accepted as normal and a right thing to do. In addition, this further shows that, to have something that the society considers as an "achievement" the woman has to always be protected by a man and be reserved in many ways. This basically forces women to do things that are accepted by the society. It is important to emphasize that, as the case of Tihitina shows, structural and institutional discrimination exists in today's Ethiopia. As indicated earlier, Tihitina chose to change her style of clothing rather reporting to her boss. First of all, she internalized her styling of dressing is one of the main causes of the harassment she was facing. Secondly, even though there is policy regarding harassment in the office the implementation remain embedded within the structure.

To see how the level of education makes a difference, I have looked at the case of Selam, comparing to those women who went to university. Selam faces tremendous problem to access the labor market, which limits not only her access to financial resource but also social resources that she could get from her family and develop some kind of self-worth. For Selam, moving out of her parents' house is an impossible subject to think. She has to respect the time at which

she gets home. Both Tihitina and Selam mentioned that they have to respect the “curfew”, apparently imposed for their Safety.

Marriage As Social Mobility: Education As A Vehicle

The young educated women I interviewed understood empowerment as ‘accomplishment’ in their life rather than as making ‘choice’ in their life. For them, attaining higher education help them get paid job and put them in a better economic position and in the ‘marriage market’. Being educated and employed make them better competitive in the marriage market to find someone who is better than them. They define the idea of someone ‘better than them’ with economic and educational status of the man they are looking for. Hence, being educated and employed has important value for them.

Most of the respondents agree that marriage is a way to evaluate their life success or accomplishment. This shows that getting married is one way of showing their status in the society. Since, in most cases the role of the women in the society is related to reproduction which forces women to become better wives and mothers, or to increase the opportunity to find a better partner (Kabeer, 2005). With this in mind, the kind of partner they get married with should have better status than them. Consequently, marriage becomes a way to create social mobility that can show their status in the society.

Here, I would like to discuss the cases Haimanot, Nardos and Rozina who explained their concerns regarding how it is important to find a suitable partner and how having education and employment gives them advantages. Haimanot says,

I work in the customer service for my company, which helps me to meet people from different background. Guys used to look for someone who sits at home and wait for them, but now things have changed. Working is very important, it gives you respect, whether you really contribute to the household or not as long as you are working out it make him to respect you (Haimanot, interview, July 2016).

Nardos, says,

I met my boyfriend through work, when your work takes you to quality places you meet a good potential man that is better than you. If I were not working I wouldn't have met him. He is a well to do person and many people assume that I met him because of his wealth. We only met in some office where I cannot be able to know who he is. (Nardos, interview, July 2016).

I believe I should have my own things before I get married, but it might take me sometime to get there which might be too late considering the fact that I am a woman. If you have money, but you don't start family all the hard work might be a waste of my time (Roziana, interview July 2016)

The above excerpts show the relationship between employment and marriage. Though it might be considered that women have the ability to choice to whom to marry they are forced to marry at a young age.

In Ethiopia there is a ceremony called '*shemgelena*', whereby a man sends three or more elderly people to the parents of the women to get confirmation from her family for the marriage. At the *shemgelena* ceremony there are common question raised by the women's family. According to interviewees, the parent of the women enquires if the proposing husband is able to support his bride economically. The other questions raised to the visiting elders including the economic, religious, ethnic and other backgrounds of the proposing man. Yet, often times the women make sure that they find a man that their parents approve of. This show that we should not only focus how women's able to make strategic life choice but also it is important to consider the kind of strategic life choice they are faced with.

In contrast, for those who do not have higher education, they don't look for someone who is better than them, which is related to their self-assertiveness. As a result, the women who do not have higher education do not think they are competitive enough in the marriage market compared to those who are educated. For the women who do not hold a higher education qualification marriage is a mechanism to cope with their life situation though they know that

they are young to get married and that financial independence is good before marriage. For example, we can see the case of Befiker.

Befiker is 21, who currently live with her boyfriend. Her family was against the whole living arrangement she have with him because she was just 17 at the time she decided to live with him. The situation is getting tense with her parents because she was not successful in her grade 10 national exams. Her exam result could not let her to continue further with her education, which makes her feel less valued in her parents compared to her siblings who manage to pursue their education. Yet, by the time they discover the economic status of her boyfriend the parents approved their relationship and she is still unemployed. In fact, she says without education finding a job is difficult. In addition to that, even if she manages to find a job her income might not be enough to support her basic needs. Yet, she didn't hide how difficult her life would be if not for his financial support. She further explained that even if her boyfriend makes enough money for both of them, because there are days the grocery she bought for the whole months might not be enough, at that time it is hard to let him know things are finished earlier than planned time.

From these examples one can understand that educational attainment is not only to strive towards employment and higher income but as a form of assurance and as a basis for personal advancement. Conversely, looking for a higher social status could be more important to human nature than other factors (Puts 2010; von Rueden et al. 2011). The outcome of education for both men and women is not only for career, but it also works in the capacity to attract a suitable partner (Smits et al. 2000; Lutz et al. 2007). For a woman to be with a man with better economic and educational status, her level of educational attainment plays a crucial role. Women who attended higher education do not want to get married to someone who only have primary education level (Birkelund & Heldal 2003; Blossfeld & Timm 2003, Raymo & Iwasawa 2005).

As a matter of fact, one of the pointers for empowerment is the participation of women in paid job - the more women's have resources, creates an opportunity to control over resources (Duflo, 2012). Further, economic well-being improves social status of women in any given society (Robeyns 2003). Some argue women gain their social mobility through marriage and that contribute to

their social status. Yet, studies shows that economic development is not meant to empower women by reducing the inequality. This is the result of women still hold very low paying jobs in most places and face discrimination in the labor market. Participation of women in Ethiopia in the labor market is increasing but the wage gap is still there (UN Women 2014).

Most of the women stated that, immediately after they graduated from university and start working, family and friends start questioning when they will get married and whom they get married with. This gives an idea that how marriage and reproduction are the expected roles of women, and define women's success in her life. This reinforces the fact that marriage as the main accomplishment in their life. I cannot assume whether these women are empowered or disempowered because their choose to marriage. This only makes me to question if marriage (which might be important aspect of life for both man and women) alone makes a life of women worthy. My data shows, even though the woman succeeds in her education and is successful in the labor market, the society still evaluates her success when she have a man in her life. Getting married might be big part of women life but it should not be the way to define or to evaluate her life accomplishment.

Motherhood and Strategic Life Choice of Women

The women interviewed tend to think fertility age when they make strategic life choice. For these women becoming mother is an achievement. The respondents point out that education and employment is important part of their life to be independent but things to be considered perfect when they start a family. In this context women consider motherhood as a status. Women came up with these assumptions that they are at risk to find man and to get married if they passed their prime age (which mostly between 23 up to 27).

Studies show that childbearing age used to show social status but due to the increasing cost of raising a child it become less, especially with women who are educated. Then the statues-fertility changed to education in many countries which becomes defining way of social status, but it made it problematic to reach high status through education and at the same time have high fertility, mainly for women (Jones 1982; Jejeebhoy 1995; Skirbekk 2008). In many cases, women faces problem with being highly educated and staying too long on edu-

education might force them to lower their requirements and they might lose the time frame to attract a suitable partner (Lutz et al. 2007). After someone has achieved an educational qualification the next thing that follows is to find a stable job with good income, attracting a partner and establishing a stable union (Marini, 1984). The literature point out that education increases the opportunity cost stating the relationship between working and studying the age of bearing children (Jain 1981; Skirbekk 2004; Angrist et al. 2005; Gustafsson & Kalwij 2006). More or less education have a causal effect on both the timing and the outcome of fertility. Yet, the degree of this effect can be contingent to many influences including the socioeconomic, institutional and cultural characteristics of the specific country considered (Skirbekk , 2008).

This brings the issues of Weber's discussion on race, class, gender and sexuality and those things are socially constructed. According Weber (1998), race, class, gender and sexuality created through battle to take over socially valued resources. Here, social class compares and contrasts race, gender and sexuality in a given context. The social class identified to reinforce and justify social hierarchy even in contested situation (Weber, 1998). Weber, specifically argues how motherhood is socially constricted and can be seen as status. The main example that he discusses is related to social role of the women in the society, which is related, to work and the family role women has (Ibid). The main role of the women is bearing child and taking care of the family. On the other hand, women's role for those who work outside the household and those who are middle class women stays at home and take care of their family. Yet this has been related to the biological fact that if women can bear children or not which comes to the point that women's biological relationship with child as social class which legally defines motherhood. In order to see this in the Ethiopian context we can see some example from women's who interviewed, Tihitina, Nardos and Seble respectively.

I was planning to start my Masters, but I started by studying a diploma which took me three years than working on a four years to do bachelors degree, then if I continue to do my masters, since am taking night classes it will be 3 years at that time I will be 33 years, is a red-flag for me. So when I thought about it, I felt that it is better to get married first. If I wait more years

I might run out of time. It is hard to give birth to a health child (Tihitina. Interview, July 2016)

I am currently engage and will get married soon, am 25. It is a good age to get married I believe. Women get old easily than men, which also affects my look and it might affect my attractiveness for men. This might put at risk my possibility of getting married. So rather than putting myself at risk it is better to do something about it while I am young and attractive.” (Nardos, interview, July 2016)

I wanted to study theatrical art but my parents forced me to study communication because that is easier to get job but now again am studying marketing management because it is too late for me to start over again since am women. I should consider the time for everything. After sometime I don't get choice that I want, whatever position I have in relation to work and kind of money I have as long as I am a woman I can't compete with man who can get married even when they are 45 with 25 young woman (Seble, interview, July 2016)

All things considered, Sen argues that having capability helps people to choose what they value the most but he did not consider gender aspect. Yet society has gender expectation for both man and woman and in most cases for women it is related to caregiving role and motherhood. This implies, if the relationship does not ensure and formulate accepted relationships between mother and child, woman fail to get the status of motherhood. This leads to an idea that if women could not give birth it is a taboo. This kind of believes and attitudes force women to choice different life path in their life. Women normalized their gender role in the society. In order not to lose the statues they prefer to take different kinds of choice. Yet it is not only about their choice but it is also related to how people consider themselves when they become mother. Furthermore, respondents accept that it is a biological reality that women get old before men.

According to Kabeer (1999), the first order choices are strategic life choices which includes getting married, when to get married, whom to get married with, how many children to have and so on (Kabeer, 1999). This brings the above discussion on “marriage as social mobility” for women who are getting married and then becoming mothers. It is their first order choice but they made this kind of choice not only from self-interest but also from a cultural imposition. Marriage has to happen when she is still young and could become a mother to get the status of motherhood in socially accepted way. Secondly, women has to get married when she is still young and attractive in most cases this is related to the preference of man. Therefore, first order choice impacts the second order choice. This kind of choice influences the quality of life women might have in their future. The factors that my respondents factored in their decision include the kind of study they do, the amount of time that takes, the amount of time they spent with a boyfriend, even though there are problems in the relationship. These kinds of choices and decision they take will have an impact on their academic life, which directly affects their income and career.

According to both Kabeer and Sen, education and participation in employment in non-agricultural sector considered to be the sources of the empowerment. There should also be another consideration about the kind of choice that give them and what factors they were considering when they make choice. I agree that everyone has different values for different things in their life, which they value as important. In this case women’s choice to consider what is important in their life. Yet we can see that from this perspective, the kind of choice women make in their life is very much reinforced in relation to what is being successful in the society. This perpetuates the value in women’s life is only related to their gender role that is constructed by the society. Furthermore, it makes it problematic for me to understand the outcome of policy implementation that were emphasized on women’s empowerment and change the perspective of the women from caregiving and being mother to be part of development endeavour of the country.

From this perspective, even though there is ‘access to resources’, it did not bring transformative change for women. It might not mean that these women are disempowered. According to Mosedale (2005), different scholars define

women's empowerment differently but the most common one include "in order to say someone is empowered, they have to be disempowered at the first place" (kabeer, 1999). Secondly, it relates to people making decisions regarding their life. Yet while making decisions, women might be affected by their surroundings in the society and the empowerment mostly focuses on the individual level rather than at collective level. Finally, and most importantly, empowerment is not a product rather it is a process. This implies there is no ending, people might be empowered or disempowered, as compared to others or relatively to themselves at a previous time (Mosedale 2005). In such cases, there is no general conclusion on whether a woman is empowered or disempowered since it is a subjective situation. Rather, this is mainly related to the kind of education they have got. Most of the women understood their education in relation to job market and 'marriage market'. It is not difficult to understand from my respondents that, education didn't help them or equip them to question the inequality they face and see and to evaluate their experiences from different perspectives. Education has only become a tool to get access to economic resources, which in turn merely contributes to perpetuate the societal value of pursuing a better husband.

To sum it up, in the Ethiopian context providing access to education and employment has not solve the inequality. In many cases having education and paid job considered to be empowering for women but women have to face double standard set by the society when they make choices in different aspects of their lives. This brings in the idea that social change is very difficult regarding women's empowerment through education.

Conclusion

The research paper attempted to investigate women's empowerment in Ethiopia at two levels. The first level is the broader legal regime and participation of women in national and regional decision-making organs. The second level is a narrower focus of the study of women's lived experiences in Addis Ababa. I have found out, the Ethiopian government has incorporated international goals advocated through MDGs and the Beijing platform. Further, for more than two decades Ethiopia has developed national policies and strategies concerning gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women empowerment. The national policies and strategies stipulate that Ethiopia strives to create gender equality and make women part of the development endeavor that the country is pursuing. The main drawback is that, international goals are incorporated in the national policies without paying sufficient attention to the local contexts and without unpacking how these goals will be implemented within the existing structural and institutional inequality that women face.

The incorporation of international goals and the increasing number of women in national and regional decision-making bodies has pleased international donors and organizations. Yet, empowerment has not gone beyond paper work and numbers. The number of women in the national parliament and cabinet has been increasing for the last two decades but the women who join these bodies function in strict party lines, in a party-state known for its democratic centralism that ruled Ethiopia since 1991. The assumption that the participation of women in decision making bodies has only become a façade for various reasons. The women who join these bodies do not have both the political capital and technical knowhow to advance issues of women's empowerment in their political participation. These women politicians are mainly concerned with the party agenda and what they are told to do by men who dominated politics for long.

Furthermore, the international goals that are incorporated in the national policies and the legal documents stipulated can only be measured in what they changed in the lives of women at large. My study of two groups in Addis Ababa, divided into those who pursue higher education and those who did not,

tells otherwise. Both the educated and the “non-educated” categories of my study underlined that, they have heard the word empowerment in many forums but do not know what it really means. From policy perspectives and its implementations, education was put as the main pointer for women empowerment. Sending more girls to school, as educated women would join the labor market, which in turn would contribute to their financial independence. My finding tells me that, graduating from a university and employment made the women mainly to aspire to be better wives and mothers. In other words, the young educated women understood empowerment as re-confirming what the society imposes than giving them choices and help them view the world from different perspective, which education is supposed to bring about. The literature emphasizes that women’s participation in higher education is an important tool to women’s empowerment in itself and as basis for other empowerment mechanisms (Murphy-Graham, 2012). Education is supposed to bring consciousness on gender equality and unequal power relation in society. In Ethiopia, it seems that it failed by only forcing women to focus only on academic success and perpetuating the gender power relation that exists in the society.

Here, it is crucial to emphasize what Mosedale (2005) claims about how one sees empowerment. For Mosedale, there is no right way to say someone is disempowered or empowered - it is a subjective outcome depending on the personal situation. Yet, this doesn’t prohibit questioning socially constructed ideas such as taking marriage as the most vital aspect of a women’s life that reinforces the subordination of women. Women’s empowerment is embedded within the assumption of bringing social change by mapping out the gender power relations from different point of views (Stromquist, 2015). The four dimensions of women’s empowerment in relation to education, i.e. financial independence, the ability of decision making or be represented in decision making organs, having information on the situation that one is in, and a psychological dimension of giving value and self-worth to oneself remains an important tool of analysis (ibid). In my study of the Ethiopian context, there is a long way for women’s empowerment to materialize. The financial independence of women in Ethiopia has not yet been materialized as income inequality and the job market is still significantly tilted towards men. Decision-making in the public sphere is a highly politicized matter and bringing in feminist perspectives to

decision making has not yet come to be realized for the reasons outline above. Information and self-worth has been marred with societal imposition that perpetuates the subordination of women as well as the pitfalls of the education curriculum.

Women in Ethiopia (whether they are in decision-making organs, educated, uneducated) face a three-sided domination – Political, social and economic. In the political front, they live under a one-party state where discussions and decisions are made without significant participation. Here, even the role of women associations are controlled and managed by the party-state. In the social front, the women live in a society that constantly perpetuates the subordination of women as caregiver. Economically, though there are attempts to increase the participation of women in education that make them ready for the work force, it is still at an infant stage. The financial independence of women is very far from being a reality.

To change women's position in the society in Ethiopia, further research and comprehensive investigation of local needs would be important. My study and analysis focused on the incorporation of the ideas of women's empowerment in the national legal frameworks and the women's take on that by looking at a small group of women in Addis Ababa. I would suggest an agenda for further studies that would involve broader group of people, both men and women, using participatory research approach to unpack local context, identify social values and beliefs and analyze that from perspectives that matters most for the women's in Ethiopia. Such analysis would help to bring fresh perspectives to the policy process and social change at large.

The central assumption that education brings both ideological and personal changes and eventually makes women to have more strategic life choices should be re-considered. The first re-consideration could be on the separation of education and schooling. Schooling is the formal education while education is a broader spectrum than the formal schooling system and includes experiences of individuals from different cultures and societies (Anderson-Levitt 2005). Thus, policy processes should take this into account. The second re-consideration should be on the emphasis of the means rather than only on the end. Beyond focusing on the contribution of education to the financial and

other independence of women, a proper attention should be paid to the formal curriculum to nurture consciousness and dialogue on power relations and social constructions.

References

- Abbink, J. (2006) 'Discomfiture of Democracy? The 2005 Election Crisis in Ethiopia and its Aftermath', *African affairs* 105(419): 173-199.
- Alkire, S. (2005) 'Why the Capability Approach?' *Journal of human development* 6(1): 115-135.
- Alsop, R. and N. Heinsohn (2005) 'Measuring Empowerment in Practice: Structuring Analysis and Framing Indicators', *World Bank policy research working paper* (3510). (it used as et al should add the second person on the referencing)
- Aikman, S. and E. Unterhalter (2005) *Beyond Access: Transforming Policy and Practice for Gender Equality in Education*. Oxfam
- Anderson-Levitt, K. M. (2005) 'The Schoolyard Gate: Schooling and Childhood in Global Perspective', *Journal of Social History*, 38(4), pp. 987-1006. (EUR e-journals)
- Angrist, J.D., V. Lavy and A. Schlosser (2005), *New evidence on the causal link between the quantity and quality of children*.
- Arnot, M. and S. Fennell (2007) '1 (Re) Visiting Education and Development Agendas', *Gender education and equality in a global context*: 1.
- Batliwala, S. (1994) 'The Meaning of Women's Empowerment: New Concepts from Action.'
- Bertaux, D. (1981) *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences*. Vol. 23. Sage Publications (CA).
- Birkelund, G.E. and J. Haldal (2003) 'Who Marries Whom? Educational Homogamy in Norway.', *Demographic Research* 8(1): 1-30.
- Blossfeld, H. and A. Timm (2003) *Who Marries Whom?: Educational Systems as Marriage Markets in Modern Societies*. Vol. 12. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Biseswar, I. (2011). *The role of Educated/intellectual women in Ethiopia in the process of change and transformation towards gender equality, 1974-2005*
- Cohen, P. (2004) *The gender division of labour: 'keeping house' and occupational segregation in the United States*, *Gender & Society*, 18, pp. 239–252.
- Cherinet, H., and Mulugeta, E. (2003), *Towards gender equity in Ethiopia, Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) Sida, Sweden*.
- Cornwall, A. (2016) 'Women's Empowerment: What Works?', *Journal of International Development* 28(3): 342-359.
- Cornwall, A. and J. Edwards (2014) *Feminisms, Empowerment and Development: Changing Women's Lives*. (year of publishing it used as 2012 it should be 2014)
- Comim, F., M. Qizilbash and S. Alkire (2008) *The Capability Approach: Concepts, Measures and Applications*. Cambridge university press.

- Devlin, C. and R. Elgie (2008) 'The Effect of Increased Women's Representation in Parliament: The Case of Rwanda', *Parliamentary Affairs* 61(2): 237-254.
- Demessie, S. and T. Yitbark (2008) 'A review of national policy on Ethiopian women', Digest of Ethiopia's national policies, strategies and programs. Forum for Social Studies, Addis Ababa, pp93-126.
- Duflo, e. (2012) 'Women Empowerment and Economic Development', *Journal of Economic Literature*, ': 50, pp. 1015–1079
- ESAA (2014), *Education Statistics Annual Abstract*, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education, Addis Ababa
- ESAA (2016), *Education Statistics Annual Abstract*, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education, Addis Ababa
- FREME(1996) ,*Education Sector Development Program I(ESDP-I)* , Federal Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education , Addis Ababa
- FREME(2002) , *Education Sector Development Program II (ESDP-II)*, Federal Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education , Addis Ababa
- FREME(2005), *Education Sector Development Program III(ESDP-III)*, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education , Addis Ababa
- FREME(2010), *Education Sector Development Program VI(ESDP-VI)*, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Education , Addis Ababa
- Gubrium, J.F. and J.A. Holstein (2005) *Handbook of Interview Research: Context & Method*. Sage.
- Jain, A.K. (1981) '*The Effect of Female Education on Fertility: A Simple Explanation*', *Demography* 18(4): 577-595.
- Jejeebhoy, S.J. (1995) *Women's Education, Autonomy, and Reproductive Behaviour: Experience from Developing Countries*, OUP Catalogue .Evidence from Developing Countries, Oxford: England, Clarendon Press.
- Jones, E.F. (1982) '*Socio-Economic Differentials in Achieved Fertility*. World Fertility Survey Comparative Study No. 21, International Statistical Institute, Voorburg.
- Jejeebhoy, S.J. (1995) '*Women's Education, Autonomy, and Reproductive Behaviour: Experience from Developing Countries*', OUP Catalogue .Evidence from Developing Countries, Oxford: England, Clarendon Press.
- Kabeer, N. (2005) '*Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Critical Analysis of the Third Millennium Development Goal 1*', *Gender & Development* 13(1): 13-24.
- Kabeer, N. (1999) '*Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment*', *Development and change* 30(3): 435-464.
- Kalwij, A. and S. Gustafsson (2006) *Education and Postponement of Maternity: Economi Analyses for Industrialized Countries*. Vol. 15. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Lutz, W., A. Goujon, S. KC and W. Sanderson (2007) '*Reconstruction of Populations by Age, Sex and Level of Educational Attainment for 120 Countries for 1970-2000*', *Vienna yearbook of population research*: 193-235.

- MOLSA (2012) Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, *Gender Mainstreaming Manual*. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Addis Ababa.
- Macro, O., & Measure, D. (2011). *Ethiopia demographic and health survey, 2011: Preliminary report* Central Statistical Agency.
- Marini, M.M. (1984) '*The Order of Events in the Transition to Adulthood*', *Sociology of education*: 63-8
- MoFED(2014)Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, *Growth and Transformation Plan (2012/13)*. Addis Ababa: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.
- MoE (2010) Ministry of Education, *National Girls' Education Strategy*: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Mosedale, S. (2005) '*Assessing Women's Empowerment: Towards a Conceptual Framework*', *Journal of international development* 17(2): 243-257.
- Murphy-Graham, E. (2012) *Opening Minds, Improving Lives: Education and Women's Empowerment in Honduras*. Vanderbilt University Press.
- Ogato, G.S. (2013) '*The Quest for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Least Developed Countries: Policy and Strategy Implications for Achieving Millennium Development Goals in Ethiopia*', *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology* 5(9): 358.
- Powley, E. (2005) '*Rwanda: Women Hold Up Half the Parliament*', *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers* : 154-163.
- Puts, D.A. (2010) '*Beauty and the Beast: Mechanisms of Sexual Selection in Humans*', *Evolution and Human Behavior* 31(3): 157-175.
- Raymo, J.M. and M. Iwasawa (2005) '*Marriage Market Mismatches in Japan: An Alternative View of the Relationship between Women's Education and Marriage*', *American Sociological Review* 70(5): 801-822.
- Rosenthal, G. (1993) '*Reconstruction of Life Stories: Principles of Selection in Generating Stories for Narrative Biographical Interviews*'.
- Robeyns, I. (2003) '*Sen's Capability Approach and Gender Inequality: Selecting Relevant Capabilities*', *Feminist economics* 9(2-3): 61-9-
- Rowlands, J. (1997) *Questioning Empowerment: Working with Women in Honduras*. Oxfam.
- Sen, A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*. United State: Alfred A.Knopf.
- Sen, G. (1997) '*Empowerment as an Approach to Poverty*', Background Paper to Human Development Report
- Schildberg, c. (2014) *A Caring and Sustainable Economy*. A Concept Note on a Feminist Perspective. Unpublished manuscript.
- Skirbekk, V. (2004) '*Age and Individual Productivity: A Literature Survey*', *Vienna yearbook of population research* : 133-153.
- Skirbekk, V. (2008) '*Fertility Trends by Social Status*', *Demographic Research* 18(5): 145-180.
- Smits, J., W. Ultee and J. Lammers (2000) '*More Or Less Educational Homogeneity? A Test of Different Versions of Modernization Theory using Cross-*

- Temporal Evidence for 60 Countries', *American Sociological Review* 65(5): 781-788.
- Stewart, A.J. (1994) *'The women's Movement and women's Lives: Linking Individual Development and Social Events'*, *The narrative study of lives* 2: 230-250.
- Stromquist, N. P. (2015). *Women's empowerment and education: Linking knowledge to transformative action*. 50 (3), 307-324.
- Stromquist, N.P. (2002) 'Education as a Means for Empowering Women', *Rethinking empowerment: Gender and development in a global/local world* : 22-38.
- Saint, W. (2003) 'Higher Education Development for Ethiopia: Pursuing the Vision', *Washington, DC: World Bank*
- Upadhyay, U.D. and D. Karasek (2010) 'Womens Empowerment and Achievement of Desired Fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa.'
- Unterhalter, E. (2005) 'Global Inequality, Capabilities, Social Justice: The Millennium Development Goal for Gender Equality in Education', *International Journal of Educational Development* 25(2): 111-122.
- Unterhalter, E. (2007) *Gender, Schooling and Global Social Justice*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Unterhalter, E. (2007) '2 Global Values and Gender Equality in Education', *Gender Education and equality in a Global Context*: 19.
- Unterhalter, E. (2008) 'The Capability Approach and Gendered Education: Some Issues of Operationalism in the Context of the HIV/AIDs Epidemic in South Africa'.
- UN (2013), *Ethiopian Joint Flagship Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (JP GEWE) - End -Evaluation of Phase I*. (United Nations Agencies in Ethiopia)
- UN (2015), *Ethiopian Joint Flagship Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (JP GEWE) - End -Evaluation of Phase II*. (United Nations Agencies in Ethiopia)
- UN (2008) *Millennium Development Goals Indicators. Official List of MDG Indicators* (New York, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations)
- UN(2002). *Johannesburg Summit Ethiopian Country Profile*. (Johannesburg, United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development)
- UN (2014) *Preliminary Gender Profile of Ethiopia*. (Addis Ababa, United Nations for gender equality and the empowerment of women)|
- UN (2015). *Assessment of Ethiopia's Progress towards the MDGs; Millennium Development Goals Report 2014 Ethiopia*. (National Planning Commission and the United Nations in Ethiopia)
- Verloo, M. (2016) 'Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Europe. A Critical Frame Analysis Approach', *Επιθεώρηση Κοινωνικών Ερευνών* 117(117): 11-34.
- Von Rueden, C., M. Gurven and H. Kaplan (2011) 'Why do Men Seek Status? Fitness Payoffs to Dominance and Prestige', *Proceedings. Biological sciences / The Royal Society*.
- Weber, L. (1998) 'A Conceptual Framework for Understanding Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality', *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 22(1): 13-32.

- World Bank Group (2012) *World Development Indicators 2012*. World Bank Publications. Comparative education: The dialectic of the global and the local : 179-205.
- Woldemicael, G. (2009) 'Women's Autonomy and Reproductive Preferences in Eritrea', *Journal of Biosocial Science* 41(02): 161-181.
- Yasin, A. M. (2013). Affirmative action for women in higher education and the civil service: The case of Ethiopia.
- Yizengaw, T. (2007) 'Implementation of Cost Sharing in the Ethiopian Higher Education Landscape: Critical Assessment and the Way Forward', *Higher Education Quarterly* 61(2): 171-196.