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## **THE CONSTRAINTS OF SOMALI WOMEN'PARTICIPATIONS ON POLITICAL PROCESS IN MOGDISHU-SOMALIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The aim of this work is to look into the purpose of The constraints of Somali women`s participation on political process in Mogadishu –Somalia The survey took in three aims which are: To determine economic constraints of Somali women`s participation on political process and decision making. To investigate culture constraints of Somali women`s participation on political process. To examine political constraints of Somali women`s participation on political process and decision making. This study used quantitative approach and used explanatory research, the target population was 80 from ministry of women and women organizations in Mogadishu, The simple size of this study was 66 respondents carried out from target population using Slovene`s Formula. This research employed quantitative data collection method whereby data were pulled together by the use of closed ended questionnaires which were self-dispensed. The results generally indicate that independent variables (women challenges in economics, culture constraints, and economic constraints) were found to have positive significant correlations on public sector institutions at 5% level of significance.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Constraints, Somali Women Participations, Political Process, Mogadishu, Somalia.*

## INTRODUCTION

Globally, the constraints of Somali women's participation on political is increasingly low. As of 2011, the global average representation of women legislatures was 19.5 percent. This is after a modest increase in women representation from 19% to 19.8% between 2010 and 2011 (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2012). The Inter-Parliamentary Union (2012) observes that this minimal progress was due to the attempts made, world over, to gender parity in parliamentary representation. There is increased sensitization on the need for equal representation of both genders in political offices and a number of industrialized democracies have seen an increase in women representation. However, despite these substantial gains by women in wielding political power (Paxton et al. 2007); women participation in formal politics is still low in the developed democracies (Ali Yassin Sheikh Ali1, 2015)

The international community through the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform of Action has shown commitment to gender equality in formal political representation, which has led to the increase in women representation in top political positions, albeit low. There is effort to increase women representation to at least 33 percent of elective positions (Bari, 2005). However, this has yielded little in increasing the rise of women into top political offices. The constitution of Somalia requires or allows the representation of women by 30% of the parliamentary seats and other political positions. (Somali constitution draft 2010) This action in Somali constitution implies that it is difficult for women to get to power in contests between women and men A number of factors hinder the participation of women in politics. This paper will look at three major constraints that women face in their quest to political leadership. The factors are political constraints (Ali Yassin Sheikh Ali1, 2015).

Since the 1990s, women across sub-Saharan Africa have made significant advances in the political realm. Whereas in the 1980s it was virtually unheard of for a woman to run for public office, now women occupy on average 22.5 percent of legislative seats

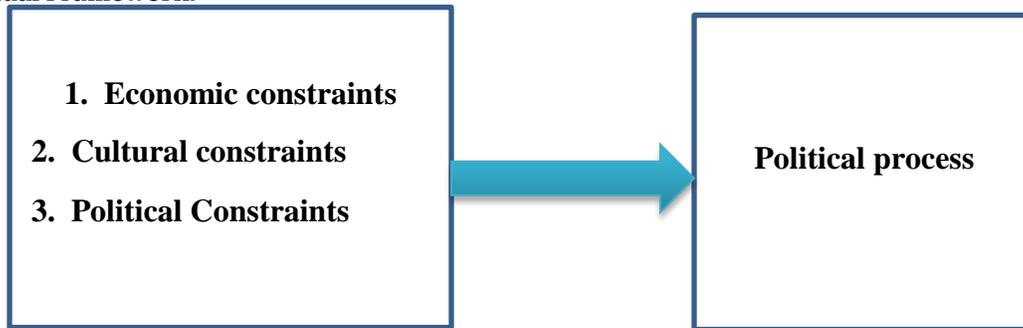
across the continent. This figure is only marginally lower than the averages for the Americas (25.2 percent) and Europe (23.5 percent), and it is higher than the averages for Asia and the Middle East. Sixty-four percent of Rwanda's parliament is composed of women legislators—the highest proportion of women legislators in the world. There are currently two women heads of state in Africa: President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and Interim President Catherine Samba-Panza of Central African Republic. Joyce Banda, president of Malawi from 2012 to 2014, just recently lost her bid for a second term in office. Women also occupy such other high-ranking positions (Ndlovu, 2013)

The Somali women have been engaged in peace building albeit through informal and unrecognized processes. In the context of African traditional societies, Somalia included, a mother is the first and most valuable school in life and peace as educators to children (Jama, 2010). As peacemakers, they have responded in a variety of ways depending on the situation at hand. One notable example is the use of poetry to transmit powerful peace messages to their male leaders. They have also wielded immense latent decision making power as they influence their husbands, sons and fathers, while being effective family managers. This form of participation, however, is unrecognized and considered informal (Ali Yassin Sheikh Ali1, 2015).

The ignorance of the African culture in women's role of traditional leadership was hampered the current political participation and decision making involvements of the most African women, though many African nations made affirmative action's to enabled women's equal participation in politics.

In Somali context, the challenges of political participation and decision making of Somalia women are same as those faced the rest of the African women as mention above. For example Somalia traditional leadership was dominated by the male elders. Women have no room in clan-based politics, and they cannot represent their clans. As you go back to historical practices, you can see that women's business was to care of her husband and children.

**Conceptual Framework:**



**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Gender equality is a global crucial topic all the time. Nowadays, it is visible that women still suffer gender discrimination in various fields. It is necessary to study women’s contribution to society development. Using cross-country and panel regressions, I investigate whether gender gaps in political participation affect economic growth during the period 1991-2013 using data up to 30 countries in Asia. I update and specify the results of previous studies on the link between female political participation and economic development and concentrate the analysis on Asian panel. The result shows that in recent years, female political participation fosters economic growth in Asia (Xu, 2012)

In exercising the right to participation the men and women shall have an equal opportunity in involvement in the political system in many forms from voting in elections, holding a position as a legislator, ministry, and judge or to be a head of the state. To put in other words the women and men in exercising their rights to participation is entitled to exert influence in the decision making process through public debate, and dialogue with the representatives they elected or through their capacity to organize themselves; or exercise public power by holding public office at different levels of administrations- local, regional national and international (Abdi, 2007). The realization of the effective participation in both women and men in the political and decision making process in an equal manner is the obligation of the state (Alvarez, 2012).

The exclusion of women in political participation and decision making processes was one inherited by human history. Even when democracy had birth ancient Athens in 5th century BC, the exclusion of women from political participation and decision making was existed. The Athenians women had no a right to vote or to participate in the democratic process and even they had not considered as a citizens. The only Athenian men had a right to attend meetings of the assembly, a meeting of the citizen body which was

called more than 40 times per year (Bentley et al., 1995). The absence of women in the involvement of the decisions of the assembly had deprived them to have a right to speak and to vote at the assembly. This also prevented from them to have a chance to directly determine what the law should be (Alvarez, 2012).

The expert group meeting analyzed the current situation of women in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on women’s political participation and leadership at the international, national, regional and local levels. It discussed the conditions that facilitate women’s representation in decision-making processes within the context of current socio-economic and political transformations, and examined the linkages between women’s presence in decision-making and their impact on the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into policies and programmes. The expert group meeting adopted policy recommendations to advance women’s participation and leadership through, inter alia, capacity-building, coalition-building and gender-sensitive institutional policies, programmes and mechanisms, based on the identification of the most promising practices and lessons learned to date. The report that follows is the outcome of deliberations of the independent experts (AUVINEN, 2011).

Politics affects the survival and success of women in politics. The nature of politics determines whether women are included or excluded in politics. Traditionally, politics is considered a male affair and women tend to be excluded from the political sphere. Political activity is restricted to the public arena and highly discouraged against the private sphere of family life. Politics, culture of formal political structures, and political parties dominated by male hinders the participation of women in politics (Bari, 2005). Often, such male dominated parties have a masculine approach to issues of national importance while ignoring the perspective of women in the parties (Ndlovu, 2013).

Due to the gender biases of the male leadership in political, women are rarely elected to positions of power within the party structures. This minimizes the chances of women getting to power in top political positions. It is also observed (Bari, 2005) that the degree of democratization and democratic framework affect the participation and success of women in politics. Secular democracies offer more space for women to succeed in politics than countries whereby religion shapes the politics and democracy (Paxton et al., 2007; and Reynolds, 1999).

Women have limited time to participate in politics due to the roles of the female gender in production and reproduction they are expected to fulfill their primary roles as mothers and wives and the resultant domestic duties of caring for the home before doing anything else. These leaves them limited time to politic and rise in the political arena and take top political positions. Shvedova (2007) suggests that women carry a disproportionate share of domestic work making it difficult to participate in politics. Huang et al., (2004) concurs that women the household demands and family responsibility is immense on women which interfere with their political ambition. According to Jennings & McDougald (2000), unlike women, men take sacrifices at home to maintain their work responsibilities persistently face more household demands and family responsibility.

Lack of economic resources is one of the obstacles to women's political participation and electoral processes. It is clear that women face specific and diverse economic and financial challenge. As you can see relationship between economic resources and electoral processes reveal important difference in between women and men candidates. Women's unequal access to economic resources restricts to manage their political activities (Nagaad, 2007). Both men and women rely on direct resource and indirect resources of their campaign. Direct resources can be characterized as a cash money that comes from private donors, political parties, state budgets, subsidies or candidate's personal own resources.

Margaret Roberts attended Hunting tower Road Primary School and won a scholarship to Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School.[6] Her school reports showed hard work and continual improvement; her extracurricular activities included the piano, field hockey, poetry recitals, swimming and walking. She was head girl in 1942–1943 In her upper sixth year she applied for a scholarship to study chemistry at Somerville College, Oxford, but she was initially rejected and was offered a place only after another candidate withdrew. Roberts arrived at Oxford in 1943 and graduated in 1947 with Second-Class Honours in the four-year Chemistry Bachelor of Science degree, specialising in X-ray crystallography under the supervision of Dorothy Hodgkin. Her dissertation was

on the structure of the antibiotic gramicidin. Working on chemistry, she was already thinking towards law and politics. She was reportedly more proud of becoming the first Prime Minister with a science degree than the first female Prime Minister (Davies, 2008,)

Conceptual of study Gender equality is a global crucial topic all the time. Nowadays, it is visible that women still suffer gender discrimination in various fields. It is necessary to study women's contribution to society development. Using cross-country and panel regressions, I investigate whether gender gaps in political participation affect economic growth during the period 1991-2013 using data up to 30 countries in Asia. I update and specify the results of previous studies on the link between female political participation and economic development and concentrate the analysis on Asian panel. The result shows that in recent years, female political participation fosters economic growth in Asia (Marumoagae, 2008).

## METHODOLOGY

This study used quantitative approach and used explanatory research, the research population was 80 respondents from ministry of women & women organizations in Mogadishu and they are a good source of information to analyze this topic, The sample size of this study was 66 respondents carried out from target population using Slovic's Formula. Questioner was used to collect data from the chosen sample, and analyzed by Statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 20.

## FINDINGS

The first objective of this study was to identify the relationship between political challenges and on women political participation in public sector in Mogadishu, Somalia. The correlation between political constraints and women political participation as table 4-6 shows is 0.243. It tells us that a one level increase of women participation leads to 0.243 lower political constraints. The probability of this correlation coefficient occurring by chance is .001. This coefficient shows that there is a statistically significant weak positive relationship between economic constraints and political participation.

The second objective of this study was to examine the effect of culture constraints on political system public sector in Mogadishu, Somalia. The correlation between culture challenges on political participation and women political growth public sector in Mogadishu as table 4-7 shows is 0.469\*\* with probability of 0.000. This coefficient shows that there is a weak positive relationship between culture constraints and women participation. ( $r = .469$ ,  $p > .05$ ). However, there is a moderate positive statistically

relationship between network culture constraints and women political participation.

The third objective was to assess the effect of economic constraints on women political system in some selected public sector in Mogadishu, Somalia. The correlation between economic constraints and women political system as table 4-8 shows is .446 it states that a one level increase of economic constraints of women participation leads to 0.446 decreases women political participation. The probability of this correlation coefficient occurring by chance is .001. This coefficient shows that there is a statistically significant weak positive relationship between economic constraints and women political system in Mogadishu.

### RECOMMENDATION

The researcher suggests the following recommendation:

1. Directors of organizations should pay some attention on women's participation on their organizational performance also should check other factors that can effects organizations.
2. Political system of women chances and work performance should organize public sector commitment like employment people to attract organizational managers on behave of them if they face some problems such as political.
3. Economics development should not only think about resource or money but take into a factors and thinks that there are other factors that can affect their performance.
4. Adequate Political system of women and security framework could encourage the use of public sector.

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