

**WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND DECISION MAKING  
IN HARGEISA, SOMALILAND**

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## **DECLARATION**

"This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or any other academic award in any university or institution of learning".

Khaddar Mohamed Ahmed

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPROVAL**

"I certify that this research Report satisfies the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master's Degree of Development Studies in Kampala University".

Ms. Peace Peatrice, Academic Advisor of Kampala University

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DEDICATION**

The Research is dedicated to my beloved Mother, Khadiija Osman Sabban and my wife, Muna Mohamed Du'ale.

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In the name of Allah, the most merciful the most gracious, the researcher thanks Allah the way he has guided to him and given the ability, the knowledge and the wealth to write this thesis.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Of Women
DAW	UN Division for the Advancement of Women
NGO	Non-G overnmental Organizations
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
ICCPR	International Convention on Civil and Political Rights
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End poverty
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations

## **ABSTRACT**

This study determined women's political participation and decision making in Hargeisa Somaliland. The study was guided by the following objectives; the first was to assess women's political participation and decision making in Hargeisa, Somaliland; the second objective was to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of: gender, age, marital status and level of education; the third and fourth objectives was to determine the level of challenges of women's political participation and decision making under the lights of the Somaliland political landscape, and the last objective was to establish the previous failures and how to empower women to participate in politics and decision making process aimed at finding solutions towards political imbalance in Hargeisa Somaliland.

This study was conducted through descriptive analytical survey design by using both quantitative and Qualitative research methods with two parts questionnaire and one part interview schedule for collecting data from the respondents. The study was utilized simple random sampling techniques to select a sample of (128) from a population size of (189). The study utilized frequencies and percentages; tables were used in the presentation of data. In addition to that, data collection was analyzed using themes and explanations while comparing and contrasting the findings with the literature review part of the study.

The researcher found that, women have no consideration in politics, leadership and decision making in Hargeisa Somaliland.

The study concludes that, women face serious challenges in their political careers of decision making, governance and state building in Hargeisa, Somaliland.

The researcher recommends that the government, civil society and women activists need to work towards sensitization and awareness creation among the community to realize the need of the Women to participate in politics and governance. The men need to realize the women's need for political power and change the way they look at the women and the government should embark on activities which support women's political

initiatives. The government should also introduce a quota system to facilitate women's membership in either houses of parliament and local councils. To happen this, the political will of Somaliland government will be required.

The researcher recommends these areas to be further studied including: a study that could analyzes the contribution of civil society organizations in promotion of women political participation and human rights, a study that could assess the policy gaps concerning gender equity in governance and politics for women empowerment and other study could be conducted in the field concerning implication of culture on women's political participation and decision making.

# CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction of the study

Politics is very important for many parties of human life. Mostly it is imperative for the existence of statehood and the way in which people interact-how they make decisions and settle disputes. Because people live groups in groups, there is a need to make decisions-about how power or available resources to the group are to be shared out for example or how conflicts which arise within the group are to be solved. The study of politics is the study of the how such decisions are made. It may also be the study of how such decisions should be made. Thus, we can define politics in two ways; first politics can be considered as the study of power and secondly as the study of the conflicts resolutions (Bentley, robson, grant, & robberts., 1995). To put in other words a modern philosopher, Michael Oakeshott, who was attracted by the original Greek roots of the word *politiki*, meaning the affairs of the state, defined politics as a merely organization of the running of the state (McNaughton, 2001).Politics relates the power struggle of the state. It is thus, concerned with power and the way in which power is distributed among the society (or groups). While power is mostly obviously held by the government and its agents (Bentley et al., 1995).

However, the participation of the decision making and political power of the state has an important paramount for every citizen of the state. Political participation is “the active engagement by individuals and groups with the governmental processes that affect their lives”. This encompasses both involvements in decision making and acts of opposition. Acts of active engagement include conventional political participation (such as voting, standing for office and companioning for political party) and unconventional (acts, which may be legitimate (such as signing a petition and attending a peaceful demonstration), or illegal (such as violent protest and refusing to pay tax) (Charles & Tayo, n.d). Political participation is thus, those voluntary actions through which citizens seek to influence the making of public policy.

Political participation in fact matters the life of every individual human being both men and women. Recognizing the essence of the political participation for every individual human being the United Nation (UN) exerted its human rights core instruments and recognized it as a fundamental political right.

According UN publications (1990.para. 147) the right to participation is the right of individuals, groups and peoples to seek decisions collectively and to choose their own representatives organizations, and have freedom of democratic action, free from interference. It is a core element of a democratic system based on consent of the people, and more importantly it enables the individuals to fulfill their obligations toward their society in holding discussions and exchange of opinions to determine the responsiveness of the development process to the needs and particularly interests of all segments of the society (Abdi, 2007). The important of the right of the participation as a means for the individual to involve in the political affairs and decision making process of his/her society is recognized and protected in article 25 of the international convention on civil and political rights (ICCPR).

In excising 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.

Although, Somaliland is not internationally recognized as a sovereign state, it has a duty to observe and respect the UN international conventions on human rights including the ICCPR. Similarly Somaliland state is under international legal obligation to observe all treaties and agreements entered in to its predecessor state of the former Somalia. In this regard, the Somaliland is under international legal obligation to ensure

the equal participation of men and women in the political affairs and decisions making process of the country in all levels.

Somaliland constitution is based on democracy and multipart system and guaranteed Somaliland women an equal political rights and decision making with men (Article 22 of Somaliland Constitution (2001)). Accordingly, the constitution postulates the equality and prohibited all forms of gender-based discriminations (Article 8 (1 & 2) of Somaliland Constitution (2001)).

In this study, the paper will focus on the women's political status in Somaliland. It is apparent that women are one of the politically marginalized social groups. They have no active role in the key positions within the bureaucracy. They have no political representation in both parliamentary and local councils. Though many efforts were made by certain women pressures groups, they ended up in vain when it causes to political sense.

Without jumping to conclusion we should study the main factors that caused women's failures to take an active role in public affairs. The research should make profound analysis in this subject and test all the ingredients of the causing factors in to the practical laboratory of Somaliland political system.

Diagnosing the symptoms of the problem will leads us to the curable solutions. So, study should present more information, relating to the practical and theoretical composition of the Somaliland politics.

## 1.2 Background of the study

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 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

The other European countries women had neither a right to political participation nor involve the decision making and public affairs before 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the beginning of the 19 centuries Britain electoral system was far from democratic. The Britain electoral system was male adult suffrage and did not provide the means for fair and equal representations. The right to vote and be voted was restricted to men. Women had no a role in the political sphere of the country. This had result the rise of the suffragists (women campaigned to win the vote) (Bentley et al., 1995).

Despite the efforts of the chartists, a mass movement of mainly working people who demanded universal suffrage in the late 1830s and 1840s, it was not until 1867 that the second reform Act was passed. Just after the end of the First World War Britain was fully recognized the women's right to political participation and decision making process (Bentley et al., 1995).

After the establishment of the UN in 1946, there is an increasing recognition among international community of women's historic exclusion from structures of power. The UN has been made a global commitment to redress gender imbalance in politics. Thus, to enhance the political participation of women the UN has been adopted several instruments recognizing the women's right to equally participate in politics.

Most notable one was the universal declaration of human rights (UDHR), which in its Article 21 recognized the right of every one, including both women and men, to take part in the government of their country, directly or through freely chosen representative. To enforce these important rights the UN adapted the convention on civil and political rights, which is legally obliged the state parties to ensure the effectiveness of women's political participation and public affairs without discrimination on the ground of, among others, sex. The UN also adopted a special convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination of women (CEDAW), which elaborates the nature of women's political rights and the steps required to promote greater equality between women and men in this area.

Although these efforts were become fruitful in some areas, women are not still having an enough space in the political involvements. This is true in many countries of Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa as UN Human Rights Committee has found that "the right to participate in the conduct of political affairs is not fully implemented everywhere on an equal basis...."(UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights & International Bar Association, 2003, p.508).

In African countries women have lacked an enough space in both political engagement and decision making process. Although the whole African constitutions and laws enshrined provision that recognize the right of women to equally participate in politics, African women is the most disadvantageous and marginalized groups in political arena. Because this the result of several underlined and perceptible factors. One of the most remarkable factors was the African customary and traditional laws which were based on the patriarchy supremacy (Abdo & Abegaz, 2009). For example the African traditional assembly leaders were male dominant; male has exercised the power of the law making, decision or policy making and leadership of the African society traditionally and even religiously. Women had neither decision nor had the right to sit and speak or vote at the assembly.

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, thought many African nations made affirmative action's to enabled women's equal participation in politics. According Quadri Nigeria (and other African countries) lives in a patriarchy society where the women's place is said to be in the kitchen. She can't go against the wish of her husband. And within political groups, the woman is seen as a threat that must not be allowed to thrive (Charles & Tayo, n.d).

In Ethiopia for example the participation of women in Regional State Councils is very low. The Percentage female members in Regional State Councils in Ethiopia are only 27.61%. While when we are looking in regional wise, the Somali region women are made 3.27% of the total (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009).

The challenges of political participation and decision making of Somaliland women are same as those faced the rest of the African women as mention above. For example Somaliland 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.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

To begin with one cannot ignore that politics, governance and decision making are some of the key areas of focus in development. In this regard, development to be perfect and sustainable needs wider participation from all segments of the society including Hargeisa Somaliland women who are currently uninvolved in the political affairs of the state. They do not have sufficient seats in local governments, parliamentary houses, judiciary and the cabinet houses as well. For instance if you look in to the result of 2005 parliamentary (House of Representatives) elections, you will see that women won only two seats out of 82, which currently one of them was missing her membership of the house due to her failure to attended the required number of sessions of the house. In the House of Elders, which composes 82 seats, women have no seats today although there was a one woman in this house but later she resigned in 2012. Women are also politically underrepresented in local elections. In the recently 2012 Somaliland local council elections women have won

only 10 seats out of 375 local council seats of the whole country. All the 25 seats in Hargeisa local council held by male members. And in the house of cabinet there are only four women out of 46 cabinet members.

Somaliland government has not give in any attention to the women's political challenges though, certain women associations and international community addressed the absence of women's active role in the political process and despite of suggested quota to be reserved for women in the house of represent, there is no sign of improvement.

In this research we would like to come up with possible solutions to the existing theoretical and practical challenges, and to study all the inhibitive factors under the lights of actual political environment.

The current women's political status is improvable. The solutions depend on perceptions and the ways we understand the current political problem. We should not confuse with the means or polish the structural gaps with delusive colours if in order to react short term political backlashes. The solutions pleads more than that, it needs to be the common end that we collectively seek regardless our sex, gender, race, colour, or political afflictions.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

This study intends to explore the women's political and decision making challenges of Somaliland political landscape.

#### **1.5 Research objectives**

##### **1.5.1 General Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to assess the women's political participation and decision making under the Somaliland political landscape.

##### **1.5.2 Specific objectives of the study**

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of: gender, age, Marital status and level of education
2. To determine the level of challenges of women's political participation under the lights of the Somaliland political landscape;
3. To determine the challenges facing women in political decision making in Hargeisa , Somaliland ;
4. To determine the previous failures and how to empower women to participate the politics and decision making process aimed at finding solutions towards political imbalance in Hargeisa Somaliland.

## **1.6 Research Questions of the Study**

This study will answer the following questions:

1. What extent do the women participate and contribute in decision making process about matters of the state governance in Hargeisa Somaliland?
2. What are the levels of women's political participation challenges under the lights of the Somaliland political landscape?
3. What are the challenges facing women in political decision making in Hargeisa Somaliland?
4. What are the previous failures and how to empower women to participate the politics and decision making process in Hargeisa Somaliland?

## **1.7 Scope of the study**

### **1.7.1 Content Scope**

This study on the challenges of political participation and decision making of women in Hargeisa Somaliland was conducted through descriptive analytical survey design. The study was specifically investigated the women's political participation and

decision making challenges, and the previous failures and how to empower women to participate in politics and decision making process aimed at to solutions towards political imbalance in Hargeisa Somaliland.

### **1.7.2 Geographical scope**

Geographically, the study was undertaken at Hargeisa capital city of Somaliland. This city of study was chosen for research because the accessibility, time and economic factors. And also it is a city where all women political organizations movements are actively operating and this facilitates getting the necessary information concerning the matter under investigation.

### **1.7.3 Time scope**

The study was covered the period between 2002 and 2013. During these periods Somaliland has held five political elections, although it has not got international recognition from the international community. However, in these politically elected positions the participation of women has been comparably low. That is why the researcher strategically selected these time frames.

## **1.7 Definitions of Key Terms**

**Politics:** refers the necessary involvement of power struggle of the state and influence and the way in which power is distributed among the male and female in the process of decisions making.

**Political participation:** refers the active involvement and engagement by individuals both women and men with political process that affect their lives. The act of active engagements includes voting, standing for office, joining of political party or to take part the political campaigns of the political parties and 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.

**The right to political participation:** refers to citizen's rights to seek to influence public affairs without any discrimination, to seek decisions collectively and to choose their own representatives organizations, to vote and be voted in elections, to exercise political powers such as legislative executive, judiciary and all other public administrative powers and to influence the formulation and implementation of policy at international, national, regional and local levels and have freedom of democratic action, free from interference.

**Women's political participation:** refers to women's ability to participate equally with men, at all stages, and in all aspects of political life and decision making process.

**Decision making:** refers the ability to stand a given position in two or more matters on the table.

## **1.8 Significance of the Study**

This study provides sufficient information on the Challenges of women in Political Participation and Decision Making, Hargeisa Somaliland. It will also be a reference for many policy makers, researchers, students, NGOs and even other people who have close interest on the subject matter. Specifically the study may be benefiting some of the following:

1. Government of Somaliland in particular the Ministries of Social Affairs, Nation Development and Planning and National Human Rights Commission to take national affirmative actions to empower women's equal political participation and decision making.
2. Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), both national and international
2. Researchers on the subject matter will also refer this study as a literature review.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will highlight the review of literature that relates to the challenges on woman's political participation and decision making, in terms of related studies for previous researchers and conceptual frame work which is related to this study.

#### **2.2 The Challenges of Women's Political Participation under the Lights of Somaliland Political Landscape**

In the pre-colonial Somaliland people were not under one political authority that governs all the clans and there was no clan that was superior to the others. It was vertical society before the arrival of British colony. There was no police, no soldiers, and no governing palace. People's affairs were run by charismatic traditional leaders who used unwritten social norms as a means of problem-solving mechanism.

The introduction of formal bureaucratic political authority to the Somaliland peoples commenced with British rule. It is unquestionable for someone to say women's exclusion from the political participation and decision making was formalized by the colonial administration. The composition of the first advisory council containing 48 members which was established in 1946 was completely male members. Another worst historical evidence that can be taken as an example of women's discrimination from exercising equal political rights, was the first historical ordinance formed for regulating the electoral process of the legislative council. This 1958 ordinance excluded women from voting and being voted. It was the first historical Somaliland political election which was based on the male suffrage, although Somaliland was not considered as independent state and the whole electoral system was in the hands of the protectorate governor and his district commissioner (Somaliland Protectorate Annual Volumes of Law 1958).

As a formal politics took shape after independence in 1960, political representation was based on the clan system and men continued to occupy that domain, ironically it was under the repressive regime when Somali women for the first time took political positions in the public arena. But even then, women's role remains minimal and few taken positions were given to them (Warsame, 2000).

After the collapse of Siyad Barre's regime in 1991, the whole country faced a new situation of political vacuum when all the institutions of the government disintegrated. So the people organized themselves along clan lines to cope with the new political trend. In this regard, clan had become the only social unit that can be used as the bases of the reconciliation process. Though, indirectly, women took part in reconciliatory process and all efforts of nation building, they were not included in the negotiating delegate that was selected from the Somaliland settling clans. They attended these conferences as the cheer groups who were there to encourage clan leaders in to peace-making. After the reconciliatory process was completed, the country resorted to the clan-based political system in which women had no representation (Bacaluul, 2009).

Up today, it is apparent that women are not represented in the governing bodies of the Somaliland, though the country is claiming that it had politically shifted from the clan-based to multiparty system. As you look in the composition of women in the elected councils, both national and local level, you would see the absence of the female voices or drowned by the male tunes.

### **2.2.1 Cultural Factors**

Somaliland society can be described as a male dominated patria-lineal and patriarchal society. Traditionally, women are regarded as the backbone of society, primarily because they are responsible for the biological reproduction of the lineage and interclan alliances. A women's position in a Somaliland society is ambiguous. When a married woman still belongs to her father's clan and her behavior can reflect on the honor of her father's lineage. Her male relatives are committed to protect her and to claim compensation if she is mistreated or murdered. On the other hand she is expected to be loyal to her husband's clan to which she is linked through her sons. Traditionally,

women have no a right to participate in the clan-decision making, because they are not considered as a permanent member in any clan.

One to understand the political status of women, he/she should review the social status of women in the realm of culture. In war-like society were men are used as the recruitment and the force that can be used to the potential interclan hostilities, women have lost their merits. Historically, clans hostilities that were arising out water and pasture disputes were common. While there were also sporadic clashes among the clans resulting from the camel robberies made by certain armed groups. Camels were known as a property that belongs to men not to women. Camels were regarded as the most valuable belongings to the clan, so women could not be entitled to claim. Caring and milking them were also assigned to the men only. This shows you women's status in the clan politics.

Historically, however, women are known, accepted, and expected to exert political influence indirectly through their husbands and their kinsmen. There are legends like that of Araweello, which warn of the dangers of women assuming political leadership. Others (likes the wives of the warrior and the leader (Wiil Waal) suggest that women denied direct participation in the political process, can and do exert political power through men, particularly their husbands. In contemporary politics, the wives of Presidents since independence in 1960 also seem to wield political power (Academy for Peace and Development, 2002).

Though women claim that they were one of the bricks that made the peace which is the foundation of the Somali statehood, their political pedigree has been ignored. While the issue of women's political rights and roles in Somaliland is deeply rooted in the realm of culture. Women were often excluded from exercising political sphere, and even from the discussions of the clan issues. A cultural belief in male superiority and greater ability to leadership assigns women inferior positions from a very early age (Nagaad, 2007).

Traditionally, Somali culture is based on the concept of patriarchy and is manifest by male rule. The patriarchy as a system of male domination shapes women's relationship in politics. It transforms male and females into men and women and constructs the

hierarchy of gender relations where men are privileged and women are subordinated. Andrienne Rich defines patriarchy as:

*“ A familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play in which the female I everywhere subsumed under the male (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009, p. 17)*

The gender role ideology is used as an ideological tool by patriarchy to place women within the private arena of home as mothers and wives and men in the public sphere (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009). This is one of the vital factors that shape the level of women's political participation in Somaliland.

Apart from the cultural patriarchy, the nature of politics is another attributable factor for the inclusion or exclusion of women in politics. If we look the nature of Somali politics one will understand that it is clan and tribalism based system. In the essence of this political culture, it is apparent that the system supports the men's involvement in political system and political sphere. The domination of men in political practices and decision making processes can be attributed to the influence of tribalism which is based on gender discriminating and prevents women to get an access to participate political life and conduct of public affairs. As of constitutional right every citizen has the right to stand as a candidate and to be elected in the election process both at the national and local levels (Article 22 of Somaliland Constitution). In practice, however, a citizen who desires to be elected in the election process must have the support of his/her tribe. The acceptance and support of the tribe is a litmus test for the political parties to include some body in their candidacy list for the election. Accordingly, it is only a few numbers of women that will stand as candidates in the election process: this assertion is proved by the fact that, in the election of the parliamentary (House of Peoples Representatives) held on 29 September 2005 only seven were women out of the 246 candidates; and out of the 82 candidates who won their seats in the parliament that emerged, only two were women (this was 2.44%). And in 2002 local elections only two women are elected out of 400 councilors (Abdi, 2007).

In the same way, women political participation in the latest 2012 local council elections is comparably very low as shown in the below tables.

**Table 1:** Gender of Candidates (National Level)

Gender	Number	Percentage (%)
Male	2088	92.4
Female	172	7.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2260</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Liza and Sa'id for Interpeace (2012). Somaliland Local Council Elections in 2012: Candidate's Demographic Analysis

**Table 2:** Gender distribution of Candidates by Political party/association

No	Party/Association	Male #	Percentage %	Female #	Percentage %	Total #
1	Umadda	305	91.0%	30	9.0%	335
2	Ucid	307	91.6%	28	8.4%	335
3	Kulmiye	317	94.6%	18	5.4%	335
4	Dalsan	304	92.7%	24	7.3%	328
5	Rays	240	93.4%	17	6.6%	257
6	waddani	313	93.4%	22	6.6%	335
7	Xaqsoor	302	90.1%	33	9.9%	335
<b>Total</b>		<b>2088</b>		<b>172</b>		<b>2260</b>

Source: Liza and Sa'id for Interpeace (2012). Somaliland Local Council Elections in 2012: Candidate's Demographic Analysis

The traditional of tribalism based on gender does not only discriminate women in the election process, but also disfavors them in the appointment or nomination of political positions and public offices (Abdi, 2007). The truthfulness of this proposition could be inferred from the fact that there is only one woman out of 40 cabinet members in 2007.

### 2.2.2 Religious Factor

In Islam both men and women are entitled equality before the law and the courts of the law. Both men and women are accountable for their deeds before the law. Like men, women are entitled to seek justice. Islam asserts both genders are honored and

dignified, and they are equal in the sight of Allah, as they have same religious and moral duties. In addition, they both the same consequence of their deeds:

*“For Muslim men and women and for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men And women who engage much in Allah's remembrance for them has Allah prepared Forgiveness and great reward “(Qur'an 33:35).*

In Islamic context, a woman's right to political participation and decision-making remains to be open to question. Some Islamic scholars argue that women's are religiously required to undertake the important task of taking care of her home and her offspring. The Koranic verse which say *“And stay quietly in your houses (Qur'an32:33)*, is used as the defense of their argument.

It is agreed that women are attended the mosque and took part in religious services on feast days. They actively participated in discussion and were free to question, confront and challenge speakers. This practice continued even in 'Umar's time — when he was caliph. It is reported that when 'Umar attempted to limit the dowry in a khutbah in the mosque, a woman challenged his ruling and 'Umar conceded that "the woman is correct and 'Umar is wrong". In the light of such historical evidence as the lawfulness of women's right to participate in the choice of rulers, in public issues, in consultation(shura),in administrative positions, and even on the battlefield. Such involvement in political affairs was conducted without losing sight of the complementary priorities of both genders, and without violating Islamic guidelines of modesty and virtue. The Prophet was often advised by his wife Umm Salamah. (Academy for Peace and Development, 2002)

In contemporary Muslim societies, scholars differ on the appropriate level of women's participation in community activities. Religious leaders, officials of the key branches of the government, intellectuals and civil society leaders of each country need to review and decide on strategies for women's participation in the community, taking

into consideration their national welfare and the social and economic settings (Academy for Peace and Development, 2002).

As a result of these religious conflicts over the concept of women's political participation, Islam is underlined as a realistic obstacle that lies in front of women's political ambition. As the Pettygrove who studied the obstacle to women's political empowerment in Jordan concluded and said that:

*“Religious play an important role in shaping the beliefs and actions of jordinean women, and there is a lack of true questioning of the values prescribed through Islam and Jordan. Islam in Jordan has been co-opted by patriarchy and supports women in roles of subordination to men. The system of Islamic values creates realm within which women are protected but not allowed to exercises complete power or agency. Much like the family structure, this means that women feel content with the established gender roles, and do not feel that they are being deprived anything. Islamist political factions have supported women's rights but only within the framework of conservative Islamic interpretations, and thus there is a little space within Islam for women to achieve strategic empowerment.”*

Hence, the interpretational debates over koranic and prophets statements had turned women's political aspirations in to skeptical concept. Many women were influenced by the perceptions of Islamic scholars who view women's political involvement as a forbidden act that ought to be avoided. Though, Islamic question cannot be exaggerated to the extent that culture affected women's quest for political power.

### **2.2.3 Economic Factor**

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. Indirect resources are usually made by individuals, political parties, association or clan-based constituencies that donate on behalf of a candidate. This money is more freely designated in to pay for the candidates campaign needs.

Having access to direct and indirect financial resources critically effect women's decision to run for the office. In Somaliland, women tend to be reluctant to become political candidates for a variety of economic reasons. This including investing family resources, which they do not feel they individually own, asking for credit or risking their own or the family's capital, paying for domestic/caring work they will not be able to do, leaving their jobs and reentering the labour market in cases where they do not get elected.

On the other hand women's lack of capital is caused their exclusion from the leadership because they are neither head of communities, tribes (traditional clan leaders) nor kinship groups and social organizations (Adamu& Mekonnen, 2009). Moreover the women's lack of clan financial supports is another constraints factor of women's political participation.

### **2.3 The Challenges Facing Women in Political Decision Making Under Somaliland Political Landscape**

Before we make further discussion the challenges facing women in decision-making process under Somaliland, we should define the leadership concepts under the lights of gender ideals.

Historically leadership was believed as masculinity traits. The notion that men make better leaders than women is still common today. Although the number of female leaders has increased, they are often named as an afterthought. According Haggard, the societal conventions regarding gender and leadership traditionally exclude women, and top leadership is viewed as a masculine domain. In African cultures, it is believed that men lead and women follow (Kiamba, 2008).

Grove and Montgomery (2000) defined leaders as people “who provide vision and meaning for an institution and embody the ideals toward which the organization strives. Though From such perspective, leaders are alike and genderless, women’s abilities are overshadowed by clouds of doubt. As apparent in many situations, gender, more than age, experience or competence determines the role (position) one is assigned. (Kiamba, 2008. Para. 3).

It is agreed that women’s leadership is different from the men’s one. Their leadership had demonstrated more flexibility and participatory approach as well as for more power and information sharing. In other word it is more democratic, more sensitive than men. Some scholars hold that women are better at conflict management, have better listening skills and show more tolerance and empathy. Instead of considering their leadership characteristics as positive traits, it was stereotyped as a weakness (Kiamba, 2008).

In politics, women have been marginalized because monopolize the decision making structures and are in majority. Inherent patriarchal structures that pervade lives and cultures of many societies are identified as the underlying problems that kept women from decision-making process. In many societies women are still assigned secondary place by the prevailing customs and values. As indicated in African context, traditional

beliefs and cultural attitudes regarding the role and status of women in society are still prevalent and many women are part of this system finding it difficult to dislocate from this culture and tradition lest they be ostracized. Despite women's education and entry into the job market, the woman's role is typically one of homemaker. The man, on the other hand, is bread winner, head of household and has a right to public life. Confining women's identity to the domestic sphere is one of the barriers to women's entry into politics and politics by its nature catapults one into public life. Generally, cultural attitudes are hostile to women's involvement in politics (Kiamba, 2008).

It has been argued that women themselves are often reluctant to run for public positions and this is partly attributed to cultural prohibitions on women speaking in public or going to public places. Political campaigning requires that one travel extensively, spend nights away from home, go into bars, and for women it means meeting men. All of these things are not easily accepted for women in many African societies. Women who vie for public office have to consider the risk of being labeled 'loose' or 'unfit' as mothers and wives, and being socially stigmatized. Such considerations make many women shy away from politics, and positions that put them in the public eye (Kiamba, 2008).

In other public arenas, women's access to leadership positions has been hindered by discrimination and stereotyping. Women are more or less persecuted for seeking an executive position. This is largely due to society's attitude toward appropriate male and female roles. In their discussion on barriers women face in leadership positions, Grove and Montgomery (2000) say that compared to men, women receive little or no encouragement to seek leadership positions. There are also few social networks (formal and informal) for women such as membership in clubs, resulting in a lack of recognition that leads to advancement (Kiamba, 2008).

Administrative/leadership positions require hard work, long hours and are stressful. For women, this burden is added on to their child-care, home, and family responsibilities, a phenomenon referred to as the 'double shift. These observations are also true of women in higher education. In addition to issues of family responsibility that make it difficult for women to advance, cultural beliefs about the roles of men and women inhibit women's advancement to top leadership as much as it does in politics.

Some scholars pointed out the all too common statement (often not taken seriously) that women at senior level positions are not always supportive of other women and tend to want to maintain the status quo. Of course, institutional culture and micro politics do act as barriers for women implicitly or explicitly influencing the research environment that ultimately breeds professors and executive leaders (Kiamba, 2008).

However, when we considering in Somaliland women, male domination of politics and Somaliland clan based politics are the main factors that inhibit their political decision making. Most of the political decision makers are men while women are minority in a decision making processes and feel loneliness. The majority of men in the participation of the decision making had attributed to undermine the women's contribution in the political discussion meetings. According Amina Milgo, the executive member of Kulmiye political party the most challenges faced women who hold decision making position are ignorance of their contributions and lack of support during meetings. This is due to Somali traditional culture where men do not ask women for advice because men have no confidence in women's capabilities as said Nimo, who was one of Kulmiye Party women candidates in 2005 parliamentary election (Nagaad, 2007).

Also the way that decisions are taken and meetings are arranged is not conducive environment for women to participate in a decision making processes. For example in a work committee, which are often turned in to khat chewing sessions are difficulty sittings for Women to participate in the discussions (Nagaad, 2007).

Somaliland clan based politics are not supported women to hold public offices. Somali women have not traditionally space in political power and no clan leadership responsibilities. women have not represented a clan, since women in between clans of birth and clans of marriage as said Fadumo Suudi who was the former Somaliland Ministry of Family Affairs (Nagaad, 2007) . For this reason the clan elders and the community themselves are not considering women to have represented them in the political positions. Therefore the clans are not accounting the women's political seats and that is why a woman who holds (whether selected, nominated or appointed) a public office has not get a support from the public or her clan.

On the other hand women's limited political experience is another main obstacle that faced woman who fills with the political positions. Hodan Abdi, who was a one of the Udub political party women candidates in 2005 parliamentary election was stated that "women lack political experience and mistrust amongst women is prevalent" (Nagaad, 2007). The absence of women's competency and the required political skills to participate and influence the outcomes of the political decisions are made them to have no voice or self- assertions on the decision making table.

In Somali culture women play supportive role to men and lack confidence- their self esteem is consequently low. Women are not expected to demand space where there are men (Nagaad, 2007). Thus, the women's traditional role hinders to take part in the discussions and to express their positions. As such women neither exert their political view nor made their self assertions during political meetings and discussions.

Women are also lacked to political exposures and communications that are enabling them to influence political, economic, social decisions and processes. Women have no access to information which are necessary to their leadership positions. Men do not want to share any information about them and are not similarly willing to share with their political information, decisions and views.

Women also find it hard to participate in political discussions and decisions due to the limited time available to them because of their dual roles in the reproductive sphere. With their primary roles as mothers and wives and competing domestic responsibilities and care worked, they are left with little time to participate in politics (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009).

On the other side, political discussions or meetings are mostly occurs in odd times which are not favorable women to attend and take part. For example, Meetings of councils or parliamentary sessions are held in odd timings conflicting with women's domestic responsibilities (Nagaad, 2007).

## **2.4 The previous failures of the government and Empowerment of Women to Participate Politics and Decision Making Process**

### **2.4.1 The previous failures and political attempt made by the Somaliland government in respect to women's political empowerment**

Somaliland women's political participation incapacitates and hinders the socio-cultural, political, religious, and economic factors as stated in the above. The government of Somaliland by acting in response with these factors was attempted several times in different steps that pave way the women's equal opportunity in political and public affairs. One of these attempted was the proposal of women's political quota suggested by Somaliland House of Representatives in 2008. This promotion strategy for women's participation in politics was put pressures by the Somaliland women's political organization movements such as a women political forum (WFP).

The quota was suggested to be reserved for women in parliamentary make-up and it had become one of the legal contentions that are not solved yet. The house of Guurti (elders) had refused to pass the quota bill on the grounds that it is against article 8(1&2) of the constitution.

In this regard, there is misperception in the part of Guurti. The quota bill was intended to promote women participation in the politics, since they failed to be competitive political stakeholder in the national election. Women's exclusion from political is detriment with democracy as said the former U.S Secretary Clinton in 2011...any democracy that does not include half its population-its women-is contradiction in terms ("Strengthening Women's Rights and Political Participation" 2013).

These failures however, due to misperceptions of women's rights in the constitution and religion and the Somali culture which based on male rule concepts. These misperceptions are totally contrary with the philosophy of participatory democracy, promoted by the French political philosopher, Alexi de Tocqueville who attested that "the individuals citizen participation (*in equitable manner (italics mine)*), is essential to the survival of a democracy, and that democracy is undermined when citizens are incapable of influencing government (*political (italics mine)*) decisions. A state that

ignores the needs and interests of large sections (women) of the population in...  
(*politics and decision (italics mine)*) making is not an effective state.”

Another worth mentioned factors that handicaps the Somaliland women’s political participation and decision making is the lack of government commitment towards the creating a conducive environment for the inclusion of women in politics and decision making and the absence of the both gender policy and political ambitions of women.

#### **2.4.2 Empowerment of Women to Participate Politics and Decision Making Process**

The women empowerment means to enable them, at par with men, for mobilizing the provisions, environment and capacity in order to use all the rights and authorities like economic, social, political, religious and cultural fields (Nepal, 2009). Here the condition of women’s enabling political participation and access to the decision making positions has been considered as ‘political empowerment’. The women’s enabling to exercise their political rights was emphasizing by the fourth world conference on women held in Beijing in 1995. The conference affirmed the empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of women’s social, economic, and political status as essential for the achievement of both transparent and accountable government and administration and sustainable development in all areas of life. It also postulated the equal political participation of women and men and its importance in strengthening and promotion of proper functioning democracy. In this respect, the women’s equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the general advancement of women. Women’s equal participation in decision making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women’s interests to be taking into account. Without active participation of women’s perspectives at all level in decision making, the goals of equality and development thus, cannot be achieved (The UN Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995, para.181).

However, to empower women, the government and other international and national institutions should adapt means enabling women to equal political participations.

These may include the adoption of women's career development programmes to ensure that women have equal access to technical and leadership training. Since woman's leadership skills strengthening her self-esteem and can encourage to take decision making positions and self-assertions. The building and strengthen solidarity among women through information, education and sensitization activities and advocacy at all levels to enable women to influence political, economic, social decisions, processes and systems are among the affirmative actions that government is required to do in order to empower women's political decision making(The UN Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995, para.194).

The Constitution of the Republic of Somaliland by recognizing the importance of women's empowerment to enable equal participation in public life is guaranteeing the enjoyment of equal rights and freedoms of women and men and obliged the Government to encourage, and legislate for, the right of women to be free of practices which are contrary to Sharia and which are injurious to their person and dignity (Article 36 (2) of Somaliland Constitution (2001)). As such to achieve the goal of equal participation of women in politics the government should take steps to change the socio-cultural, political, religious, and economic structural barriers.

Since, Access to education, health and employment is directly linked with women's ability to create space for themselves in politics and development the constitution of Somaliland obliged the government to raise women's level of education, income, welfare of the family, and to open for them vocational, special skills and adult education schools(Article 36 (4) of Somaliland Constitution (2001)).To end this, the government is required to take affirmative action's, which empowered to among others women's political influences and public affairs. These actions may include the allocation of budget for the women's capacity building and to provide them free educational trainings and income generation actions. This enables women to acquire educational competency and required skills of the political leadership.

Women's consciousness of their political rights is another critical element for women's' individual and collective agency. Political consciousness through building transformative communities is one sustainable way to transform politics and development (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009).

A strong women's movement and civil society is another condition of enabling environment that can influence the direction of politics and development in favor of women (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009). Since women's movement raise-up to women's voices in order to be heard and give priority to their political and social needs.

#### **2.4.2.1 The Possible Administrative Tools That Encourages Woman's Political Participation and Decision Making**

The adoption of administrative tools is another effective way that can be empowered women's political participation and decision making processes. These tools are among others the strategies, policies, applicable legislations, awareness raising and directives relating to women's inclusion of the decision making table. One of the effective of these administrative tools is electoral quota, which defines as a mandatory percentage of women candidates for public elections. It emerged as a global fast tract strategy to redress the historic exclusion of women from the formal arena of politics.

There is a clear consensus in the literature that gender quota is an effective tool in addressing women's exclusion and ensuring their presence in formal structure of politics. Rwanda is evidence for the effectiveness of quota. The adoption of quota in Rwanda increases women's representation which makes it the leader of women's representation, with 48.8 percent in the space of women in parliament (UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) 2005). While the lack of quota makes Somaliland women representations in parliament with less than 1 percent (women have 1 seats out of 164 seats to day) and local council representations with 2.83 percent (women have 10 seats out of 375 Somaliland local council and out of the 375 seats for local council members in Somaliland, Hargeisa has 25 seats for competitive elective position of which all are taken up by males during democratic election process).

However, without addressing the structural constraints to women's political exclusion, their inclusion through gender quota cannot lead to an effective representation. Rai has emphasized the same point by arguing that "while quotas are important in addressing the exclusion of women from the public political sphere, they can only form one part of a multi-faceted strategy for empowering women, which must together with increased political participation also involve a redistribution of socio-economic

resources within societies.” Women who lack civil and economic rights are unable to exercise their political rights fully. The gender quotas, therefore, need to be linked with the social and economic redistributive justice in the society (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009).

The gender gap in politics cannot be redressed simply by bringing more women in to the system. But this requires another supportive mechanism such as policy. The formulation of adequate policies and programmes addressing negative customs and practices, which are fosters women’s marginalization and disfavorable political culture, is very essential. The framing and adaption of national gender policy area to including and stressing gender representation in the political system and all public spheres is also administrative tool that empowering and enable women to develop their constituency (Abdi, 2007).

Advocacy, lobbying and awareness initiatives are also one of the effective tools that empowering and enable women to influences political arenas.

## **2.5 OTHER RELATED STUDIES**

It is not only Somaliland women who are politically underrepresented and encountered waves of challenges to get equal political participation, but such setbacks are both international and regional. Under this subtitle, we will take a quick view on the other similar researches that were made under various geopolitical settings.

### **Latin America and the Caribbean**

In all that previous studies, it was figured out that Women rarely participated in the establishment of their governments or the creation of judicial systems, state powers or governmental norms and policies. Until mid-century, women were unable to elect public officials. Women lacked real, effective, viable alternatives for expressing their consent. Furthermore, despite the acquisition of suffrage, women rarely have the option to vote for female, rather than male, representatives because the rules of the political game make women's access to elected positions difficult. The extremely limited presence of female representatives in legislative organs and, consequently, in the process of debating and adopting laws casts doubts on whether women have consented to governance.(Mehrotra, 1998).

Mehrotra (1998) when women's relative position in the political is gauged, it is evident that the social prerequisites for perfect competition do not exist. Because democracy has also been viewed as the system that best permits the expression and satisfaction of individual preferences. It likens the political system to a market wherein candidates freely offer their political positions and citizens freely express their political demands by casting their vote for their preferred political platform or candidate. Democracy requires that men and women have unrestricted access to spaces of power where they can realize their political value and where their individual demands and preferences can be manifested and satisfied.

The research has shed lights to the political settings of Latin America and women's role in that field. It was revealed that, In Latin America and the Caribbean, women's access to the political system is further limited by their conditions of poverty and low educational attainment. Moreover, many women do not identify with politics; they

often seem to reject the prevailing practice of power, authority and leadership. They fear gruelling political campaigns, the aggressive media and the exposure of their private lives. These factors have effectively disenfranchised women in the region. Their formal political participation is often reduced simply to periodic voting in elections (Mehrotra, 1998).

Women's low rank on economic and social indicators is shown in the political system. Representation of Latin American and Caribbean women in high-level forums is disproportionately low. As table 3, reveals, very few women have attained the status of head of state or government, all of them during the last quarter of the century. Women are practically absent in the deliberative political bodies that influence the development programmes in the region. The system of proportionality is a better guarantor of women's representation as permanent actors in civil society (Mehrotra, 1998).

**Table 3:** Female Heads of State and Government in the Twentieth Century in Latin America and the Caribbean (as of 1994)

<b>Country</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Years</b>
Argentina	Isabel Martínez de Perón	July 1974 - March 1976
Bolivia	Lidia Gueiler	Nov. 1979 - July 1980
Haití	Eartha Pascal-Trouillot	March 1990 - Feb. 1991
Dominica	Mary Eugenia Charles	July 1980 - June 1995
Nicaragua	Violeta Chamorro	1990 -

Source: United Nations (1995). *The World's Women 1995: Trends and Statistics*. New York: United Nations Publications. Chart 6.1, p. 152.

**Table 4: Women and Political Participation in Latin America and the Caribbean**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Local Municipalities Or Equivalent</i>		<i>Parliamentary Upper and lower chambers</i>		<i>Executive</i>
	<i>Female Council Members</i>	<i>Female Mayors</i>	<i>Seats held by women</i>	<i>Share of seats held by women</i>	<i>Share of women at Ministerial level</i>
	% 1990-94	% 1990-94	% 6/94	% 6/96	% 5/94
<i>Argentina</i>	-	4	43	14	0
<i>Antigua and Barbuda</i>	-	-	4	12	0
<i>Bahamas</i>	-	-	7	11	23
<i>Barbados</i>	-	0	3	8	6
<i>Belize</i>	8	-	10	6	0
<i>Bolivia</i>	-	4	32	5	5
<i>Brazil</i>	5	6	25	9	11
<i>Colombia</i>	14	0	8	14	10
<i>Costa Rica</i>	14	5	134	23	4
<i>Cuba</i>	12	7	12	7	13
<i>Chile</i>	19	5	15	10	4
<i>Dominican</i>	-	-	4	13	8

<i>Republic</i>	5	3	4	5	6
<i>Dominica</i>	15	11	9	11	10
<i>Ecuador</i>	6	1	6	5	20
<i>El Salvador</i>	22	17	13	20	11
<i>Guatemala</i>	-	-	3	3	13
<i>Guyana</i>	11	13	10	8	11
<i>Haiti</i>	13	25	10	12	5
<i>Honduras</i>	-	3	41	7	5
<i>Jamaica</i>	13	10	15	16	10
<i>Mexico</i>	10	9	5	7	13
<i>Nicaragua</i>	-	5	7	6	7
<i>Panama</i>	-	6	7	9	6
<i>Paraguay</i>	-	-	3	6	0
<i>Peru</i>	21	14	12	18	19
<i>Suriname</i>	10	16	6	5	0
<i>Trinidad and Tobago</i>	16	6	15	6	11
<i>Uruguay</i>					
<i>Venezuela</i>					

Source: UNDP (1995). Human Development Report 1995. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 60-62.

In this study, the researches revealed that barriers to political participations and decision making process are not confined to the women in Latin America, but it is a political problem that exists throughout the world. These limitations reside in prevailing social and economic regimes as well as in existing political structures (Mehrotra, 1998).

It is found that Social and economic obstacles to women's participation include: the unequal partition of and responsibility for household work, the difficulty of balancing professional life and attention to the home, judgments emanating from their civic status, preconceived ideas about women and "their role", economic dependence, and relatively lower levels of education and formal training (Mehrotra, 1998).

Political obstacles that impede participation include resistance to women's participation, lack of tradition and motivation to actively intervene in politics, the electorate's lack of confidence in women, economic and social criteria for political candidacy, and the exigencies of availability that political activity demands (Mehrotra, 1998).

The socio-economic and structural impediments to women's political participation must be immediately removed; as long as they continue in force, women's access to the decision-making process will be severely impaired and the constructive and positive energies of women will not be available for the betterment of the human condition. (Mehrotra, 1998).

Women's political rights have been conceived minimally as the right to suffrage and candidacy. While these are necessary practices, they are not sufficient to guarantee women's equal participation in political life. It is important to distinguish between equality of opportunity and equality of rewards. In general terms, equality of opportunity implies equal rights to seek power, rights and remuneration; equality of reward, on the other hand, implies not only the potential of power, position and

remuneration but the actual realization and acquisition of power, rights and Often, the equality of opportunity and reward converge. Yet, equality of opportunity can also often lead to unequal rewards or, alternatively, equality of rewards may require unequal means. In other words, the unequal distribution of means is sometimes a necessary condition for eliminating discrimination and realising more just relations. Such measures define affirmative action (Mehrotra, 1998).

## **Austria**

Oedl-Wieser (2008), the representation of women in the Austrian political arena differs considerably across level and place. At high political level more women are participating but at regional and local level very few women are active in politics. Approximately 40% of the Austrian members of the European Parliament are women – this is a top position in the ranking of the EU-25. At the national level 33% of the members of the National Council and 27% of the Federal Council are women. At provincial level in Austria 18 out of the 72 members (25%) of all provincial governments are women. At municipal level the lowest rate of women’s participation rate in political functions can be observed. Being a mayor in Austria is a “typical male” position. In 2006 only 3.2% or 74 of the 2,359 mayors are women and in the municipal councils only 14% of the delegates are female.

Women are thus generally poorly represented in politics but this is especially true for the rural areas. This can be explained by the conservative rural gender regime and the ongoing male dominance in the areas of political and economic citizenship. Some changes may be witnessed in the domain of rural development were gender-sensitive projects have been implemented, but in many rural municipalities and especially in the agricultural world the gender roles are firmly established and not very flexible. This means that in addition to their professional and political work women are still primarily responsible for the household and care work. Women’s involvement in politics often depends on the agreement of the partner. These circumstances make it much more difficult for women to be active in local politics than for men. Fact is that the political socialisation at local level is often the basis and the gate for a political

career at provincial or national level and in that case women are clearly disadvantaged (Oedl-Wieser, 2008).

## **Jordan**

Pettygrove (2006) had made analytical research on the hindering political challenges encountered by the Jordanian women. In her research she put the gender roles in Jordanian society under the focus, and underlined the tribal structure as one of significant factors that effected women in public and privates sphere. In public sphere, it was found that that tribal social structure affects women political activity and women's abilities to participate in the political activities. As the fundamental building block of the tribe, the critical aspects of tribal structure can be traced down to the family unit, it is widely understood that the family structure in Jordanian society create significant and social and strategic barriers to women's empowerment and participation as a decision-makers in the public sphere. Even when women are aware of their rights and have adequate resources, the family structure prevents women from participating fully in the society. Within the family, women generally are not involved in making decisions, as gender roles within the family are based on patriarchal values.

Women's allegiance to the family or tribe creates a barrier to dissent which is very difficult to prevail. The family unit, as the strongest socializing factor has created homogenous belief, which in turn leads to homogeneity in political views. The data collected from the interviews made as the primary study sample shows, women could not theorize about the possibility of dissenting against their families.

It was revealed that Jordanian women had no economic and educational barriers as a justification of their political backwardness. They were mobilized and organized themselves in various social organizations. Women have also equal access in terms of education and others social services provided by the state. But there are other challenges that can be attributed to their absence from political participation, particularly religious and culture.

As the lawfulness of women to hold decision-making posts in the public sphere appears to be in hazy concept and raised controversial arguments among the Islamic scholars, Jordanian women become more reluctant to attempt climbing up the political

ladders. Because in Islamic society, like Jordan, religious beliefs is the most significant parameter that determines every social and political question.

## **Nigeria**

Ogbogu (2012), scrutinized the role of women's political role in Nigerian society. He focused on the latest political developments in Nigeria, and presented the composition of women in the Nigerian councils. In 2007, which is the year women's political activities increased; they had won 7%, while men occupied 93%. In that year, elections revealed that 6 women emerged as deputy governors, while none was elected governor in the whole of 36 seats in Nigeria.

Having studied the obstacles that limited women's role in the political sphere, social culture is recognized as the most complex challenge that lies in front of women's political ambitions. The observed low trend in female participation in the politics is not unconnected with the fact that more male constitute the membership of the most political parties and therefore readily available to be voted for. Also this trend demonstrates that social construction of male and female roles in Nigeria such that male rule, while the female follow. As a patriarchal society, political activities in Nigeria fall outside the boundaries of socially acceptable activities of women. Due to such popular views on appropriateness of political activities for women, their participation is constrained (Ogbogu, 2012).

In the study, most of the females' respondents indicated that exclusion from political is accentuated by the fact that most political party networking and caucus meeting are held in the nights. The timing of such meetings are unsociable hours are not appropriate for women. Due to the prevailing gender-related labour assignments in Nigeria and the multifaceted roles of women, they claimed that they are unable to attend such meeting where very crucial decisions are taken. In addition to this, politics are characterized as a "dirty game" which is used as a pretext to exclude women from political party network. It is believed that politics are exposing women to close interactions with men. This interaction is culturally unacceptable and is regarded as rudeness (Ogbogu, 2012).

The researcher has shown that economy is critical factor to women's participations in politics. The number of men who have the kind money that is required to win election outweighs the women. Financial consideration is the greatest factor that determines the candidacy of the politicians in the party level. Apart from those party aspects, only few women who succeeded to stand for the elections have become the victims of their respective economic inabilities, since 56% is identified as the major hindrance for securing victory at polls. This implies that rigging and lack of transparency in the electoral process affects women.

### **Kenya and Ethiopia**

Apart from the above studies we also deal in here with some studies related to Kenyan and Ethiopian women's challenges of political participation and decision making. Both of these countries have shares in Somaliland with similar socio-political and geo-political cultures and also there are two separate Somali regions which are part of these two countries. However, Women of these two countries including the women of the Somali regions are less represented in politically.

### **Kenya**

Kenyan women's Parliamentary level of participation in electoral politics is only 4.3 percent as you shown the below table 5. Kenyan women's low level in the political representations is caused to several factors as stated the research conducted by Adhiambo-Oduol in 2003. The researcher was examined the challenges and opportunities of Kenyan women in the political participation. The researcher was identified in his study that socio-cultural beliefs, attitudes, biases and stereotypes are major barriers that prevent women from advancing to political spheres. These emphasize the superiority of men and the inferiority of women. They form the integral part of socialisation process in form of gender education and training that men and women are exposed to from childhood. Another formidable barrier is the institutional framework guiding gender division of labour, recruitment, and vertical mobility. Current estimates show that women are particularly disadvantaged with their labour often under-valued and under-utilized. Women are more likely to be employed than men, yet their average income is lower. Yet another obstacle confronting women is

lack of enough participation and empowerment in decisions that affect their lives in political and social processes. He also notes that since men dominate public decision-making processes, it is the male values that are reflected in the decision-making bodies.

Kenya's development record and its demographic composition suggest a need for active involvement of women in key decision-making bodies. There is a clear indication that even though women form the majority voters in Kenya, they are still under-represented in leadership positions. Women's participation in electoral politics since Kenya's independence in 1963 has been limited to providing support to male politicians. With the new political dispensation in Kenya, there is a greater need for equal gender participation in acquisition and exercise of political powers. Notably, the repeal of Section 2 (A) of the Kenya Constitution in 1991 to some extent provided this opportunity by allowing room for multi-party democracy and reactivating of the civil society. In this endeavor it was envisaged that a level playing ground and larger political arena would be created for women's involvement in electoral politics. Yet women are still under-represented in electoral politics. A recent survey in Kenya has revealed that women constitute majority of voters and that their level of participation in electoral politics is minimal. The level of participation of women in electoral politics in Kenya in the last general elections is summarized in the tables below (Kasomo, 2012 ).

**Table 5:** Parliamentary level of participation in electoral politics

	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Nairobi	54	8	62	7	1	8
Coast	110	4	114	20	1	21
N. Eastem	54	0	54	11	0	11
Eastern	191	10	201	34	2	36
Central	165	7	172	27	2	29
R. Valley	169	9	178	47	2	49
Western	98	3	101	23	1	24
Nyanza	150	3	153	32	0	32
Total	991	44	1,035	201	9	210

Source: Kasomo (2012).

**Table 6:** Civic level of participation in electoral politics province

	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Nairobi	305	18	323	54	1	55
Coast	672	44	716	173	11	184
N. Eastem	270	2	272	112	1	113
Eastern	1,136	78	1,214	307	20	327
Central	902	42	944	211	8	219
R. Valley	1,657	68	1,725	645	21	666
Western	615	59	674	188	16	204
Nyanza	1,068	71	1,139	353	19	372
Total	6,625	382	7,011	2,043	97	2,140

Source: Kasomo (2012).

## **Ethiopia**

On the other hand Ethiopian women as mentioned above are similarly politically underrepresented. According Adamu & Mekonnen (2009) Ethiopia is one of the countries wherein women's participation in politics is minimal due to the ideological, political , economic and socio-cultural factors and lack of social and political capacities. As indicated by the representative of Ethiopia, in her report to the committee on elimination of discrimination against women, 645 and 646 meeting, under-representation in decision making is one of the several disadvantages facing Ethiopian women.

However, to enhance the political participation of women, the Government of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia ( FDRE) ratified the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, integrated the same in the country's Constitution and made it the law of the land ( Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009).

The FDRE Constitution promote women's participation in politics declaring under Article 38 the right of every Ethiopian to participate in public affairs, to vote and to be elected to any office at any level of government and to be a member of any political

organizations, labor union, trade organization and etc; without discrimination on the ground of sex. In addition the Constitution entitled women to affirmative measures in politics, under Article 35(3), in order to remedy the historical legacy of inequality and discrimination suffered by Ethiopian women by enabling them to participate and compete on the basis of equality with men, including in political life.

Besides, the government initiated various policies and strategies such as the National Policy on Women of 1993 and the five years (2005/06-2009/10) Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End poverty (PASDEP). The national policy for women is aimed at institutionalizing the political and socio-economic rights of women by creating appropriate structures in government institutions so that public policies and interventions are gender sensitive and geared towards ensuring equitable development for all Ethiopians. The attainment of equality between men and women, among others, in the political and development endeavor of the country is one of the goals of PASDEP. Building women's and girls capacity in the areas leadership and managerial skill so that they can exercise their rights and initiating specific measures to increase gender balanced representation within political and public sphere are among the general objectives of PASDP. Efforts have also been made both by governmental and non governmental organizations to disseminate women rights information to the people including, but not limited to, women's right to participate in politics equally with that of men. The translation of Human Rights Conventions which enshrined provision that recognize women's right to participate in politics into working local language and the improvement in the education of gender issues in media are part of the effort made to promote the political participation of women in the country.

The increase in the number of women both in the House of Peoples Representatives and House of Federation, in almost all political parties and the state councils are indicators of the enhancement of women's political participation in Ethiopia though the increase is not as large as it should be due to the continuation of stereotypes as shown the below tables 5, 6 and 7 (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009).

**Table7.** Number of Women in the House of People's Representatives in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Parliamentary Terms

<b>Term</b>	<b>Total Seat in the House</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Women in %</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	546	504	42	7.69%
3 <sup>rd</sup>	526	410	116	22.05%

Source: Adamu & Mekonnen (2009).

**Table 8:** Number of Women in the House of Federation in the three parliamentary terms

<b>Term</b>	<b>Total Seat in the House</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Women in %</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	108	101	7	6.48
2 <sup>nd</sup>	112	12	8	7.14
3 <sup>rd</sup>	112	91	21	18.75

Source: Adamu & Mekonnen (2009).

**Table 9:** Women participation in Regional State Councils

	<b>Regions</b>	<b>Regional state councils</b>	<b>Male members</b>	<b>Female members</b>	<b>Percentage of female members</b>
1	Tigray	152	78	74	48.68%
2	Oromia	537	338	199	37.05%
3	Harari	36	24	12	33.33%
4	Amhara	294	208	86	29.25%
5	Southern Nations, Nationalities and peoples (SNNP)	348	253	95	27.29%
6	Gambela	82	70	12	14.63%
7	Benshangul Gumuz	99	88	11	11.11%
8	Afar	87	80	7	8.04%
9	Somali	183	177	6	3.27%
	Total	1818	1316	502	27.61%

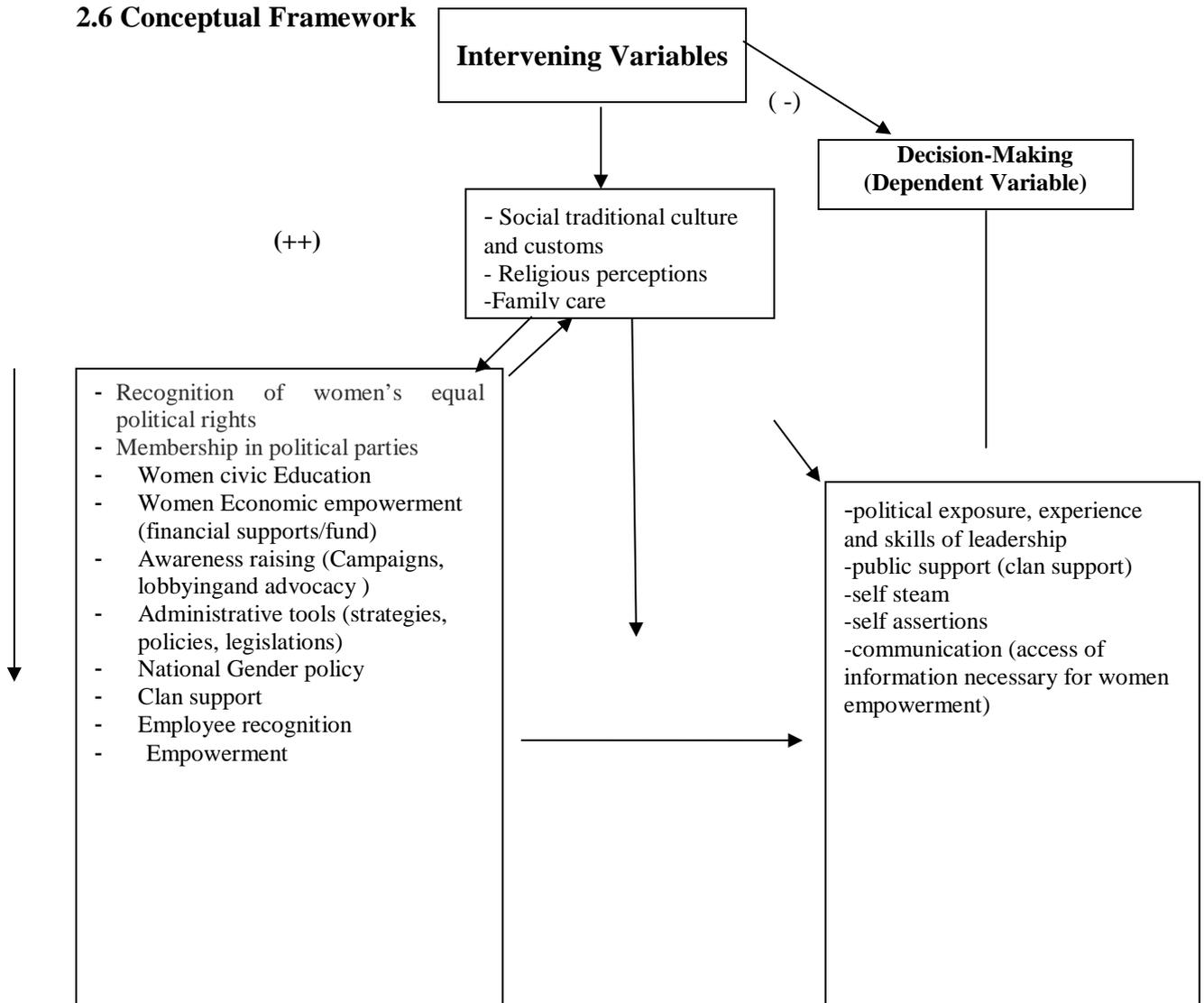
Source: Adamu. & Mekonnen (2009).

According to these tables you can see that women's political participation and decision making in Ethiopia is comparatively low. As you shown in the table 7 the number of women in the House of People's Representatives in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Parliamentary Terms is only 7.69 and 22.05 percents respectively and the number of women in the House of Federation in the three parliamentary terms as you shown in table 8 is 6.48, 7.14 and 18.75 percents respectively.

**Political Participation  
(Independent Variable)**

On the other hand the Ethiopian participation of women in Regional State Councils is very low when you see the last table 9. The female Percentage members in Regional State Councils in Ethiopia are only 27.61%. While when we are looking in regional wise, the Somali region women are made only 3.27% of the total. The Somali women have the least representative seats in Ethiopian councils. This shows that Somali women are the most marginalized females in the politics whether they are in Ethiopian Somali region or even Hargeisa Somaliland. Because as already mentioned in the above the Somali traditional cultures and Somali clan based politics are one of the major barriers that prevent women from the political sphere.

**2.6 Conceptual Framework**



(++)

*Source: author, 2013*

**Figure1.** A Conceptual Frame Work for the Relationship between the Political Participation and Decision-Making

In the conceptual framework depicted in figure 1, postulates that the political participation directly affects the decision-making of women in Hargeisa Somaliland. The women's political participation requires Recognition of women's equal political rights, Membership in political associations, women civic education, women economic empowerment and Awareness rising, Administrative tools, National Gender policy as well as Clan support. Therefore women to enable to take part in the decision making process, they need to have among political exposure, experience and skills of leadership, public support, self-esteem and self-assertions, communication or access of information. However, this relationship may be modified by Social traditional cultures, customs and the Religious perceptions as well as Families from which the women came from. If these factors are addressed it is expected that there will be women political participation and emancipation in key decision-making about matters that affect the humanity at local, national, regional, continental and global levels.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, various items were covered. These include research design, research population and sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability of the instruments, data analysis, and limitation of the study as well as ethical considerations.

### 3.2 Research Design

The researcher employed a descriptive analytical survey design as it was the most suited method in the context of this research. Alongside this, the researcher engaged both quantitative and Qualitative research methods.

### 3.3 Study Population

The target population of this study was all the members contains in Somaliland House of Parliament and Hargeisa Local Council. According to Somaliland Constitution and Local Council Electoral Law Somaliland House of Parliament and Hargeisa Local Council are contains 164 and 25 seats respectively. Therefore, the total target population of this study is stands for 189. It is from this population that the sample size was derived.

### 3.4 Sample Size

From the target population of 189, a sample of 128 was selected, using the Slovene's formula for calculations of sample sizes.

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

Where:

n = number of samples

N = total population

e = margin of error

### **3.5 Sampling Procedure**

This study utilized simple random sampling techniques. This method was used because it ensures that each member of the target population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample.

### **3.6 Research Instruments**

The questionnaire and interview schedule were used as the main tools for collecting data. The selection of these tools has been guided by the nature of data to be collected, the time available as well as by the objectives of the study.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments**

The validity of the instruments, which are questionnaire and interview schedule was measured. Validity of the instrument means the ability of an instrument to measure what it was intended to measure. In this study, the validity of the instruments was measured by a panel of experts through an assessment of selected items in the instruments that would ensure that the instrument was measuring to the expectations. After identifying the vague and ambiguous questions, corrections were made and a final instrument was prepared.

On the other hand, the test-retest technique was used to determine the reliability (accuracy) of the researcher devised instruments to ten respondents. These respondents will not be included in the actual study. In this test-retest technique, the questionnaires were administered twice to the same subjects. If the test is reliable and the trait being measured is stable, the result was consistent and essentially the same in both times many scholars like, (Amin, 2005, Sarantakos, 1998, Treece and Treece, 1973).

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

In this study, researcher was used data collection, presentation, interpretation and analysis for using tables and lastly interprets information based on tables. In addition to that, data collection was analyzed using themes and explanations while comparing and contrasting the findings with the literature review part of the study.

The frequency and percentage distribution was used to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The frequencies and percentages were applied for the challenges of political participation and decision making processes of women in Somaliland.

### **3.9 Limitation of the Study**

Not all the research tools constructed are 100% correct due to human error. In view of the following threats to validity, the researcher considered an allowable 5% margin of error 0.05 level of significance. Measures are also indicated in order to minimize if not to eradicate the threats to the validity of the findings of this study.

1. Extraneous variables which was beyond the researcher's control such as respondents' honesty, personal biases and uncontrolled setting of the study.
2. Instrumentation: The research instruments on the challenges of political participation and decision making of women are not standardized. Therefore a validity and reliability test was being done to produce a credible measurement of the research variables.
3. Attrition/Mortality: Not all questionnaires maybe return completely answered nor even retrieved back due to circumstances on the part of the respondents such as travels, sickness, hospitalization and refusal/withdrawal to participate. In anticipation to this, the researcher was reserved more respondents by exceeding the minimum sample size. The respondents was also be reminded not to leave any item in the questionnaires unanswered and was closely followed up as to the date of retrieval.
4. Additionally, while the interviews were on, some of the respondents took this initiative wanting to narrate their own problems. These problems were addressed by reminding the participants about the objectives and the purpose of the study.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

To ensure confidentiality of the information provided by the respondents and to ascertain the practice of ethics in this study, the following activities were implemented by the researcher:

1. Seek permission to adopt the standardized questionnaire and schedule interview on the challenges of political participation and decision making of women in Hargeisa, Somaliland.
2. Acknowledge the authors quoted in this study and the author of the standardized instrument through citations and referencing.
3. Present the findings in a generalized manner.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, DISCUSSIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FINDINGS**

### **Introduction:**

This chapter hinges on the following areas: data presentation, analysis, discussions and interpretations. The work is presented in sections/parts within the chapters and arranged objective by objective. This ensured logical flow and made it easy to organize the work for analysis, discussions and interpretations. The objectives which underpinned this study were as follows:

1. To assess women's political participation and decision making in Hargeisa Somaliland.
2. To determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of: gender, age, marital status and level of education.
3. To determine the level of current challenges of women's political participation under the lights of the Somaliland political landscape
4. To determine the challenges facing women in political decision making Hargeisa Somaliland
5. To determine the previous failures and how to empower women to participate in politics and decision making process aimed at finding solutions towards political imbalance in Hargeisa Somaliland.

Generally, in this chapter, the findings of the study are compared and contrasted with the related literature reviewed and the implications of the study for the methodology, and the research questions which directed the study are also explored

## **PART ONE**

### **The objective in this section of the study was to assess women's political participation and decision making in Hargeisa, Somaliland.**

First and for most it should be observed that participation is an important element of development. This is so because when we want to initiate development we need to have the concerns of all those who are potentially going to be affected by that development activity being carried. One of the components of development is the political aspect. This involves among others decision making processes; decision making must be all inclusion so that the different gender and development need should be attended to. However, if people are not involved in matters that affect them, policies concerning such issues normally do not work well. The development needs especially the women's needs for decision making is a democratic way of governance and this serves to satisfy their human and political rights.

Much as governments have over time been emphasizing the issues of women empowerment. The empower that they talk about are not in all aspects of life and development. They tend to look at women as in home care takers and look at their most immediate and short term needs of food, water and the like, women's strategic needs are normally ignored and or not properly attended to including their need for public decision making and political participation. Those needs for leadership and power are in most cases seen as men's needs. Thus banning women from the associated benefits which accrues from such privileges.

The findings revealed that, in exercising the right to Political participation, the men and women are not considered on an equal opportunity. This was found to be hindering the active participation and involvement of the affected female gender in the political system. Especially, the women who are affected more are those who are aspiring for any elective political position. This is so because such women normally get it rough to access the political back up of their governments especially in male dominated societies where they are denied holding key positions such as the head of state, and other key or influential political positions. In the area of study women's initiatives for decision making and political participation were not even recognized at the lower political level such as of the local council. Much as empirical evidences indicated that

women had certain political positions in the local council and the house of parliament this did not turn out to be fruitful at all. Instead of voting the women in the allocated quota for women it was highly ironical that men and women overwhelmingly turned out to vote for the men to take up the space created for the women in the house of parliament and the local council for the case of Hargeisa.

This is a clear indication that women experience serious challenges in the due course of their political career. Due to the cultural biases and religious beliefs as well as stereotypes against women, it was revealed that women could not stand out to support their fellow women much as men did for their fellow men.

This implies that, women are not a homogeneous group. Within the same women groups there are several divisions that create barriers for the women themselves. It also implies that, to attain political success, women need to first unite among themselves to address their common needs and they can thus synergistically unite with the men to get their back up.

This further implies that, there is need to prepare the community to see the need for women's decisions making and political participation. This will enable the community to gradually change their negative attitudes towards women political participation and build confidence and trust in the women to take up leadership positions.

However, it must be noted that, women and men who want to exercise their rights to political participation are entitled to exert influence in the decision making process through public debate, and dialogue with the representatives through their capacity to organize themselves; or exercise public power by holding public office at different levels of administrations - local, regional national and international.

**Policy-constitutional frame work:** Somaliland constitution stipulates it that, both men and women of Somaliland under democratic governance system have an equal political rights and decision making. (Article 22 of Somaliland Constitution, (2001)). Accordingly, the constitution postulates the equality and prohibited all forms of gender-based discriminations (Article 8 (1 & 2) of Somaliland Constitution (2001).

Contrary to what is put forth in the constitution of Somaliland, it was revealed that, in this study, women's political status in Somaliland is very worrisome. It was apparent; Somali women are politically marginalized social groups. They have no active role in the key positions within the bureaucracy. They are not genuinely represented in both parliamentary and local councils. Though attempts have been made by some women pressures groups, they did not yield any positive results. Unlike Abdi who argues that the realization of the effective participation of both women and men in the political and decision making process in an equal manner is the obligation of the state (Abdi, 2007). Seemingly the events on the ground indicate that government policy implementers of Somaliland seems not to be committed towards ensuring that there is gender mainstreaming and equality in the political system. This is clearly indicated by the fact that, the policy stipulating the support for women remains on paper rather than by practice this renders the efforts of the women to no avail.

This implies that, in the absence of government support towards the political participation of the women, little or no success will be scored. Similar policies and conventions have also been advanced at the international level for example the adoption of a special convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against the women (CEDAW), which elaborates the nature of women's political rights and the steps required to promote greater equality between women and men in this area. Alongside this, the importance of the right of the participation as a means for the individual to involve in the political affairs and decision making process of his/her society is recognized and protected in article 25 of the international convention on civil and political rights (ICCPR). Most notable one was the universal declaration of human rights (UDHR), which in its Article 21 recognized the right of every one, including both women and men, to take part in the government of their country, directly or through freely chosen representative.

Despite the existing policies by governments at local and international levels, women continue to suffer political discrimination by most governments. And in particular, women in Hargeisa Somaliland find it rather difficult to work against all these political huddles without the support from the government, community, families and civil society organizations.

One of the most remarkable factors found to be hindering the active participation of the Somaliland women was the customary and traditional laws based on the patriarchy and religious system where men control all the resources including power and decision making. This finding is partly in line with the views of Abdo and Abegaz, who contents that customs and traditional laws reinforce patriarchy supremacy (Abdo & Abegaz, 2009). However, it differs because of the mixed feeling concerning the religious perspective.

In the same way Quadri laments that, lives in a patriarchy society stipulates women's place to be kitchen. She can't go against the wish of her husband. And within political groups, the woman is seen as a threat that must not be allowed to thrive (Charles & Tayo, n.d ).

The study equally indicates that, Somaliland traditional leadership is predominantly male elders whereas the Women have no room in clan-based politics, and cannot represent their clans. One respondent laments that, as you go back to historical practices, you can see that women's business was to care of her husband and children. The issue of women's political rights and roles in Somaliland is deeply rooted in the realm of culture. Women were often excluded from exercising political sphere, and even from the discussions of the clan issues. A cultural belief in male superiority and greater ability to leadership assigns women inferior positions from a very early age (Nagaad, 2007).

Traditionally, Somali culture is based on the concept of patriarchy and is manifest by male rule. The patriarchy as a system of male domination shapes women's relationship in politics. It transforms male and females into men and women and constructs the hierarchy of gender relations where men are privileged and women are subordinated. Andrienne Rich defines patriarchy as:

*“ A familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play in which the female I everywhere subsumed under the make”* (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009, p. 17)

The gender role ideology is used as an ideological tool by patriarchy to place women within the private arena of home as mothers and wives and men in the public sphere (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009). This is one of the vital factors that shape the level of women's political participation in Somaliland.

The traditional of tribalism based on gender does not only discriminate women in the election process, but also disfavors them in the appointment or nomination of political positions and public offices (Abdi, 2007). Likewise the empirical study findings indicated that, out of the 46 cabinet members, only four women have surfaced. The searching question is thus, what has happened to the rest of the women? Why have they not succeeded if there is any justice in their case? All these indicate that, women are still a long way from being recognised in the politics of Somaliland. This statement is further reinforced by Warsame, who stated that, t even if women's role remains minimal and few positions or vacancies were specifically created for the women (Warsame, 2000, Nagaad, 2007).

This implies that, till then, women are not adequately represented in the government systems of Somaliland, though the government claims to have politically shifted from the clan-based to multiparty system. This shift alone has no impact on the representation of the women in the political structures. First because the clan system does not have provision for the women. Secondly, because the composition of members of the house of parliament and local council indicates a lot of discrepancies to this effect. The reality thus stands that, Women in the elective positions at all levels including at the councils, both at national and local level, are under represented and or not represented at all.

The domination of men in political practices and decision making processes can be attributed to the influence of tribalism which is based on gender discrimination and prevents women to get an access to participate political life and conduct of public affairs. As of constitutional right every citizen has the right to stand as a candidate and to be elected in the election process both at the national and local levels. This is clear in (Article 22 of Somaliland Constitution). In practice; however, a citizen who desires to be elected in the election process must have the support of his/her tribe. The

acceptance and support of the tribe is a litmus test for the political parties to include some body in their candidacy list for the election. Accordingly, it is only a few numbers of women who actually contest as candidates in the election process: this assertion is proved by the fact that, in the election of the parliamentary (House of Peoples Representatives) held on 29 September 2005 only seven were women out of the 246 candidates; and out of the 82 candidates who won their seats in the parliament that emerged, only two were women (this was 2.44%). And in 2002 local elections only two women were elected out of 400 councilors, (Abdi, 2007).

Further still, 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 them to manage their political activities. This view is also reiterated by ( Nagaad,2007).

On the other hand, women's lack of capital causes their exclusion from the leadership because they are neither head of communities, tribes (traditional clan leaders) nor kinship groups and social organizations (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009). Moreover the women's lack of clan financial supports is another constraints factor of women's political participation. The isolation policies adopted by the men against the women only make women to be used by the men as a climbing lather.

In Islam both men and women are entitled are equality before the law and the courts of the law. Both men and women are accountable for their deeds before the law. Like men, women are entitled to seek justice. Islam asserts both genders are honoured and dignified, and they are equal in the sight of Allah, as they have same religious and moral duties. In addition, they both the same consequence of their deeds:

*“For Muslim men and women and for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard*

*their chastity, and for men And women who engage much in Allah's remembrance for them has Allah prepared Forgiveness and great reward “(Qur'an 33:35).*

Practical events on the ground indicated that, In Islamic context, a woman's right to political participation and decision-making remains to be open to question. Some Islamic scholars argue that women's are religiously required to undertake the important task of taking care of her home and her offspring. Hence women's abilities are overshadowed by clouds of doubt. The Koranic verse which say “*And stay quietly in your houses* (Qur'an32:33), is used as the defense of their argument.

According Haggard, the societal conventions regarding gender and leadership traditionally exclude women, and top leadership is viewed as a masculine domain. According to Kiamba ( 2008), it is apparent in many situations, in African cultures that men lead and women follow (Kiamba, 2008).

It was indicatively emphasized that, in other public arenas in Somaliland, women's access to leadership positions has been hindered by discrimination and stereotyping. Women are more or less persecuted for seeking an executive position. This is largely due to society's attitude toward appropriate male and female roles. In their discussion on barriers women face in leadership positions, compared to men, women receive little or no encouragement to seek leadership positions. Besides women have fewer social networks (formal and informal) to support them. This leaves them helpless.

The issues in Somaliland are even made complex for Somaliland women, due to male domination of politics and Somaliland clan based politics are the main factors that inhibit their political decision making. Most of the political decision makers are men while women are minority in a decision making processes and feel loneliness. The majority of men in the participation of the decision making had attributed to undermine the women's contribution in the political discussion meetings while the women seem not to be aware of their potentials.

The organization of some of the technical meeting and the venue and time where these meetings take place are not user friendly to women for example work committee, which are often turned in to that chewing sessions are difficulty sittings for Women to participate in the discussions as well as work meetings which are

scheduled for late hours. Men tend to employ trickeries to discourage women from pursuing their political cares, in most cases; they tend to make women to develop low self-esteem in discussion of matters of importance. So that the women can believe in a self-fulfilling prophecy that they are not competent enough to take decision of high significance levels (Nagaad, 2007).

Somaliland clan based politics do not support women to hold public offices. Somali women have not traditionally space in political power and nor clan leadership structures. Besides lacking the political experience, they have low self esteem and confidence, self- assertions over the decisions taken by them, mistrust amongst women for their fellow women, the dynamics of intra party and inter party politics, For these reasons, the clan elders and the community themselves are not considering women as their representatives in the political positions. Majority of the clans do not approve of women's political seats and that is why a woman who holds (whether selected, nominated or appointed) public office does not seem to get the recognition she deserves and the public support (Nagaad, 2007)

Women are also lacked to political exposures and communications that are enabling them to influence political, economic, social decisions and processes. Women have no access to information which is necessary to their leadership positions. Men do not want to share any information about them and are not similarly willing to share with their political information, decisions and views.

Women's multiple tasks, in both the productive and reproductive spheres places a lot of burden on the women in pursuing the political activities which is demanding in terms of resources like the time and physically exhaustive, the conflict of balance between the domestic and public life. Scholars like (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009, Nagaad, 2007), in a way have hinted on some of these issues.

## PART TWO

### Background Characteristics of the Respondents

#### Introduction:

This part of the study was guided by the objective to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of: gender, age, marital status and level of education. This survey was carried out by the researcher in Hargeisa, Somaliland. The purpose of the survey was to assess the women's political participation and decision making. The Survey was conducted from April to July, 2013. The main focus of the survey was to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of: gender, age, marital status and level of education. Respondents from different age groups provided information needed for this study. The table below shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

**Table 10: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	127	99.2
Female	1	.8
<b>Age</b>		
25-40	18	14.1
41-56	52	40.6
57-72	50	39.1
73-above	8	6.2
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	127	99.2
Divorced	1	.8
<b>Educational Qualifications</b>		
Secondary	53	41.4
vocational training equivalent to secondary	42	32.8
Diploma	11	8.6
university degree	18	14.1
post graduate	4	3.1

SOURCE: RESEARCHER, JULY, 2013

The table 10 above depicts that, of the 128 respondents occupying elective political positions and participating in political activities such as decision making, concerning the matters of state of nation building, 127 of the respondents representing 99% are males, and women representative is only one. This inherently denotes the gender gaps in women's political participation and decision making. In this study, the key variables examined included decision making and political participation. All of these variables were studied in relation to their significance. It was supposed that accessibility to political institutions in Hargeisa implied that one ought to be a male gender of certain age category. And this further means that, decision making did not concern the women. This is reflected in the words of one respondent who said that, after all "*women cannot take good decision*" and another added that, their inaccessibility would mean decreased levels of decision making and political participation among women and increased privileges for men.

The term *gender* refers to those characteristics of men and women that are socially determined in contrast to those that are biologically determined. It defines culturally acceptable attitudes and behaviour of men and women, including responsibilities, advantages, disadvantages, opportunities, constraints, roles, status, and power assigned to women and men in society. Gender roles are learned through socialization and vary within the society or culture.

Gender disparities between the men and women in as far as key decision making and political participation is too wide. This is indicated by the fact that about ninety nine percent of the key political position is occupied by the men. This partly explained by the dominance of the patriarchy system. So to say patriarchy is a system of rule or governance by men. Such systems can be openly patriarchal where by men greater legal, political, religious and social freedoms than women have. This implies that, women become coverts, in that women are discriminated against institutionally, in work place (in terms of pay and conditions), and the like. In this study there are both overt and covert sources of patriarchy.

Gender is dynamic, ideally speaking; it ought to evolve to yield to changes in cultural, religious, political and social aspects. It is widely recognised that women's needs tend to be overlooked within private and public affairs.

Addressing gender issues in the context of political sphere therefore involves looking at the different needs and interests, power imbalances, and inequalities that exist between women and men.

The table above also shows that out of 128 respondents from Hargeisa, the highest age proportion (52), at (40.6%) and it falls between (41-56) years of age. This is followed by age proportion of (50) at (39.1%) of respondents who fall between the age group of (57-72). The other age categories were those age proportion of (18) falling at (14.1%) of the respondents who fall in the age bracket of (25 to 40), and age proportion of (73 and above) at the frequency level of (8) and a percentage of (6.2%). The majority of the respondents fall within the age group of (41 to 56) compared to those who fall in the age categories of (57-72, 25-40 and 73 and above). This is mainly because most of the people who are active and influential in politics comprise of the majority adults who are from (41 to 56). It was also found out that, the men at this age have the resources needed for the political campaigns apart from having the support of the community. This was followed by those at (57 to 72). Despite the fact that, the men at this age seem to be old, they were still found to be influential. What explain their influence is partly the resources they have and the advantages of age and their reputation. This is followed by those at the age of (25-40) young adults, who are vibrant age of development but are not that very influential in politics. One factor which explains this is partly the lack of support from the old people, and the greed for power among the ageing people and the lack of resources among this age group and the interest of the young adults, and lastly those in the age of 73 and above. This age group, are the least due to their old age factor.

This further implies that, the age factor has a bearing in women's participation in decision making. While some respondents argued that, women's participation in decision making is negatively affected because women are culturally believed to be care takers at home, some said that their position is not in public decision making, and

to others, women cannot take good decision. Meanwhile some maintained that their religion that is Islam does not permit women leadership and that decision making services provided by women in most cases do not meet the expectation of the service recipients or the public. And those women are biologically weaker sex, and they are in most cases emotional and reactive and so nobody can wish to give matters of state affairs to be decided upon by the women.

The table 10 above demonstrates that, nearly, all the respondents (127) are married, representing 99%, and only one is divorced. This depicts the fact that, the social relation issues also have an impact on who to elect to any political position of decision making. Indirectly, because of these social relation issues, especially those who are not married are not considered for the position by the voters yet such people may have the ability to deliver. And on the other hand, those who are not married tend to think that, politics is the game of the old people or it is a job that you take as a last resort when you are retiring. All these psycho-social factors affect women's participation in elective political positions.

To enable us to capture the levels of women's decision making and political participation in Hargeisa Somaliland, the educational background of the respondents was required. Education attainment has been identified as one of the essential approaches of influencing policy in order to combat gender disparities in access to opportunities, resources and power, and indeed it is a core aspect in creating gender equality in all spheres of life and ensuring women empowerment. This is relevant because societies with low levels of education are less likely to attain and maintain high levels of important decision making on matters affecting them as well as in socio-cultural and political-economic growth. The education echelons of the respondents were captured in the following categories of educational attainment levels; (secondary education, vocational training equivalent to secondary school education, attained university education or equivalent, and diploma)

From the above table 10, out of (128) respondents, (53) at (41.4%) of the respondents attained secondary school education. This is followed by those who attained vocational training equivalent to secondary school education who numbered (42) at (32.8%), and this is followed by those category of respondents who attained

university education or equivalent and they numbered to (18) at (14.5%), and those who attained diploma who numbered to (11) at (8.6%). And for those who stopped at secondary, when asked why they never went ahead with school, reasons given ranged from indifference to education to cost, orphan-hood to ill health and social responsibilities. From the educational background of the respondents, we can see that majority of the respondents numbering to (53+42= 95) are moderately educated all attained secondary education either directly or through vocational training equivalent to secondary education. The implication of this is that, more post secondary education is required to build the capacity of the respondents for serious development work. While the implication of this for policy formulation, analysis and implementation is that, such a category of people may not do much in this area yet the key role of the politicians includes policy related issues and decision making about matters which concerns all the genders either directly or indirectly for any meaningful development to take place.

**Table 11: Distribution of Respondents by Relevance of women’s decision making**

<b>Relevance to decision making</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very relevant	0	0
Relevant	0	0
Somewhat relevant	02	1.56
Not relevant	126	98.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data, 2013

From the table 11 above, out of the 128 respondents, 02 maintained that, women’s participation in decision making is somewhat relevant and this stands at (1.56%).while none of the respondents believed that women’s participation in

decision making is very relevant or important, in the same way, none of them thought women's political participation is relevant. While (126) considered that women's participation in decision making is not relevant. This stands at (98.44%). This group of respondents maintained that, women's participation in decision making is not very relevant because women are culturally believed to be care takers at home, and that their position is not in public decision making, and that they cannot take good decision. And others maintained that their religion that is Islam does not permit women leadership and that decision making services provided by women in most cases do not meet the expectation of the service recipients or the public. And those women are biologically weaker sex, and they are in most cases emotional and reactive and so nobody can wish to give matters of state affairs to be decided upon by the women.

**Table 12: Distribution of Respondents by Relevance of women's political participation**

<b>Relevance of women's political participation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Very relevant	0	0
Relevant	0	0
Somewhat relevant	01	.78
Not relevant	127	99.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Filed Data, 2013

Of the (128) respondents (127), maintained that women's political participation is not relevant, standing at (99.22%) while (01) of the respondents maintained that women's political participation is somewhat relevant , standing at (.78%), whereas none of respondents urged that women political participation is relevant in the same way none of the respondents maintained that, women's political participation is very relevant. Several reasons exist from the side of the respondents as to why they considered women's political participation as being neither very relevant nor relevant and somewhat relevant and not relevant.

For those who considered that women's political participation is somewhat relevant, maintained that it would enable the men concentrate in key political activities of the state while the women can keep in the soft positions of power which otherwise would become work over load for the men.

For those respondents who maintained women's political participation is not very relevant had this to say: the influential factors are:

1. Factors related to Policy and gender gaps in politics
2. Cultural Factor
3. Religious factor
4. Economic or Financial factor
5. Social factor
6. Personal initiative and commitment
7. Community factor
8. Lack of unity among the women as a gender
9. Historical-structural factors

To some respondents, when asked on level of education on women political participation: they observed to the contrary that, women's educational level to have no significant impact on political participation and decision making process. This was so because of the perception and attitude of the community towards women. And in the context of the socially ascribed roles of men and women, the men assume that women's duties are in the kitchens and the bed but not in public sphere of life, this and many culturally determined issues are still deeply ingrained among the Somali community and this affects women's political participation grossly.

More disturbingly, instead some respondents observed that, the low levels of women's participation in political decision making, enable the men concentrate in key political activities of the state while the women can keep in the soft positions of power which otherwise would become work over load for the men.

**1. Historical-structural factors:** The historical and structural prevailing injustices reflect them in the fact that history repeats itself. This is so because current events on

the ground reveal that, women historically have not been considered for key political activities. The implication of this is that, the policy implementers tend to go by the historical political events which have been unfolding themselves in this land. Little have they taken it into consideration to revisit the unfair policy frames which hinder women. It is not surprising to see gender disparities in today's Somaliland politics. This can be traced back to the historical-colonial divide where by the composition of the first advisory council containing 48 members which was established in 1946 was completely male members.

Another worst historical evidence that can be taken as an example of women's discrimination from exercising equal political rights, was the first historical ordinance formed for regulating the electoral process of the legislative council. This 1958 ordinance excluded women from voting and being voted. It was the first historical Somaliland political election which was based on the male suffrage, although Somaliland was not considered as independent state and the whole electoral system was in the hands of the protectorate governor and his district commissioner (Somaliland Protectorate Annual Volumes of Law 1958).

Several scholars (Reborts, 1995, Abdi, 2007, Morel & Bock , 2008, Abdo & Abegaz, 2009, Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009, Adamu & Mekonnen ,2009, Kasomo, 2012, Ogbogu, 2012,), reveal that, the gender disparities in political participation and representation has existed since time immemorial in human history.

2. Factors related to Policy and gender gaps in politics: the existing policy and gender gaps have created a rift between men and women in as far as their participation in politics are concerned. This is reflected in the constitution by the fact that, there are too few seats in which women compete with the men in politically elective positions in the house of parliament and in the local council in Hargeisa Somaliland. However, it was made known that, in some of the few seats which exist; women still meet a lot of resistance from the men, and community as well as their fellow women in due course of pursuit of their political career. These findings are in line with the thoughts of Abdi, who made it known that; the gender gaps in politics cannot be redressed simply by bringing more women in to the system, (Abdi, 2007).

This requires a supportive mechanism such as good policy and government commitment and willingness to ensure the policy implementation. There is need to formulate adequate policies and programmes addressing negative customs and practices, which fosters women's marginalization and those which create dis-favorable political culture. There is also an urgent need for framing and adaption of national gender policy. This requires laying grounds for gender mainstreaming and gender equity in all the levels to include politics. This could be done among others by stressing gender representation in the political system and all public spheres. Alongside, administrative tools for empowering and enabling women to develop their constituency need to be clear and transparent.

Advocacy, lobbying and awareness initiatives are also one of the effective tools for empowering and enabling women to have influence in political arenas.

**3. Community based factor:** Equally so, gendered attitudes in society also constitute a formidable problem where many of the concerns and constraints in women's leadership issues are deeply ingrained or rooted in deep-seated gender inequalities. However, Changing these attitudes and behaviors is one of the greatest challenges for the government today. This calls for gender quota as an effective tool in addressing women's exclusion and ensuring their presence in formal structure of politics.

There is also an urgent need for the adoption of administrative tools as an effective way that can be used for empowering women in political participation and decision making processes. These tools are among others the strategies, policies, applicable legislations, awareness raising and directives relating to women's inclusion in the decision making table. One of the effective tools is those administrative tools which includes electoral quota, which defines as a mandatory percentage of women candidates for public elections.

The mixed feelings about women's political participation casts dilemma of the political career of the women in Hargeisa, Somaliland. As in the words of one respondent, ... " a woman's position is in the kitchen and bed room not in the public decision making".... and in an interview with another respondent, about the same issue, she had this to say:-...education brings gender equality and empowers a

*woman to compete with the men, yet our culture and the men do not permit this...how shall we accept such a thing?" ....as if it is not enough, in an interview with yet another respondent more so a lawyer, he had this to say: I quote .... by our culture, a woman does what she is told by her man and obeys what a man has decided as she cannot make any meaningful decision and I do not think our women need to participate in decision making and politics"....another respondent had yet this to say, if everybody enters the political wagon who will keep the children?....*

This and many other sentiments and cultural obligations keep the women away from serious political engagements at any given rate.

This actually implies that, or (means) that such communities cannot easily support women's political participation, decision making, emancipation and empowerment as a tenet towards community development. Nevertheless, it must be observed that, the relevance of women's decision making and political participation cannot be underestimated. Women's needs for decision making about matters that affect them and their community is very vital.

The community should realize that, women have a role to play as far as decision making and other political activities are concerned. The political space opens up the opportunities for the women to get exposures, build their potential and market their talents to make contribution towards state building. However, it emerged very strongly from oral interviews that, although there are some merger political considerations in terms of the space for the women, this only appears to be more theoretical than practice based, it is obvious that, the government is tilted towards mainly employing men, in key decision making and political positions and this allegedly discriminated against women, and deprived them of their constitutional rights.

Further evidence shows that, cultural, religious, economic, psychological, and logistical factors also affect women's political participation in House of parliament and local council elections in Hargeisa, Somaliland. Many respondents said that, it was common practice to prioritize men's needs for power rather than that of the women due to the cultural, religious and psychological factors. Expectations within

the Somali family specifically dictate behavior of women, as well as the practice of profession or career; whereas, in general terms, lack of money for campaign activities, alongside lack of popularity among the women, sets in a very bad precedence for women to succeed with their political career.

Various and mixed views and opinions were also held about the matter concerning whether or not Islam supports the participation of women in decision making process and politics. Some respondents interpreted Islam as giving priority to men while conceptualized it as having placed great value on among other things women's career development and education, regardless of gender.

### **PART: THREE**

**The objective which guided this section of the study was to determine the level of challenges of women's political participation under the lights of the Somaliland political landscape. The respondents revealed the following information concerning the matter under investigation:**

1. Tribalism is a major factor that affects Somaliland women's political participation and it becomes a part of our life;
2. Women's intellectual capacity is not mature enough to participate in the politics
3. Women have no common ground to view themselves as separate status that is not dependent on their counterpart in attaining their goals.
4. the natural responsibility of women; the women's household and child care responsibilities
5. The lack of economic power.
6. Women consider themselves as the sexual property of their husbands.
7. women themselves are politically incapacitated and not supported to each other
8. the absence of women's linkages and co-operations
9. the lack of women's political will
10. The lack of support right from the family, clan, community and at national levels

## **PART: FOUR**

**The objective that governed this part of the study was to establish the challenges facing women in political decision making. The following were the responses from the respondents:**

1. Women's decisions are ignored due to their minority in decision making positions;
2. Women have no full participation because of their low self-esteems ;
3. Women are lost their confidence and political will, due to their lack of political experiences which are based on traditional way of life;
4. Women are loyal for this reason men are not want to them. They opposed women to hold a public positions and if they hold they don't give support rather than resists;
5. Since male are dominant, women lacked communications due to social stigma.

In an interview with Fadomo, one of the respondents, she had this to say about her political career experience as once a member of Guurti Council: ...At the first I was unwelcomed by the elders as because they think that women have no place in "this house". ..My presence as a female member in the Gurti Council was seen as something that was strange to the long-standing tradition of the Somali people... For them it was unacceptable behavior to see a female member sitting in the middle of ,men...to deliberate on matters of state affairs"....

This is the kind of experience a Somali political woman would face even if she succeeds to be a member of parliament or a council".....many Somali women are left speechless about the experiences that they go through. At times they consider not to speak any more about the wild experiences, and the trauma, and isolation by the members with whom they are to deliberate on matters affecting the citizens. This is the experience of the women ...silence speaks better than words..I will not answer any answer further questions relating to the challenges I faced while functioning as a member of elders. ..Time will tell...I need no more trouble....I want my peace....however, what I can let you know if truth that, my voice was never heard at all....just in case, any one heard my voice it was highly disrespected in the house

debates”. ..What then was my use in this house...if I cannot speak and where I spoke...where I spoke, the speech looked out law...and where I am heard no body or even be respected...

In a further probing, Fadoma could not relay the exact reasons of her resignation from the membership of the house; she did not mention exact causes that forced her to step down though by implication she attributed her resignation to the prevailing cultural challenges that existed in the working environment.

On general causes she explained the women’s barriers in the political participation and stated in her interview with a passion tones that ...”men do not want to see women involved in politics of the country and believed that women do not deserve political positions. ..And that the women do not themselves have the political will much as they are not supported female contestants or female candidates.

Additionally, “women lack the support in both of her two clans-birth and married clans”....

### **SOME WAY FORWARD FOR OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES**

1. These barriers can be broken through promoting women empowerment and capacity building,
2. Men’s support and encouragement of women to hold a high political positions,
3. Helping Women to have amicable environment in which they can demonstrate their political will.
4. Undertaking constitutional amendments and introducing quota system to facilitate women’s membership in either house including the councils (the house of Guurti/elders).
5. The enactment of family law

## **PART: FIVE**

**In this part of the study, the objective that underlined it was to determine the previous failures and how to empower women to participate in politics and decision making process aimed at finding solutions towards political imbalance in Somaliland. The respondents revealed the following information concerning the matter under investigation**

Previous failures: Somaliland government has in many ways attempted to resolve the problems concerning women's political participation through setting quota in Somaliland House of Representatives in 2008 to no avail. This promotion strategy for women's participation in politics was put pressures by the Somaliland women's political organization movements such as a women political forum (WFP). However, the Somaliland House of Guurti (elders) strongly disagreed and boycotted the quota of women by arguing that it is against the Somaliland constitution particularly article 8 (1 and 2), which provides the equality of Somaliland citizens. The House of Guurti failed to understand the importance of women's equal political participation in Somaliland democracy and democratization process. This is a detrimental attack for any country that needs a true democracy.

These failures however, due to misperceptions of women's rights in the constitution and religion and the Somali culture which based on male rule concepts. The lack of government commitment towards the creating a conducive environment for the inclusion of women in politics and decision making and the absence of the both gender policy and political ambitions to women all form major failures to this attempts.

Unlike (Adamu & Mekonnen, 2009), who suggests increase in the number of women both in the House of Peoples Representatives and House of Federation, in almost all political parties and the state councils for enhancement of women's political participation this by far stands cannot work in the case of Somaliland women unless the community and the families as well as the government are prepared to accept such to happen.

This also needs the women to be empowered to enable them, to be at par with men, for mobilizing the provisions, environment and capacity in order to use the rights and privilege due to them and make use of the good offices and gain access to and control of the available resources like in economic, social, political, religious and cultural fields this is hoped to promote functional democracy, true justice for advancement of women's interests for governance. Without active participation of women's perspectives at all level in decision making, and other political activities, the goals of equality and development cannot be achieved.

This implies that, to empower the women, the government and other international and national institutions should adapt means enabling women to equal political participations. These may include the adoption of women's career development programmes to ensure that women have equal access to technical and leadership training.

A further implication is that women need to develop among other things leadership skills, positive self-esteem and confidence, encourage and support one another, and develop strong assertive options,. The building and strengthen solidarity among women through information, education and sensitization activities and advocacy at all levels to enable women to influence political, economic, social decisions, processes and systems are among the affirmative action's that need to be undertaken seriously by the government.

The policy implementers and the community should realise the women's need for power sharing, as a right and entitlement due to them. Constitution of the Republic of Somaliland should be upheld, by recognizing the importance of women's empowerment to enable equal participation in public life to enable the women to enjoy their political and human rights to the fullest.

This implies that, the government obliged to encourage, and legislate for, the right of women to be free of practices which are contrary to Sharia and which are injurious to their person and dignity as up held in (Article 36 (2) of Somaliland Constitution (2001)). This calls for government commitment so as to achieve the goal of equal participation of women in politics and take major steps to change the socio-cultural,

political, religious, and economic structural barriers in consortium with the community for a common goal and purpose.

It further implies the need for building a strong women's movement and civil society structures to raise awareness of the need to consider women's political initiatives and creating enabling environment that can influence the direction of politics and development in favour of women priority tailored towards their political and social needs.

### **WAY FORWARD FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT FOR VIBRANT POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

1. To change socio-economic and political attitudes and social structures and engage the social institutions to transform the factors which hinder women's political participation
2. Women have to gain political exposures prior to their recruitment into politics; this will enable them to play their roles more effectively and efficiently. And it will also enhance their knowledge on how to write good political manifestos, how to conduct successful political campaigns and the right methods or approaches to use to use in public address or rally, how to manage their time in order to balance between the multiple tasks of reproductive and productive roles.
3. Need for social transformations in order to sensitize the public about the women's inclusion in politics
4. Women must join and actively participate in the existing community organizations in order to show their capabilities to the community and at the same time must form special organizations which raise their awareness, and work as lobbying forces that promotes their equal rights in both civil and political domains.
5. The formations of women's linkages and co operations are vital to overcome such barriers in concerted efforts.
6. The government and community should recognize women's role in the society in as far as governance and state building is concerned
7. Tribalism can only be reduced through media, and awareness programme addressing its bad impact on community development and the women's political participations.

8. For better future political environment Children should be socialized in a manner which enhances them to conceptualize the roles of gender in development, interactions between genders, culture, and environment to build a community not based on tribal lineage.

## **PART. SIX**

### **THE IMPLICATION OF THE FINDINGS:**

#### **Introduction:**

This part of the study gives the implication of the study findings: here is a recap of the implication of the study findings on the phenomenon under investigation: the eminence of the problem for the study, the objectives which under pinned the study, the research questions used, the scope of the study, the definitions of key terms, the conceptual frame work used, the related literature reviewed, the methodology employed, the findings there of, the summaries, conclusion, general recommendation, and the recommendation for future studies.

The topic: this was found to be the most essential part of the study. The topic selected accurately described the content of the research, this implied that, the topic delimits the scope of the study and was clearly and precisely stated to capture the key variables under investigation.

The idea of the study was thus introduced by clearly providing a brief description of what the research is about, and origin of the problem was traced through the background to the study in its wider and narrow contexts. The implication of this is that, it had to comprise of a variety of issues, this helped to understand the specific problems addressed by the researcher. The various elements considered at this stage were related among them to show how they lead to the problem that was thereof isolated and treated by the researcher.

Against the background, the researcher isolated the problem of the study he found to be particularly crucial, and looked at it critically. This equally had an implied that, the researcher had to categorically state the problem in clear and specific terms. This delimitation helped the researcher to manage and deal with the problem efficiently and effectively. This was so because, the researcher clearly stated how the situation under investigation was like and how it should have been. By isolating the problems

under investigation, precisely and clearly stating it, the knowledge gaps were discovered.

The scope of the study, the limit within which the study had to be kept was stated. The reasons for the limit were geographical, ideological and personal. This implies that, the researcher had to keep within the limits of the study, and issues outside the stated scope were not the focus of this study. This helped the researcher to concentrate, exhaust and keep focus on the issues concerning the matter under investigation.

The purpose of the study was also stated. The implication of this for the study findings is that, the objectives had to describe the final target foreseen by the researcher in the study. This entailed both general and specific objectives. This further implied that, each objective stated had to fit within the method described to attain it.

The research questions: the researcher posed research questions which guided this study. This implies that, the questions which underpinned this study had to emanate from the objectives of the study, and besides, it had to be answered during field study.

Definitions of terms like key terms were provided for and phrases had to be used to describe the meanings of the terms used in the study. This avoided the problem of different interpretation by respondents. The implication of this was that, the researcher had to constantly explain the meanings of the terms as used in the study in the due course of the research. This made the matter under investigation to be clearly understood

The conceptual frame work: the conceptual frame work is a scheme of ideas which describe the research project. This implies that, the conceptual frame work has to descriptively explain the frame of ideas about the study while determining the independent and the dependent variables. Alongside, this represented the logical flow of the ideas diagrammatically and gave premise for operationalizing the variables under investigation.

The literature review, the researcher had to review a sample of list of literary sources closely related to the research topic. The implication of this for the study findings was that, the works cited had to demonstrate the existing gaps or the problems. Furthermore, this meant that, for each source, the researcher had to briefly mention

and relate the major ideas raised to the problem, identify and state what he intended to add to the existing body of knowledge. This was found to be crucial to the authenticity of the research vis-a-vis the contribution of the reviewed sources.

The research methodology: directly dealt with the methods, designs, instruments to mention a few. This implies that, the researcher precisely explained the steps he followed to accomplish the research. Alongside this, it also implied that, the methodology used was not generic to apply to any research but was rather fairly specific, showing particularly how the researcher handled each stage and theme. This was crucial to the study because the objectivity of the study results depended on the strength of the methodology.

The researcher employed a descriptive analytical survey design as it was the most suited method in the context of this research. Alongside this, the researcher engaged both quantitative and Qualitative research methods.

The researcher used interview schedule and questionnaires for collecting data from the respondents. These instruments were designed to solicit information from the respondents. Data gathered from interviews were supplemented by that got from questionnaire. This targeted key respondents in elective public office as well as those who are key in matters concerning community welfare, participation in decision making and in public political participation.

The study utilized purposive sampling technique to select a sample of (128) from a population size of (189). It is from this population that the sample size was derived. This was selected, using the Slovene's formula for calculations of sample sizes. This implied that the sample size was appropriately stated and the information got was dependable.

The methods of data collection chosen for this research project was best suited to achieving the aims of the research, which articulated the specific perspectives and experiences of Women. The implication of this was that, Qualitative research methods allowed for the participants to express, in their own words, 'their perceptions or experiences in order to provide insights into their beliefs about their circumstances,

somewhat considerably quantifiable facts. This constituted a credible amount of information which are presented, interpreted, analysed and discussed in line with the objectives of the study here in chapter four.

The information gathered was compared and contrasted with that of the related literature review to be able to establish the gaps in terms of knowledge. This enabled the researcher to bring out the technical information and to appropriately explain them in relation to the findings in a way to negate or support them. Both descriptive and analytical research findings were appropriately presented. Where descriptive statistics were used, key explanations followed each illustration.

While the literature review presented the other peoples views or ideas, the researcher's voice was maintained throughout the process of the work. The researcher's voice was maintained by starting and ending the paragraph with his own ideas and words. This implied/required that, the researcher frequently focuses on the problem under study and uses real life experiences for examples cited in his arguments. In so doing, knowledge gaps were clearly depicted by the researcher. The relationship of the study with the previous studies were clearly identified, presented and discussed and the implications of the key findings were explored. Having looked at chapter four, the researcher then made summaries based on the research question derived from this study. Thereafter, conclusions were drawn and recommendations given based on the study.

**Data Analysis:** In this study, the researcher identified key variables for the study. The main variable of focus of the study was derived from the study topic *women political participation and decision making in Hargeisa, Somaliland*.

In this study, data collection was analyzed using frequencies and percentages as well as themes and explanations while comparing and contrasting the findings with the literature review part of the study. The implication of this is that, the previous chapters constituted in this study do not stand isolated but rather there is a web of interactions and interconnections as well as interdependency of the work in the different chapters of the study. Similarly, it implies that, the parts of the different chapter of the study, have some forward and backward linkages, that constitutes a

logical flow of the ideas and, the correlation or links between the various themes in the study.

To carry out the above analyses, the researcher employed the use of simple percentages and frequencies. The above quantitative analysis was supported with detailed qualitative analysis to provide the logical basis for causal inference in the relationship between women's political participation and decision making as resulting from the roles of the government of Somaliland and its implications for the parliament and the public policy analysis on one hand , and citizenship and constitutionalism on the other hand. This also helped the researcher to explain the dynamics of the challenges facing the women in political participation and decision making in Somaliland.

Equally so, the frequency and percentage distribution were used to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The frequency and percentages were applied for examining the challenges of political participation and decision making processes among women in Somaliland.

The study also looked for statistical association between changes in the level of challenges experienced by women and the extent to which policy and especially gender policies and the constitution and other relevant policy options apply. It should be noted that, appropriateness of policy design is not a sufficient condition for the success of a policy strategy. Proper and effective implementation is another important condition for success. The researcher however, emphasized that, effective implementation depends on such factors as the availability of resources and the administrative competence and the capacity of the government officials or personnel to empower the women in political decision making process as well as the political will of the government to do so.

This also helped the researcher to explain the dynamics of the challenges facing the women in political participation and decision making in Somaliland

Instrumentation and limitations: not all the research tools constructed are 100% correct due to human error. In view of the following threats to validity, the researcher considered an allowable 5% margin of error 0.05 level of significance. Measures are

also indicated in order to minimize if not to eradicate the threats to the validity of the findings of this study.

This implies that, the researcher had to control the extraneous variables which stood beyond the researcher's control such as respondents' honesty, personal biases and uncontrolled setting of the study.

Alongside this, was the issue of attrition/Mortality: this implies that not all the questionnaires may be returned completely answered nor even retrieved back due to circumstances on the part of the respondents such as travels sickness, hospitalization and refusal/withdrawal from participating.

Additionally, while the interviews were on, some of the respondents took this initiative wanting to narrate their own problems. These problems were addressed by reminding the participants about the objectives and the purpose of the study. Sometimes the meetings went beyond the time that was allotted for them to cover the time lost in extraneous issues.

However, some of the factors raised remained as challenges because it was practically impossible for the researcher to resolve the structural and politically sensitive and deep rooted cultural- religious related and constitutionally backed problems. Nevertheless, the interviews and the questionnaires Yielded fruitful results and some of the issues raised in questionnaire were confirmed during the interviews, the research benefited a lot from the synergistic efforts of the respondents in sharing their views, experiences and values about the matter under investigation. This implied that, research questions were adequately answered including the objectives of the study. Given that the implication of the study have already been dealt with, the study now focuses on the summaries, conclusions and recommendations as highlighted in the next chapter (chapter five)

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMERIES, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Introduction:** This chapter gives summaries of the discussions, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings. The summaries are organized by sections within the chapter and arranged by the research questions raised. Below are the details of the work:

**This study answered the following research question: to what extent do the women participate and contribute in decision making process about matters of the state governance in Hargeisa Somaliland?**

Observations indicate that, in Somaliland women have no consideration in politics, leadership and decision making about matters that affect them and others as well as in matters concerning state building and governance. This is so because, by Somali tradition, a woman does not take part in the decision making because the decision making is the work and the responsibility of the men.

Based on such strong emotive resentments, it was critical clear that without proper for a women's political participation, no one can asses correctly the contribution of the women in governance. This is also reinforced by the fact that men constitute formidable challenges for women who have by chance managed to be elected; while the environment is unfriendly for women, fellow women do not support women's initiatives to climb the political decision making lather, the significance of women's political contribution towards politics and governance is no where to be felt since in Hargeisa the only women representing the others resigned. One thing which is clear in her resignation is that there are a lot of ambiguities concerning women's political duties. Thus, it is complex to directly comment on the extent of women contribution in decision making about matters of state governance in Hargeisa Somaliland.

**The research question which under pinned this section of the study was: What are the levels of women's political participation challenges under the lights of the Somaliland political landscape?**

1. Tribalism is a major factor that affects Somaliland women's political participation and it becomes a part of our life;
2. Women's intellectual capacity is not mature enough to participate in the politics
3. Women have no common ground to view themselves as separate status that is not dependent on their counterpart in attaining their goals.
4. the natural responsibility of women; the women's household and child care responsibilities
5. The lack of economic power.
6. Women consider themselves as the sexual property of their husbands.
7. women themselves are politically incapacitated and not supported to each other
8. the absence of women's linkages and co-operations
9. the lack of women's political will
10. The lack of support right from the family, clan, community and at national levels

**In this part of the study the research question which governed it was: What are the challenges facing women in political decision making in Hargeisa Somaliland?**

1. Women's decisions are ignored due to their minority in decision making positions
2. Women have no full participation because of their low self-esteems
3. Women are lose their confidence and will, due to their lack of political experiences which are based on traditional way of live
4. Women are loyal for this reason men are not want to them. They opposed women to hold a public positions and if they hold they don't give support rather than resists
5. Since male are dominant, women lacked communications due to social stigma
6. Lack of support by the male members the house of parliament and the council of elders

7. The miss conception and miss perception among the \_elders about the roles of women in either house
8. The prevailing traditions and cultures which promote male dominance in decision making
9. Cultural tendencies to keep women to be submissive to the men
10. The lack of acceptance by men for women to be involved in politics of the country and belief that women do not deserve political positions and the irony that the women do not themselves have the political will much as they are not supported by fellow women and their counter party males.
11. Additionally, “women lack the support in both of her two clans-birth and married clans”....
12. This is the kind of experience a Somali political woman would face even if she succeeds to be a member of parliament or a council”.....many women Somali women are left speechless about the experiences that they go through. At times they consider not to speak any more about the wild experiences, and the trauma, and isolation by the members with whom they are to deliberate on matters affecting the citizens.

**The research question that informed this section of the study was: What are the previous failures and how to empower women to participate the policies and decision making process in Hargeisa Somaliland?**

1. Previous failures: Somaliland government has in many ways attempted to resolve the problems concerning women’s political participation through setting quota in Somaliland House of Representatives in 2008 to no avail.
2. Resistance of women’s efforts in politics by the Somaliland House of Guurti (elders), division among the women, lack of support from the families as well as the government.
3. The miss- conception and misinterpretation of the constitution and other legal policies relating to the rights of all the genders
4. Lack of understanding from the community concerning the need of the women to participate in decision making and politics
5. The lack of government commitment towards the creating a conducive environment for the inclusion of women in politics and decision making and the

absence of the both gender policy and lack of political ambitions on the side of women to take up the leadership tasks.

6. Lack of empowerment for women to be at par with men, in terms of the capacity in order to use the rights and privilege due to them and make use of the good offices and gain access to and control of the available resources like in economic, social, political, religious and cultural fields to promote functional democracy, and true justice for advancement of women's interests for governance. Without active participation of women's perspectives at all level in decision making, and other political activities, the goals of equality and development cannot be achieved.

7. A further implication is that women need to develop among other things leadership skills, positive self-esteem and confidence, encourage and support one another, and develop strong assertive options,. The building and strengthen solidarity among women through information, education and sensitization activities and advocacy at all levels to enable women to influence political, economic, social decisions, processes and systems are among the affirmative actions that need to be undertaken seriously by the government

8. The policy implementers and the community should realise the women's need for power sharing, as a right and entitlement due to them. Constitution of the Republic of Somaliland should be upheld, by recognizing the importance of women's empowerment to enable equal participation in public life to enable the women to enjoy their political and human rights to the fullest.

9. This implies that, the government obliged to encourage, and legislate for, the right of women to be free of practices which are contrary to Sharia and which are injurious to their person and dignity as up held in (Article 36 (2) of Somaliland Constitution (2001)). This calls for government commitment so as to achieve the goal of equal participation of women in politics and take major steps to change the socio-cultural, political, religious, and economic structural barriers in consortium with the community for a common goal and purpose.

10. It further implies the need for building a strong women's movement and civil society structures to raise awareness of the need to consider women's political initiatives and creating enabling environment that can influence the direction of politics and development in favour of women priority tailored towards their political and social needs.

### **Suggestions to Curb the Prevailing Problems:**

1. Promoting women empowerment and capacity building,
2. Lobbying for Men's support and encouraging the women cling to their political positions, and career
3. Helping Women to have amicable environment in which they can demonstrate their political will.
4. Undertaking constitutional amendments and introducing quota system to facilitate women's membership in either house including the councils (the house of Guiti/elders).
5. The enactment of family law and enforcing any other law intended for womens political participation and emancipation
6. To make a move towards changing the socio-economic and political attitudes and social structures and engage the social institutions to transform the factors which hinder women's political participation
7. Giving Women the opportunity to have gain political exposures prior to their recruitment into politics; this will enable them to play their roles more effectively and efficiently. And it will also enhance their knowledge on how to write good political manifestos, how to conduct successful political campaigns and the right methods or approaches to use in public address or rally, how to manage their time in order to balance between the multiple tasks of reproductive and productive roles.
8. Need for social transformations in order to sensitize the public about the women's inclusion in politics
9. Women must join and actively to participate in the existing community organizations in order to show their capabilities to the community and at the same time must form special organizations which raise their awareness, and work as lobbying forces that promotes their equal rights in both civil and political domains.
10. The formations of women's linkages and co operations are vital to overcome such barriers in concerted efforts.
11. The government and community should recognize women's role in the society in as far as governance and state building is concerned

12. Tribalism can only be reduced through media, and awareness programme addressing its bad impact on community development and the women's political participations.

13. For better future political environment Children should be socialized in a manner which enhances them to conceptualize the roles of gender in development, interactions between genders, culture, and environment to build a community not based on tribal lineage.

**Conclusion:** over all objectives of the study were achieved, it is concluded that, women face serious challenges in their political careers of decision making, governance and state building in Hargeisa, Somaliland.

### **Recommendations of the Findings:**

Civil society and women activists need to work towards sensitization and awareness creation among the community to realize the need of the Women to participate in politics and governance

Women need to realize their self-esteems and gain confidence and political will, and political experiences

Women need to win the support of their fellow women, families, clans and friends in the political race

The men need to realize the women's need for political power and change the way they look at the women and they should start supporting the women

Human right activist should work as checks and balances to Condon the social stigma against women

The elders need to start showing the concern for women and respect their decision

The lack of acceptance by men for women to be involved in politics of the country and belief that women do not deserve political positions and the irony that the women do not themselves have the political will much as they are not supported by fellow women and their counter party males.

The local community must realize the need for unity and cohesion for a common goal,

Women have no common ground to view themselves as separate status that is not dependent on their counterpart in attaining their goals.

Women need to work hard to attain financial and material freedom to gain the needed economic power.

Lobbying for Men's support and encouraging the women cling to their political positions, and career

Governments must be committed towards helping women to have amicable environment in which they can demonstrate their political will.

There is need by the government and the relevant stake holders to undertake constitutional amendments and introduce quota system to facilitate women's membership in either house including the councils (the house of Guurti/elders).

The government and the judiciary should ensure the enactment of family law and enforcing any other law intended for women's political participation and emancipation

The support of the nongovernmental organization is required to make a move towards changing the socio-economic and political attitudes and social structures and engage the social institutions to transform the factors which hinder women's political participation

Giving Women the opportunity to gain political exposures prior to their recruitment into politics; this will enable them to play their roles more effectively and efficiently. And it will also enhance their knowledge on how to write good political manifestos, how to conduct successful political campaigns and the right methods or approaches to use in public address or rally, how to manage their time in order to balance between the multiple tasks of reproductive and productive roles.

The civil society organizations need to undertake social transformations in order to sensitize the public about the women's inclusion in politics

Women must join and actively participate in the existing community organizations in order to show their capabilities to the community and at the same time must form special organizations which raise their awareness, and work as lobbying forces that promotes their equal rights in both civil and political domains.

The government and community should recognize women's role in the society in as far as governance and state building is concerned

The media should ensure sensitization and awareness creation on the effects of Tribalism on community development and the women's political participations.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

1. A Study could analyze the contribution of the civil society organizations in promotion of women political participation and human rights
2. Another study could assess the policy gaps concerning gender equity in governance and politics for women empowerment.
3. Further research could be conducted in the field concerning implication of culture on women's decision making and political participation

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## **APPENDIX 1A**

### **INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR THE RESPONDENTS**

---

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Greetings!

I am a M.A. in Development Studies candidate of Kampala University. I conducted Part of the requirements for an award of my Master Degree. My study is entitled, “WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND DECISION MAKING IN HARGEISA, SOMALILAND.” Within this context, may I request you to participate in this study by answering the questionnaires? Kindly do not leave any option unanswered. Any data you will provide shall be for academic purposes only and no information of such kind shall be disclosed to others.

May I retrieve the questionnaire within two days?

Thank you very much in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. Khadar Mohamed Ahmed

## APPENDIX 1B

### Face Sheet: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

1. Gender (Please Tick): (1) Male\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Female\_\_\_\_\_
2. Age categories:
  1. 25 – 40Years
  2. 41 – 56Years
  3. 57 – 72Years
  4. 73 and Above
3. Marital status
  1. Single
  2. Married
  3. Widowed
  4. Divorced

### Qualifications Under Education Discipline (Please Specify):

1. Secondary School\_\_\_\_\_
2. Vocational Training Equivalent to Secondary
3. Diploma \_\_\_\_\_
4. University Degree\_\_\_\_\_
5. Post Graduate \_\_\_\_\_
6. Other, Specify\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 1C

### Questionnaire to Determine the Level of Challenges of Women's Political Participation

Direction: On the space provided before each option, indicate your best Choice by using the rating system below:

Response Mode	Rating	Description
Very relevant	(4)	very important
Relevant	(3)	important
Somewhat relevant	(2)	somewhat important
Not relevant	(1)	not important

- 
1. Women's participation in Somaliland politics is very important aspect as it enhances the welfare of our society
  2. Women have no power to participate in the politics of the country, due to the Educational barriers.
  3. Women have no power to participate in the politics of the country, due to the Economic barriers
  4. Women have no power to participate in the politics of the country, due to Religious Misperceptions

5. The government and the political parties themselves are not willing women's political participation, because they believe that women's political involvement are excluded them from their supremacy in the political arena
6. Somali customary law and practices were not recognized Women's equal political participation rights with men in both appointment and the candidacy for the election.
7. Clan elders and the community themselves do not consider that women have a power to represent their clan in the political positions
8. Women lack an adequate governmental policies, strategies and laws that addresses the negative customs and practices, which foster women's marginalization and disfavorable political sphere
9. Women have less membership number in the political organizations/parties, which limits women to have an equal opportunities in candidacy for the elections
10. Women do not get fundraising from their clans during political campaigns.
- 11 women's organizations failed to politically empower and to build up linkages among women
12. Women themselves have no political will and that is why their participation in the politics become very poor
13. Women voters are not supported by women candidates, instead they prefer to vote for a man who belong to their birth clan
14. The adoption of electoral quota is an effective way that can empower women in political participation
15. Women's civic education and economic empowerment are significant for the empowerment of women in political participation
16. Women can be empowered by the adaption of gender policies that addresses the customs and practices hindering women to participate in the politics and decision making processes at all levels.
17. Awareness raising, advocacy and lobbying aimed at to change the public misperceptions towards women's political participations rights are another means that can be empowered women's political participations

## APPENDIX 1D

### Questionnaire to Establish the Level of Challenges Facing Women in Political Decision Making

Direction 1: Please write your rating on the space before each option which corresponds to your best choice in terms of Challenges Facing Women in Political Decision Making. Kindly use the scoring system below:

Response Mode	Rating	Description
Very relevant	(4)	very important
Relevant	(3)	Important
Somewhat relevant	(2)	somewhat important
Not relevant	(1)	Not important

Direction 1: Please write your rating on the space before each option which corresponds to your best choice in terms of Challenges Facing Women in Political Decision Making.

---

1. Women who hold political positions are faced many challenges among others lack of political experience and skills of leadership
2. Men do not seriously consider women's contributions and suggestions in the decision making meetings because traditionally women were not allowed to attend meetings with men

3. Since women has no majority in the seats of the councils, women's voice is unheard
4. Women are not accepted as a clan representative in political and traditional aspects
5. Women in the decision making positions feel isolated, for this reason women can't make their self-assertions and lose their self-confidence
6. Women lack communications and access of information in decision making process
7. The only means in which women can overcome their political challenges is to get political empowerment such as leadership trainings, financial supports, awareness and mobilizations

## **APPENDIX II**

### **Schedule Interview**

#### **Introduction**

This interviews schedule will be used during interviews with the parliamentary and Hargeisa local council members of under study. This will enable the researcher to collect the relevant data for this study.

Q1: what are the factors that effects women's political participation under the lights of Somaliland political landscape?

Q2: What are the solutions of the factors that effects women's political Participation under the lights of Somaliland political landscape?

Q3: What are the challenges facing women in political decision making under the Somaliland political landscape?

Q4: How to overcome the challenges that facing women in political decision making under the Somaliland political landscape?

5: What are the previous failures and how to empower women to participate the policies and decision making process?

Q6: What are the main challenges you have faced when you were member of the house of elders and why you resigned from your membership of the house of elders?

### APPENDIX III

**Table 8: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male		
Female		
<b>Age</b>		
25-40		
41-56		
57-72		
73-above		
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married		
Divorced		
<b>Educational Qualifications</b>		
Secondary		
vocational training equivalent to secondary		
Diploma		
university degree		
post graduate		

**Table 9: Level of Challenges of Women’s Political Participation**

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1: Women’s participation in Somaliland politics is very important aspect as it enhances the welfare of our society		
Q2: Women have no power to participate in the politics of the country, due to the Educational barriers		
Q3: Women have no power to participate in the politics of the country, due to the Economic barriers		
Q4: Women have no power to participate in the politics of the country, due to Religious Misperceptions		
Q5: The government and the political parties themselves are not willing women’s political participation, because they believe that women’s political involvement are excluded them from their supremacy in the political arena		
Q6: Somali customary law and practices were not recognized Women’s equal political participation rights with men in both appointment and the candidacy for the election.		
Q7: Clan elders and the community themselves do not consider that women have a power to represent their clan in the political positions		
Q8: Women lack an adequate governmental policies, strategies and laws that addresses the negative customs and practices, which foster women’s marginalization and disfavorable political sphere		
Q9: Women have less membership number in the political organizations/parties, which limits women to have an equal opportunities in candidacy for the elections		
Q10: Women do not get fundraising from their clans during political campaigns		
Q11: women’s organizations failed to politically empower and to build up linkages among women		
Q12: Women themselves have no political will and that is why their participation in the politics become very poor		
Q13: Women voters are not supported by women candidates, instead they prefer to vote for a man who belong to their birth		

clan		
Q14: The adoption of electoral quota is an effective way that can empower women in political participation		
Q15: Women's civic education and economic empowerment are significant for the empowerment of women in political participation		
Q16: Women can be empowered by the adaption of gender policies that addresses the customs and practices hindering women to participate in the politics and decision making processes at all levels		
Q17: Awareness raising, advocacy and lobbying aimed at to change the public misperceptions towards women's political participations rights are another means that can be empowered women's political participations		

**Table 10: Level of Challenges Facing Women in Political Decision Making**

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Q1: Women who hold political positions are faced many challenges among others lack of political experience and skills of leadership		
Q2: Men do not seriously consider women’s contributions and suggestions in the decision making meetings because traditionally women were not allowed to attend meetings with men		
Q3: Since women has no majority in the seats of the councils, women’s voice is unheard		
Q4: Women are not accepted as a clan representative in political and traditional aspects		
Q5: Women in the decision making positions feel isolated, for this reason women can’t make their self assertions and lose their self-confidence		
Q6: Women lack communications and access of information in decision making process		
Q7: The only means in which women can overcome their political challenges is to get political empowerment such as leadership trainings, financial supports, awareness and mobilizations		

