

GENDER INEQUALITIES IN THE ETHIOPIAN PUBLIC SECTOR: CONSTRAINT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Development involves increasing standard of living, which allows for equal distribution of social wealth. From this perspective, stressing gender means emphasising the empowerment of women, as well as men. Societies that discriminate on the basis of gender pay a significant price in terms of lower quality of life and slower economic growth and development. Development effectiveness can be increased by active participation of women and men in the labour market. This paper examines men, and women's work in the Ethiopian public sector. The main objective of the study was to investigate whether gender-specific inequalities exist in the Ethiopian public sectors and to investigate factors, which have contributed to gender-specific inequalities. The study mainly depends on data from civil service commission.

This study has found out that women's participation in the government organisation has increased although women's number declines as one moves from lower to higher position. Due to lack of equal access to the educational system, women come to the market with smaller human capital endowments. Moreover, women study courses most often prepare them for low economic status jobs. Due to these differences in education and due to gender-differentiated market segmentation, there is a gender wage-gap in the Ethiopian public sector. Women are also victims of social practices and prejudices that crowd them into low paying occupations. In short, the most explanatory factors for female-male wage differentials and occupational segregation of women are productivity-enhancing attributes i.e. education, training and experience.

1. INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

1.1. Background of the Study

In earlier times, development was associated with the rate of economic growth. Nowadays development incorporates additional indicators such as: better health services; educational opportunities; level of literacy; access to various social and public services; freedom of speech; greater participation in public life; and inter-

generational equity. Men and women can only have equal chances for achieving the same standard of living if they have the same distribution of opportunity and outcomes throughout their life (Folbre 1985). More precisely, economic equality will exist only when employment opportunities and outcomes, earnings and returns to labour are equal by gender (Masika and Joeques 1996).

However, country case studies throughout Africa show that gender based inequality acts as a constraint to economic development. Gender-based differences affect labour productivity and have implications for the dynamism of a country's economy and directly limit growth. Accordingly, there is increased recognition of the relevance of gender for development work in Africa.

There is a consensus among development professionals that women and men experience development and societal change in different ways, and the development process is affected by gender relationship in the society. And such was the concern of development policy makers and they began to examine gender as a separate category similar to income, class or race. The publication of Boserup's "Women's Role in Economic Development" is often seen as the point from which the women and development lobby grew. It was only after 1970s that development planners reached a consensus that the active involvement of women in development is vital in order for society to achieve its development objectives.

According to the 1984 census, some 11.3% of the Ethiopian population is located in urban areas and women constitute 53.5% of the total urban population. Women's economic activities ranging from remunerated to unremunerated ones, are performed in the workplace as well as in the home front, both in the formal and in the informal sectors. Women's activity rate in the production of goods and services increased from 55% in 1984 to 63% in 1994. According to the census activity rate only indicates the work that involves the production of goods or services, both for household consumption and for exchange. However, it excludes the reproductive and community activities, in which women are predominantly involved.

Concerning women's employment, Ethiopia has ratified ILO's conventions. Moreover, National policy on Ethiopian women was formulated in 1993. The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia also guarantees women equal right with men (Article 35). It provides that women have the right to acquire, administer, control, use and transfer property. In addition, it guarantees woman a right to equality in employment, promotion, pay, and the transfer of pension entitlements. Despite the inclusion of women's issues in national policies, women in Ethiopia face many constraints in their efforts to participate efficiently in the public sector. The constraints could be the following: (1) responsibilities in home production and in reproduction (2) unequal access to education and training (3) social and cultural biases against women.

As the World Bank (1996) has argued, eliminating gender inequalities leads to significant productivity gains, provides large societal benefits, and enhances poverty reduction efforts. Investing in women will generate important benefits for society in the form of lower child mortality, higher educational attainment, better nutrition, and slower population growth. Moreover, studies have shown that increased female labour force participation coincided with a number of important advances, such as rising female/male earnings ratios, declining occupational and pay discrimination, higher rates of female political participation, and some redistribution of domestic work burdens.

In general, it is largely believed that compared to men, women contribute to a larger share of what they earn to basic family maintenance. Thus, since women are central to the success of poverty alleviation efforts, improving women's earnings can have important economic effects and economic success for their own lives and all people in the country.

The paper is organised in four parts. The introduction part deals with background of the study; statement of the problem; objectives of the study; hypotheses of the study; and literature review. Section two discusses female labour force participation, and section three consists of gender inequalities in the Ethiopian public sector. Finally, section four concludes the paper.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Gender inequality has a long history and has been increasing in the past decades in many parts of the developing world. It is one of the most serious challenges facing development strategists and is one of the constraints for economic development. Among the inequalities that reduce women's development include unequal distribution of work burden within the household, lower earnings for the same work, reduced access to paid employment, inequalities in promotion, and reduced access to training and education.

The central questions to be asked about women in the labour market are:

- Why are women disproportionately present in various occupations and why are women being paid less compared to their male counterparts?
- What exactly is the work that women and girls do, and how does it differ from that of men and boys?

The gender division of labour starts from the earliest ages. Even when women enter the "visible" sector of the economy, they are expected to carry on with their "invisible" tasks. This means that women all over the world are working a "double day". Neglecting the economic and social roles of women might exacerbate existing inefficiencies and misallocations of productive resources leading to slower growth and development. Moreover, any development effort that neglects half the population must

be regarded as intrinsically flawed by anyone who is concerned with equity (Klasen 1993).

Since the employment structure has become an important domain in the combat against inequalities between women and men, the study attempts to identify gender specific inequalities in employment as a constraint for economic efficiency. It should be obvious to any economist that when half the population is oppressed to whatever degree, this acts as a constraint on overall resource allocation and economic efficiency. Thus, identification of discrimination against women can lead to policies that will improve the efficiency of human resources utilisation and the economy at large.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The basic objective of the paper is to investigate whether gender-specific inequalities exist in public sectors. Specifically, the objectives are to investigate factors, which have contributed to gender-specific inequalities. The study depends on secondary data from Civil Service Commission and on a study which had been previously done by the author on two public organisations. In order to achieve the stated objectives, qualitative techniques have been used. Percentage and average have also been employed to describe and analyse the data.

1.4. Hypotheses of the Study

The study hypothesises the following: gender-specific inequalities exist in formal organisations in Ethiopia; the main causes of this discrepancy are relatively women's limited access to education and training rather than deliberate policies and practices of discrimination; cultural values and norms on sexual roles seem to have a profound effect on women's inequality, and are important variables supporting and reinforcing fundamental inequalities in the economic sphere; women are not sufficiently integrated into the positions of power and income in formal organisations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have been carried out on women in development since Boserup's thesis revealed the importance of women in development. Since then economists made an important contribution to women in development through the 1980s, with emphasis on micro studies focusing on a variety of issues and often with an interdisciplinary approach: the nature of women's work, the labour market and the gendered divisions of labour, studies on the informal sector, employment issues in international development, the feminisation of the labour force, gender and technology, the environmental crisis, migration and other demographic issues, and female/male ratios and the problem of "missing women," among others. (Sen and Grown 1985; Anker and Hein 1986; Beneria

and Roldan 1987; Berik 1987; Joekes 1987; Deere 1991; Bruce and Dweyer 1988; Berik and Cagatay 1991; Elson 1991; Tinker 1990).

Different studies in Ethiopia mentioned that Ethiopian women form 50 per cent of the total population and labour force of the country with considerable aptitude and potential for practical involvement in economic activities as producers, income generators and family supporters. But their potential appears to be suppressed, and their strengths failing them in their attempts to meet their aspirations (Poluha 1987; Alasebu 1988; TGE and UNICEF 1993; Tsehai 1991; Dejene 1994; SIDA 1992; Tiruwork 1998, 2000; Zewdie and Abebe 1992).

Lack of basic formal education and training, lack of basic management skills and detrimental socio-cultural ties have been identified by different researchers as constraints for women's role in economic development (Kyomuhendo 1991). The literature indicates that the societal gender ideology that restricted women's role to child bearing as a norm explained the subordination of women as their destiny emanating from biological nature. Even if women were educated, their trainings were limited to domestic and household skills.

Closing the educational gender gap by expanding educational opportunities for women is economically desirable for four reasons (Todaro 1997).

1. The rate of return on women's education is higher than that on men's in most developing countries;
2. Increasing women's education not only increases their productivity on the farm and in the factory but also results in greater labour force participation, later marriage, lower fertility and greatly improved child health and nutrition;
3. Improved child health and nutrition and more educated mothers lead to multiplier effects on the quality of a nation's human resources for many generations to come; and
4. Because women carry a disproportionate burden of the poverty and landlessness that permeates developing societies, any significant improvements in their role and status via education can have an important impact on breaking the vicious circle of poverty and inadequate schooling.

According to a study of ILO in 1993, women's low participation rate in the labour force can be explained by several factors: (1) the low absorptive capacity for employment for both sexes; (2) women are not preferred because of their dual roles as producers and reproducers; and (3) the unfavourable cultural and social attitudes towards working women. Funk (1988) also argues that cultural ideology about men and women's roles is a critical factor in determining the way gender relations of production are ordered in a given society and, therefore, must be seriously considered in development planning.

Women's unequal situation in the labour market as well as their relatively powerless status in the family has led to increasing poverty among them. In the labour market, they earn only a percentage of what men earn in equivalent positions, mostly because of lack of bargaining power, perceived excessive absenteeism, job desegregation etc. (UNDP 1995). Women have less power than men, receive less for their work, have less control over household resources, receive less education, have less access to better paying jobs in the formal sector, and are disproportionately represented among unpaid family workers and in the informal sector (Baden with Milward 1995; World Bank 1996).

In both developed and developing countries including Ethiopia, several studies confirmed the existence of wage differentials between men and women (Arends 1992; Gindling 1992; Massiah 1983; Tiruwork 2000; Tsehay 1998, UN 1986). Thus, gender inequality in the labour market remains to be an issue in Africa to which the situation in Ethiopia is not exceptional. Nuri (1992) also confirmed that social and cultural attitudes were among the major factors that put women in low status than men in Ethiopia. Other factors are: lack of adequate level of education and training; women's deprivation of productive resources; the negative impact of biological reproduction; and domestic chores on women's capacity in productive economic activities.

3. FEMALE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

During the United Nations Decade for women (1976-85), there has been a considerable shift in approach on the part of both academic researchers and policy makers. Researchers have moved away from a preoccupation with the role of women within the family toward an understanding of the complexities of women's employment (Moser 1989). The economic role of women in the development process depends in large part on their ability to participate in the labour market. In turn, this ability hinges on their level of training and their skills, on the one hand, and on the availability of work opportunities for them, on the other. According to the Federal Civil Service Commission personnel statistics for 1990 Ethiopian Fiscal year, the total number of Ethiopian Government employees was 316,889 out of which 29.1% were female (Table 1), while the total number of employees in the Federal Government was 40,307 out of which 41.2 per cent were female.

However, despite the increase in the women's educational attainment and qualification level, the employment of women in Ethiopia is by far less than that of men. For example, as indicated in the table below, out of the total number of Federal Government workers employed in 1990 EFY, only 27.7 per cent were females while 72.3 per cent were males (Table 2). Out of these employed women in the same year, 58.9 per cent have got wage below 200 Birr. In contrast, out of total employed men 29.8% receive wage below 200 Birr.

Table 1. Total Number of Government Employees (1990 EFY)

Region	Male	Female	Total	% Of Female
Tigray	13398	7082	20480	34.6
Afar	2436	1027	3463	29.7
Amhara	44742	15554	60296	25.8
Oromia	71977	23862	95839	24.9
Somalia	3872	1148	5020	22.9
Benshangul Gumuz	3668	1395	5063	27.6
S.N.N. & peoples	43504	12180	55684	21.9
Gambella	3105	1065	4170	25.5
Hareri	1667	1215	2882	42.2
Addis Ababa City	11340	10332	21672	47.7
Dire Dawa Administrative	1326	687	2013	34.1
Total	201035	75547	276582	27.3
Federal Government	23702	16605	40307	41.2
Total	224737	92152	316889	29.1

Source: Federal Civil Service Commission (1991 EFY).

Table 2. Total Number of Federal Government Workers Employed in 1990 EFY (by salary)

Salary	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
105-199	263	29.8	199	58.9	462	37.8
200-299	80	9.1	31	9.2	111	9.1
300-399	30	3.4	23	6.8	53	4.3
400-499	105	11.9	41	12.1	146	12.0
500-599	58	6.6	9	2.7	67	5.5
600-699	73	8.3	15	4.4	88	7.2
700-799	148	16.8	10	3.0	158	12.9
800-899	15	1.7	1	0.3	16	1.3
900-999	41	4.6	7	2.1	48	3.9
1000-1099	10	1.1	—	—	10	0.8
1100-1199	32	3.6	1	0.3	33	2.7
1200-1299	24	2.7	—	—	24	2.0
1400-1499	2	0.2	1	0.3	3	0.2
1500-1599	1	0.1	—	—	1	0.1
1600-1699	1	0.1	—	—	1	0.1
Total	883	100	338	100	1221	100
Percent	72.3		27.7		100	

Source: Federal Civil Service Commission, Personnel Statistics for 1990 Ethiopian Fiscal Year.

Agreeing with the above point, Hadera (1999) also mentioned that although job opportunities are limited for both males and females, priority has been given to males during placement even though both sexes have equal educational background and seek the same type of occupation.

There are many factors which influence women's labour force participation. The following are some of the factors: the type of work available; the structure of the family; cultural traditions concerning women's economic roles and responsibilities; fertility levels and cultural traditions influencing child bearing behaviour; child care availability; women's educational levels; women's access to technology; government policy concerning the employment of women; and the level of economic development (Ware 1981). In general, domestic works are the key factors which determine women's labour time allocation to economic activity and it also restricts women to activities compatible with their domestic obligations.

4. GENDER INEQUALITIES IN THE ETHIOPIAN PUBLIC SECTOR

In spite of considerable attention and policy initiatives to deal with the issue as in other developing countries, gender inequalities in Ethiopia exist to a lesser or greater degree. These inequalities vary and include lack of understanding and recognition of women's actual and potential roles; stereotyped perceptions of women's roles; social and cultural biases as well as inadequate information flows to women. For example, out of the total federal government employees, only a limited number of women hold high positions. There is one woman minister; two women with the rank of minister; two vice ministers; twenty six department heads; two managers; five deputy managers; four ambassadors; eight board directors; and six members of board. Moreover, out of 1432 total members in Regional Councils only 5.4% are women and out of 68,788 members in woreda councils all over the country, only 7.2 % are females (FCSC 1991 EFY).

When women are employed in the labour force, they are often asked to perform tasks, which are extensions of their traditional roles. For example, in government offices, there are more female secretaries and clerks; in hospitals there are more female nurses and sanitarians than female doctors; in education there are more female elementary school teachers than female high school teachers and university lecturers. For example, as indicated in the table below compared to elementary level, teaching profession in the higher institution is dominated by men (Table 3 and Figure 1). This confinement to traditional roles hinders women's ability to expand their job and skill ranges.

**Table 3. Total Number of Teachers and Proportion of Female
(By School Level, 1997/98)**

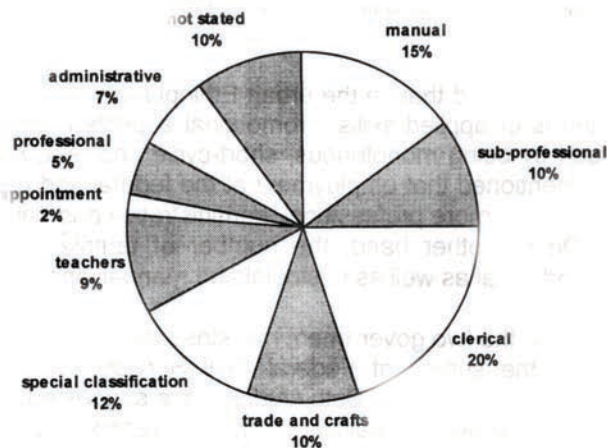
Teachers by profession	Total	% of female
Primary school	109237	27.2
Secondary school	12215	8.3
Graduate Assistant	147	8.2
Assistant lecturer	133	7.5
Lecturer	758	3.2
Assistant professor	322	3.7
Associate professor	139	2.2
Professor	12	0
Others	255	10.6

Source: MOE, Education Statistics, Annual Abstract, 1990 E.C.

Sexual division of labour tends to identify women with domestic activities and this association is often carried over into defining what are women's jobs in the labour market. Thus, the division of labour extends beyond the household into the labour market place. In general, as Lim (1996) noted relative to men, women still face: unequal hiring standards; unequal opportunities for training and retraining; unequal pay for equal work; unequal access to productive resources; segregation and concentration in a relatively small number of female sectors and occupations; unequal participation in economic decision-making; unequal promotion prospects; and greater likelihood of being unemployed and being poor.

The Federal Civil Service Commission, personnel statistics for 1990 EFY has also suggested that proportionately more women than men are employed in low-paying occupations. In Addis Ababa out of total permanent public sector women employees, only 5% were engaged in professional and technical category, 7% in administrative, 10% in sub professional, 20% in clerical and physical, 10% in trade and crafts, and 15% in custodial and manual, 9% in teaching, 12% in special classification, 2% in appointment positions, 10% not stated (FCSC 1999).

Permanent Female Government employees by Type of Service



As indicated in the table below, there are some jobs which are allocated predominantly to women. Thus, most women are engaged in 'female activities'. As a result, in the public sector of Federal Government, where females accounted for 41.2% of total employees, almost 76 per cent of female workers were engaged in jobs, which require lower educational qualifications. For example, out of total 4,656 professional and scientific workers only 15.6 per cent were females. On the other hand, out of 6,264 clerical and physical employees 67.5 per cent were women (Table 4).

Table 4. Permanent Total Government Employees and % of Women by Type of Service Both at Federal and Regional Levels

TYPE OF SERVICE	FEDERAL		BOTH REGION & FEDERAL	
	Total	% of Female	Total	% of Female
Professional & Scientific	4656	15.6	23812	11.9
Administrative	948	23.9	8262	17.9
Sub professional	7291	31.8	66067	26.3
Clerical & physical	6264	67.5	4490	49.5
Trade & crafts	5672	35.8	13163	26.8
Custodial & manual	9991	53.3	42292	39.8
Teachers	-	-	103270	23.3
Appointment	198	11.6	1821	6.2
Special classification	3632	32.2	3752	31.9
Not stated	1655	34.1	9549	25.5
TOTAL	40307	41.2	316889	29.1

Source: Federal Civil service Commission, Personnel Statistics for 1990 Ethiopian Fiscal Year.

The above table has suggested that, in the urban Ethiopia, women are engaged in jobs that are inferior in terms of applied skills, promotional aspects and salary. In addition, they are characterised by being monotonous, short-cycle and relatively quickly learned jobs. Hadera (1999) mentioned that employment at the federal and regional levels from 1994/95 to 1996/97 that are more professional, administrative and sub-professional jobs are given to men. On the other hand, the number of female employees relatively increased in clerical and fiscal as well as custodial and manual jobs.

Tiruwork's (2000) study in the two government ministries, MOF and MEDaC, also falls in broad agreement with the survey of Federal Civil Service Commission, personnel statistics for 1990 Ethiopian fiscal year. Both studies have suggested that in government organisations, there are gender inequalities in type of service, wage, and education. Major findings of the study are given in tables 5 and 8. The study has confirmed the existence of some degree of occupation segregation, which has strong impact on earnings differentials. As indicated in the table below, out of 397 professional workers in the two government ministries 20.2 per cent are women. While out of 269 clerical

workers and out of 242 manual workers 83.3 per cent and 72.4 per cent are women, respectively. For example, when we see the per cent of women engaged in different categories in the two ministries where 49% of total workers are women, 40.8% of them are engaged in clerical and fiscal occupation, and 31.6% are engaged in custodial and manual occupation. On the other hand, only 14.6% of women workers are engaged in professional science. Compared to women workers, male workers are engaged relatively in high-paid market activities. Accordingly, 55.6% of male workers are engaged in professional and scientific occupation while 19.4 per cent of male workers are engaged in clerical and manual position.

**Table 5. Number of Employees in Two Government Ministries
(By Type of Service 1991 EFY in per cent)**

Occupation	Total	Of Which Female in no.	% of Female
Professional	397	80	20.2
Sub-professional	48	14	29.2
Administrative	97	51	52.5
Clerical & physical	269	224	83.3
Trade & crafts	75	9	12
Custodial & manual	242	175	72.4
Total	1129	553	49
Total	100	100	

Source: Tiruwork, 2000.

The reasons for such disparity could be cultural factors, lower educational background of females and perceived rather than real greater absenteeism. The most important factor could be education. The classification of societal roles according to gender has also limited the educational opportunities for women and hence their status in the labour market. It is assumed that for a woman to play her traditional role of mother and home manager, she does not require much education.

Women's numbers among managers and administrators are insignificant because these positions require high technical abilities and experience in management, which a majority of women have not been prepared for. Different researchers mentioned that the identification of certain prestigious jobs as "male" and the absence or paucity of female role models in these occupations discourage females from training or applying for such jobs.

According to Todaro (1997), for all developing countries taken together, the female literacy rate was 29% lower than male literacy, women's mean years of schooling were 45% lower than men's, and females' enrolment rates in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools were 9%, 28% and 49% lower, respectively, than the corresponding male rate. Thus, gender inequality has remained prominent in the area of education. As reported by FCSC (1991 EFY) government female employees are less educated than male

workers. As indicated in Table-6, women are dominantly represented in the lower level of education as compared to men.

Table 6. Permanent Government Employees by Level of Education, 1990 EFY (Federal and Total)

Level of Education	Federal Government Employees			Both Federal & Regional		
	Total	No. Of Females	% Of Female	Total	No. Of Females	% Of Female
Illiterate	1	1	100	2913	860	29.5
Read & write	5648	2460	43.6	12990	4112	31.7
1-3 grade	923	484	52.4	3902	1519	38.9
4-8 grade	7332	3245	44.3	34827	11316	32.5
9-12 grade	11152	5296	47.5	68837	27021	39.3
Certificate	1170	551	47.1	124686	33157	26.6
Voc/Tech. Incomplete	126	75	59.5	755	312	41.3
Diploma (voc./Tech)	3540	2009	56.8	10727	4474	41.7
Coll./univ. Incomplete	554	130	23.5	2656	500	18.8
Diploma (col./univer.	3415	1173	34.3	28217	4318	15.3
Diploma (others)	680	354	52.1	4920	1783	36.2
BA/B.Sc.	3047	421	13.8	13125	1060	8.1
L.L.B	104	5	4.8	183	5	2.7
M.D	334	36	10.8	1636	228	13.9
D.V.M	58	6	10.3	533	50	9.4
M.A./M.Sc.	1477	138	9.3	2953	279	9.5
LLM	19	1	5.3	25	2	8
Ph.D.	147	7	4.8	190	10	5.3
Not stated	580	213	36.7	2814	1146	40.7
Total	40307	16605	41.2	316889	92152	29.1
Percent	100		41.2	100		29.1

Source: Federal Civil Service Commission, Personnel Statistics 1990 EFY.

Despite the strong linkage of education to so many positive outcomes and the marked progress made in the past, due to cultural and social factors, relative to men women are less able to acquire market-valued human capital. This market-valued human capital is the effect of past or expected discriminatory practices. Women focus on traditional feminine courses that have limited career growth opportunities. Due to attitudinal conditioning women are absent in fields that require science and technology while they predominate in the arts, education and social sciences. Enrolment of girls at all levels of schooling in general and at higher institutions in particular is also much lower than boys (see table below).

As indicated by the Ministry of Education, educational statistics annual abstract 1990 E.C., out of the total government and non-government students in primary schools, female students were 36.7%; in secondary schools 40.9%; in regular Diploma programmes 18.5%, and in Regular Degree programmes 13.2%, and in regular post graduate degree programmes 6.9%.

Table 7. Percentage Distribution of Students Enrolled at Higher Institutions (Diploma and Degree Level)

Year	Women	Men
1990/91	12.78	87.22
1991/92	15.41	84.59
1992/93	23.32	76.68
1993/94	19.64	80.36
1994/95	16.51	83.49
1995/96	12.70	87.30
1996/97	18.67	81.33

Source: MOE Annual Abstract (1990 E.C.).

Women can participate in the higher position of the labour force only by acquiring the necessary educational skills and qualifications. Thus, for upward mobility of women in employment they should be in the pursuit for higher education. However, according to the data obtained from MOE, 1990 E.C., out of total 867 students enrolled for postgraduate in 1997/98, only 6.9% were females. Thus, the low level of women participation in tertiary education is one of the reasons for the segregation of women in the lower category of the labour force.

As indicated in the table below, Tiruwork's study in the two government ministries also suggested that the main reason for occupational inequalities between women and men is productivity-enhancing attributes such as, education, training and experience. Thus, the study supports the general view that educational attainment is positively related to earnings.

Table 8. Educational Level in Two Government Ministries

Educational level	Female		Male	
	In Numbers	In Per cent	In Numbers	In Per cent
0-6	34	6.2	23	4
7-12	256	46.3	158	27.5
12+2	11	2	19	3.3
Secretarial	154	27.8	76	13.2
diploma	57	10.3	81	14.1
Diploma	41	7.4	218	37.9
Degree (BA, MA)				
Total	553	100	575	100

Source: Own computations.

Women's wage in developing countries ranges between 50 and 80 per cent of men's (ILO 1995). Gender differentials in wages and earnings vary considerably between sectors and industries, between countries, and over time, as well as with size of enterprise, skill level and occupational category (Masika and Joeques 1996). Due to the differences in education and due to gender-differentiated market segmentation, there is a gender wage-gap in the Ethiopian public organisations. For example, out of 277

permanent government employees who got 1800 and above monthly wage, only 7.2% are women. While out of 45,770 total workers who got wage between 105-199 monthly wage, 41.9% are women.

Table 9. Permanent Government Employees and Proportion of Female by Salary Group

Salary group (in Birr)	Federal		Both Regions and Federal	
	Total	% of Females	Total	% of Females
105-199	11066	56.0	45770	41.9
200-299	4918	43.5	39439	35.3
300-399	4682	38.7	62893	33.7
400-499	3239	40.5	37091	30.0
500-599	3273	48.7	55299	26.1
600-699	3035	45.2	24473	19.7
700-799	2386	33.7	20302	15.2
800-899	1481	31.5	8727	14.2
900-999	1496	17.9	7239	11.1
1000-1099	398	17.1	3041	10.4
1100-1199	831	15.4	2031	9.5
1200-1299	1385	10.6	2424	10.9
1300-1399	281	4.9	341	4.1
1400-1499	483	9.5	1053	7.1
1500-1599	163	5.5	196	5.6
1600-1699	246	8.5	285	7.4
1700-1799	179	10.6	444	11.0
1800 and above	267	7.1	277	7.2
Not stated	498	34.1	5564	23.9
Total	40307	41.2	316889	29.1

Source: Federal Civil Service Commission, Personnel Statistics 1990 EFY.

Similarly, according to the data obtained from the MOF, the average wage rates were Birr 740/month for males and Birr 494/month for females. In Ministry of Economic Development and Co-operation (MEDaC), average wage rates were Birr 972 per month for male worker while for female worker Birr 530 per month. These indicate that women earn 67% of what men earn in Ministry of Finance and 55% of what men earn in MEDaC.

As mentioned by Psacharopoulos (1993), the low-earning position of women can happen either because women workers have low educational attainment than men workers or because women workers are confined to low return activities and lack of access to training and promotion to a greater extent than men. However, different studies also mentioned that the econometric analysis of the gender wage gap has been significant and largely explained by discrimination. In other words, several studies in developing countries revealed that differences in human capital endowments have accounted for less than 50% of the female-male wage differentials and the more than 50% explained by discrimination.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a compelling evidence that improving women's productivity can have important contribution to economic development. There are improvements in the absolute status of women and in general equality – with respect to schooling; labour force participation; and wages. Despite the progress, gender inequalities still persist in the Ethiopian public sector. For example, the study revealed that despite considerable increases in women's education relative to men, women continue to hold low paying positions and earn less than men. They tend to find themselves excluded from the teams of skilled and professional workers who obtain the higher incomes. Male predominance in the labour market coupled with the primacy of women's household production responsibility is a global phenomenon. Thus, structural, attitudinal, cultural, religious factors etc. continued to obstruct the economic progress of women.

The study has also attempted to identify factors explaining occupational segregation and the gender wage gap. The study revealed that the differences in wages are mainly associated with education. However, different econometric results in developing countries including Ethiopia revealed that there are wage differentials with same educational level and with same years of experience. The study mentioned that the gender wage gap has been significant.

Increasing women's ability to earn also has positive effects on women's status. Thus, efforts to improve the position of women should focus on women as economic actors. A substantial proportion of women feel that they should have a recognised economic role and an independent source of income. In order to improve women's earnings the most appropriate policy would be to train and enter women in the predominantly 'male fields'. Moreover, increasing access to and use of family planning and equal access to education is a key prerequisite to reduce gender inequality, because by enabling women to better control their fertility, they can improve their economic and social position since it enables them to participate in remunerative activities and pursue careers similar to men's in much greater numbers.

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