

Review of: "Empowering Women in Leadership and Management Positions to Maintain Gender Equality: A Case Study on Sidama Region"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Thank you for exploring women's equality, a topic that continues to remain relevant. Following are my observations which I hope will help your research:

Introduction:

- What is the region of Sidama, and why would a national/international reader find it relevant? What has been its relationship/relevance with respect to gender and gender equality? Please start by setting a context.
- Gender equality - how do the authors define it in the context of the proposed research? That the focus of your paper is women is not clear. And equality in what sense and where? Equality in a domestic setting, equality in board representation, equality in the political sphere... Can start with a more focused introduction.
- "Fundamental goal for society" - how was this determined? Whom/what are we citing? Is this UN SDGs?
- "Empowering women in leadership and management positions is crucial to achieving this objective" - the abstract introduces "empowering women in leadership and management positions has a positive relationship with maintaining gender equality" as a finding obtained at the end of the research effort. Yet the very first sentence of the introduction states it as a fact. Can change how this is approached.
- 'Empowerment' is also not defined.
- "Role in maintaining gender equality in leadership and management positions" - this is confusing to a first-time reader. Empowering women in leadership/management was positioned as a means to achieving gender equality, and now gender equality in leadership/management is positioned as the end. Reads like circularity.
- 'Taneja, Pryor, & Oyler, 2012,' 'Waters-Bayer, & Letty, 2010,' and 'Sebola, 2015' - very few and rather dated citations. More than one work and dated within the past 3-5 years give credence that a particular perspective remains relevant.
- Overall, the introduction needs work. The three regressors feel pre-selected, and just three small paragraphs written to quickly form an introduction. Need to create a background where, of multiple potential antecedents, these bubble up organically because they are the most important/least researched, etc. Else, is there some framework where these are three antecedents but have never been tested together and hence now... Something?

Research Objectives: Specific and general objectives are really the same, just running versus bulleted. Rather than segmenting out and repeating words to flesh out, just let the general objective flow from the rest of the introduction and

leave it at that.

Research Hypotheses: Even before a literature review was performed, were the potential directions of relationships between various variables explored by others, the hypotheses were ready? It feels predetermined and hence impacts the work's credibility. Hypotheses flow from what is learned about relationships via the literature review.

Literature Review

- "Gender equality refers to the equal rights, opportunities..." Whom are we citing?
- Same observations for all the definitions that follow, e.g., "Empowering women..." etc. - which actually was what should have been done in the Introduction and not the literature review.
- Just six, some rather dated papers, forming the entirety of the literature review, impact credibility. How did one narrow down to these? What was the universe? What were the filtering conditions? Was PRISMA or some other mechanism followed?
- Literature Gaps in the Sidama Region: You can trim this segment. If there are region-specific gender studies, cite them and quickly summarize that the particulars that this paper seeks to explore remain unaddressed. Push this segment above the research model.
- The proposed research model should ideally be the last item. Include hypotheses on the arrows. Reattempt the graphic; for example, use equally sized boxes for antecedents, position arrows with care, etc.

Materials and Methods

- Study Area Description - not required
- Research Philosophical Assumptions - not required
- Research Approaches - not required
- "This study used employees from private higher education institutions in Ethiopia as primary data sources" and then "This includes women working in government offices, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, private enterprises, and community-based organizations." - this is confusing. Whom was the survey administered to?
- "focused on four sector bureaus" - why these?
- Choice of population is not justified. How is it representative of the women populace of Sidama?
- "employees' performance," "use of guided meditation for stress management, the practice of deep breathing, maintaining physical exercise and good nutrition, managing social media time, and connecting with others" - what are these? How did this enter the research?
- What are the scales being used to measure the variables such as gender equality?
- Where is the questionnaire?
- Cronbach's Alpha - which scale is this for? Why does it have 20 items?
- Where are other tests? How is multicollinearity checked for? Since, for example, there appears a natural relationship between X1 - women's education and X3 - women's empowerment, lower X1 will limit X3.
- Random sampling is mentioned - how was it achieved? Which technique was employed, e.g., systematic sampling,

etc.?

- How were the participants approached? How was the survey administered - online, paper form, in person, etc.?
- Which language was the survey in, and how comfortable is the sample in that language?
- **Correlation Analysis** - why and wherefore unrequired. Correlation analysis is expected.
- **Summary of Descriptive Statistics** - skewness and kurtosis?

Method: 160 is a small sample, and the paper does not convince random sampling. Non-parametric tests might have been more appropriate than multiple regression.

Regression Result: $R = .762$ - what is this? $R^2 = .565$ - this is really low and suggests that a substantial portion, or 43.5%, of the regressand's variability is not explained by the model.

Discussion:

- "being female has a regression coefficient" - gender was not a variable determinant; the survey was only administered to women. What is this then?
- "hypothesis H1 is accepted" - repeated for all hypotheses
- Separate out result discussion and implications such as 'Creating inclusive work environments' etc.

Conclusion should be the last item on the paper. Move up recommendations.

Where are study limitations and future opportunities?