

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.

This is one of those manuscripts in which I sympathize with the amount of work; however, to my concern, it could improve with a revision of a few parts. The premise of the paper is interesting. My objective in this review is to be constructive and encourage the authors in their attempts. Therefore, please take my comments (suggestions/questions) in this positive spirit.

There are 5 authors on this article, so even though it has good potential, these authors need to put in a bit more effort to refine it. For example, the abstract should be restructured. An abstract should include the primary/main aim (the research questions addressed or any hypotheses tested). The abstract should grip the reader's attention with the gap detected by the authors. Why is the article interesting? Then, as the authors do: the research design; the methods and procedures employed; the number of participants; the main outcomes and results; the conclusions drawn from these data and results, including their implications for further research or application/practice. An abstract represents briefly the article; it depends on the journal how many words it will contain.

In the abstract, we read phrases like "The results suggest that providing opportunities for women to hold leadership and management positions is crucial in promoting and ensuring gender equality," which are well-known. What do the authors truly demonstrate that's new? Where is the Sidama Region in the world? (I know it), but maybe a parenthesis likeTitle... [...] Sidama region (Ethiopia) helps people who are not so good in geography.

Perhaps, in an abstract, it may not be as crucial to show in line 3 how many questionnaires were distributed and how many were collected "Questionnaires were distributed to 262 respondents, with 160 properly filled and returned" (especially since the numbers are not high, or the reader doesn't know if they are in relation to the studied population), but rather to explain who is being interviewed and why. The details of the sampling process can be explored later in the sampling section.

In the introduction section, the authors mention phrases such as "several research gaps persist in our understanding of the factors that contribute to maintaining gender equality in these domains." However, this statement lacks support from the literature; there is not a single reference supporting this fact, making it merely an assertion by the authors. The same issue arises with the long statement: "Current literature has extensively explored the effects of education and training on women's employment opportunities and career success, but little research has examined its role in maintaining gender

equality in leadership and management positions," where references are not provided either. Conversely, when the authors cite their own aim, it is when a reference like "Taneja, Pryor, & Oyler, 2012," is cited. Their aim is what they want to do, and it should be supported for all that has been said and backed up previously.

The rest of the introduction follows a similar pattern, and it is recommended to thoroughly review it based on the previous comments. The authors present ideas without scientific backing and only later rely on authors to support their objective.

In the introduction, the authors should clearly explain what is happening and state their objective upfront, avoiding its gradual unveiling in successive paragraphs. The introduction should set the stage, identify the research gap, and pose the research question. Subsequently, in another section, a literature review should be conducted to present the literature and support the hypotheses based on the previously defined objectives. Therefore, there is an overlap between the introduction, literature review, and objectives' sections.

More precisely, the introduction presents three objectives: 1. "Hence, this study aims to investigate the relationship between gender bias and stereotypes and the maintenance of gender equality (Waters-Bayer, & Letty, 2010)". 2. "Therefore, this study aims to investigate the combined effects of these three variables on maintaining gender equality in leadership and management positions." 3. "Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between the lack of access to education and training and the maintenance of gender equality in these fields (Taneja, Pryor, & Oyler, 2012)." And afterwards, in section 1.1, the authors restate these objectives again. The article should flow smoothly without repetitive arguments.

Furthermore, the three hypotheses are linked to the introduction's arguments but lack theoretical support. They appear in section 1.2, and that's it. Subsequently, the literature is presented, which should precede those and support these hypotheses.

In conclusion, the entire sections need to be reorganized so that the introduction captures the reader's attention by discussing the topic, concepts, and specifying why this specific case is being studied there, for a particular reason rather than another. Why? So that authors can justify the title.

Again, section 2.1 lacks theoretical support (no references found) despite discussing a "concept," so the authors need to complete this part. They are not writing a manual but an academic article, so well-supported arguments are needed at every step, and the same applies to 2.2 and 2.3 (although this last section is somewhat better).