



WOLKITE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRAGUATE STUDIES

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DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL PLANING AND MANAGMENT

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN
PUBLIC SECTORS: THE CASE OF BUEE CITY ADMINISTRATION, EASTERN
GURAGE ZONE, CENTRAL ETHIOPIA**

MA THESIS

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Challenges and Opportunities of Women's Empowerment in Public Sectors: The case of Buee City Administration, Eastern Gurage Zone, Central Ethiopia Regional State

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DECLARATION

I declare that the research entitled, “Challenges and Opportunities of Women's Empowerment in Public Sectors: The Case of Buee City administration” is my original work and has not been submitted previously to any university or other organization to fulfill a requirement for any research studies.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU's	African Union's
CEDAW Women	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSA	Central Statistical Agency
DA	Disagree
EPRDF	Ethiopia revolutionary democratic front
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
MA	Master of Arts
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MSC	Master of Science
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NPC	Non Player Character
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SA	Strongly Agree
SD	Strongly Disagree
SDGs	Sustainable Developmental Goals
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Developmental Program
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

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ABSTRACT

Women's empowerment has been as a pivotal area of development discourse, yet its realization remains fraught with challenges, particularly within governmental public sectors in developing countries. . This study aimed to identify challenges and opportunities of women's empowerment in public sectors in Buee City Administration, Eastern Gurage Zone. To address the research objectives, the study employed descriptive survey research design with mixed approaches. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to select sample respondents. Purposive sampling was used for selecting public sectors and leaders for interviews. Additionally simple random sampling was used to select female respondents for questionnaires. Both primary and secondary data sources were used. Questionnaires, interviews, and document reviews were used as data gathering instruments. Descriptive statistics were used for analyzing quantitative data, and qualitative data were narrated and embedded to support quantitative data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that cultural and societal norms, structural barriers of organizations, economic constraints, lack of networking opportunities, overburden of domestic responsibilities, and policy-related challenges were main challenges which hindered women empowerment in public sectors. Additionally, limited capacity development and training opportunities coupled with lack of women empowerment initiatives were identified as challenges. Affirmative action, presence of women and children sectors, gender preference, quota system and innovation of technology were identified as available opportunities for empowering women in public sectors. Based on the study findings; gender sensitivity capacity building training, community awareness campaigns, mentorship programs that aim to cultivate a supportive network for women in local government were recommended to enhance women's empowerment and their contribution to the public sector.

Keywords: challenge, opportunity, women's empowerment, Buee.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Women's empowerment is the process of enhancing women's political, social, economic, and cultural power, encouraging their agency, and facilitating their involvement in decision-making at all levels. The United Nations asserts that empowering women advances society as a whole, resulting in increased economic growth and less inequality, in addition to benefiting individuals (UN Women, 2023). This study examined the multifaceted challenges and opportunities surrounding women's empowerment within city administrations globally, African and with a particular focus on the Ethiopian contexts, Buee City Administration, Eastern Gurage Zone, Central Ethiopia Regional State

Although women's empowerment has become a key topic in development discourse, there are still many obstacles in the way of its actualization, especially in the public sector of government. As a distinct locus of governance, the city administration has a significant impact on whether or not women participate in decision-making processes. This study looked at the many potential and problems related to women's empowerment in African and international city administrations, with an emphasis on Ethiopian contexts, specifically in the Buee City Administration in the Eastern Gurage Zone of the Central Ethiopia

Globally, women remain underrepresented in political leadership and administrative roles within city governance. According to the UN Women (2021), women occupy only 25% of political positions at the national level and an even lesser percentage in city administrations. This disparity is often attributed to socio-cultural norms, institutional barriers, and economic inequalities that systematically marginalize women's voices. Despite these challenges, there exist substantial opportunities for empowerment through policy reform, advocacy, and grassroots mobilization. For instance, the adoption of gender-responsive budgeting and inclusive governance frameworks can significantly enhance women's participation in local government (Bächtiger et al., 2020).

Women's empowerment faces significant obstacles in Africa, which are exacerbated by socioeconomic and cultural issues. Although many countries continue to struggle with entrenched gender prejudices and patriarchal systems, the African Union's Agenda 2063 seeks to put women at the forefront of African development (African Union, 2015). Women encounter obstacles in city administrations, including restricted access to training and education, a dearth of mentorship possibilities, and exclusion from networks that promote political participation. The African experience has demonstrated, meanwhile, that women's concerted efforts through neighborhood advocacy organizations can result in revolutionary changes to laws that impact their communities (UN Women, 2020).

The difficulties faced by women in city governments in Ethiopia are especially noticeable in light of the country's changing political climate. Women's representation in government rose dramatically when the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) party pledged to achieve gender parity, and it now stands at almost 50% in the national parliament (Beekman, 2021). Nevertheless, under local governing frameworks, this numerical representation does not imply actual power or influence. The politicization of women's roles, cultural norms, and long-standing gender stereotypes are some of the factors that frequently obscure women's contributions and reduce their efficacy in public office. Therefore, even while legal frameworks encourage women's empowerment, a critical examination of the practical repercussions is still necessary (Tafesse, 2022). Opportunities for enhancing women's empowerment in city administrations can be derived from various initiatives that promote gender equity and include local women's voices in decision-making processes. Programs aimed at capacity building, such as skill development workshops, leadership training, and public administration courses tailored for women, can equip them with essential tools to navigate political landscapes effectively (World Bank, 2021). Additionally, fostering partnerships with civil society organizations and international bodies can help create inclusive platforms where women's issues are prioritized in urban policies and planning.

Moreover, technology presents a burgeoning opportunity for women's empowerment in city administration, particularly in African and Ethiopian contexts. Digital tools can enhance women's access to information, increase civic engagement, and facilitate the establishment of

networks for advocacy and support (Omodia & Fadeyibi, 2021). Initiatives leveraging mobile technology and social media to amplify women's voices and mobilize communities around issues pertinent to local governance can contribute significantly to reshaping the narrative around women's roles in public sectors.

Overall, the aforementioned situation shows that although there are still major obstacles to women's empowerment in the public sectors of city administration, government, and Ethiopia, there are also a lot of potential for considerable change. Understanding and resolving the unique difficulties faced by women in local administrations becomes crucial as cities all over the world work toward inclusive government. In light of the aforementioned perspectives, this study sought to evaluate the opportunities and challenges of women's empowerment: the case of Buee City Administration government Public Sectors in Eastern Gurage Zone, Central Ethiopia Regional State.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The empowerment of women is a fundamental aspect of achieving gender equality and sustainable development. This empowerment is particularly significant within the context of city administration in public sectors, where women's participation can lead to enhanced governance and improved service delivery. Even though the value of women's empowerment is becoming more widely acknowledged, a number of obstacles still prevent women from fully participating in leadership roles in the public sector. The purpose of this study was to describe the issues surrounding the potential and difficulties of women's empowerment, particularly in the setting of Buee municipal government in the Eastern Gurage zone.

According to the World Economic Forum (2021), women only make up around 26.1% of national legislators worldwide, indicating that there is still a gender gap in political engagement. Women were frequently excluded from decision-making processes in local administration due to their underrepresentation in public posts..

The difficulties were multifaceted, with the structural exclusion of women from governing posts being exacerbated by sociocultural obstacles, discriminatory legislative frameworks, and

inadequate support networks. According to earlier studies, women encounter particular challenges such as violence against women, societal preconceptions, and the weight of unpaid caregiving, all of which further restrict their ability to participate in public administration (UN Women, 2020). As a result, the global backdrop presented women's empowerment as a crucial but difficult endeavor that required substantial transformation to provide supportive circumstances.

These difficulties are made worse in the African context by socioeconomic and historical circumstances. The execution of the progressive policies that the African Union has enacted to increase women's participation in governance is still deficient (African Union, 2019). In many African nations, women have restricted access to economic resources and education, which makes it harder for them to compete for leadership roles. Cultural norms often stigmatize women who aspire to public service, undermining their authority and ability (Ezeani, 2022). However, there were opportunities; international advocacy and other grassroots efforts have highlighted the importance of women's contributions to the progress of society. They provided a number of ways to increase women's participation and integrate gender perspectives into local policymaking.

Although Ethiopia's circumstances are distinct, they nevertheless reflect the opportunities and difficulties that exist both internationally and in Africa. The fact that women today hold more than 50% of parliamentary seats is proof that the Ethiopian government has achieved significant progress in empowering women. This percentage is among the highest in the world (UNDP, 2021). However, this numerical representation does not necessarily translate into real empowerment or influence in decision-making processes (Zewde, 2021). The additional challenges that result from the junction of ethnic politics and gender dynamics may have an effect on women's participation in city management. Political parties and governmental institutions, which still function according to patriarchal paradigms, frequently discriminate against women (Mekonnen, 2020). Notwithstanding these obstacles, Ethiopia's dedication to gender equality in leadership provides a platform for investigating successful initiatives and laws that support true women's empowerment in public sectors.

In all of these situations, the obstacles that women encounter in city administration are not insurmountable. In fact, there are plenty of chances to advance women's empowerment in government. Increasing funding for educational and training initiatives can give women the tools they need to function well in public administration. Furthermore, creating networks and mentorship programs can help women gain confidence and enter the. In order to foster an atmosphere that supports women's full involvement in governance, legislative frameworks that uphold women's rights and advance gender equality are essential (Jahan, 2022). A more inclusive approach to governance that acknowledges the interdependence of men and women in the development of society might also result from enlisting men as allies in the fight for gender equality.

A multidimensional strategy including societal change, policy reform, and the active participation of women and their allies is needed to address these issues. For societies to grow holistically and to achieve gender equality, a deliberate effort is required to remove obstacles and encourage women's active participation in decision-making processes. On the other hand, gender inequality in politics is a prevalent issue in Buee City Administration, where women are underrepresented in decision-making and face social, economic, and political disadvantages, according to the researcher's observations and experience there.

Furthermore, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is no empirical research on the opportunities and challenges of women's empowerment at the city administration level that suggests a geographical or place gap, despite decades of extensive research on women's empowerment in the government and public sectors across the nation. Thus, this demonstrates the contextual gap—the lack of research in particular circumstances. Furthermore, "Study the problem if your study replicates a former study but investigates different participants and other research settings," as Creswell (2012) said. Therefore, even if the topic at hand has been the subject of several studies in various fields, the researcher hopes to close the gap by extending it into the public sectors of Buee City Administrative Government. Thus, this research may be considered unique in the field of study based on the aforementioned perspectives.

Consequently, given the gap mentioned above, the researcher believed that it was necessary to close it by identifying obstacles to and chances for women's empowerment: the case of Buee City Administration government Public Sectors in Eastern Gurage Zone, Central Ethiopia Regional State.

Objectives of the Study

1.2.1. General Objectives

The general objective of the study is to assess the challenges and opportunities of women's empowerment in the public sector of Buee City Administration.

1.2.2. Specific Objectives

This study attempted to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To assess the current practices to empower women in public sectors
2. To identify the key challenges that hinder women's empowerment in public sectors
3. To assess the opportunities available for empowering women in public sectors

1.3. Research Questions

The study attempted to address the following basic questions:

1. What are the current implemented practices to empower women in public sectors in Buee city administration?
2. What are the key challenges that hinder to women's empowerment in public sectors?
3. What are the available opportunities for empowering women in the public sector in Buee city administration?

1.4. Significance of the study

The study of women's empowerment, particularly within the context of city administration in the Eastern Gurage Zone of Central Ethiopia, holds substantial significance for multiple stakeholders. As the landscape of women's roles continues to evolve, understanding both the

challenges and opportunities they face becomes crucial for fostering equitable societal development.

For management bodies of women affairs offices, this study serves as a vital resource that informs policy formulation and programmatic interventions. By identifying specific challenges faced by women in public sector roles such as systemic discrimination, lack of access to training, and underrepresentation in decision-making processes these offices can tailor initiatives that address structural barriers. Furthermore, the study highlights opportunities for enhancing women's participation, which can lead to more inclusive governance and improved service delivery.

For women themselves, this research is empowering. It provides a platform that amplifies their voices, shedding light on their realities and aspirations. By documenting both obstacles and opportunities, the study can inspire women to engage actively in public service roles, reinforce their agency, and encourage collective advocacy for equitable practices within their communities.

For researchers, the significance of this study lies in its contribution to the broader discourse on gender equality and women's empowerment in developing contexts. By focusing on a specific geographical area and administrative context, the findings will enrich academic literature and offer a concrete case study that other scholars can reference. Additionally, it encourages further inquiry into the dynamics between governance, gender, and community development.

Finally, for concerned government bodies at the administrative level, this study underscores the importance of integrating a gender-sensitive approach in public administration policies. By recognizing the unique challenges women face and the potential benefits of their empowerment, local governments can enhance organizational effectiveness. This ultimately fosters an environment conducive to gender equity, which is essential for sustainable development.

In general, the significance of this study extends beyond academic interest; it provides strategic insights for various stakeholders involved in the promotion of women's empowerment in the Eastern Garage Zone. The findings will facilitate informed decision-making, encourage active

participation of women in governance, and contribute to the overarching goal of gender equity and social progress within the region.

1.5. Scope of the Study

The study area was 20 public sectors from the whole public sectors which are found in Buee city administration. The City Administration is located in the Eastern Gurage Zone, Central Ethiopia Regional State. It is one of the administrative city in the Eastern Gurage zone that was formed recently as an administration city. The city is also located East of Wolikite city Administration, Southern of A.A and North of Werabe city Administration This study's time frame was taken (from March 2024 to May 2025 G.C). The target population of the study was female employees and the objective is to identify the challenges and opportunities of women's political empowerment in Buee city administration public sectors.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

It is obvious that there would be limitations to study. Because of this, several challenges were faced during the study's execution, such as a lack of adequate funding and time. Nevertheless, in spite of these challenges, the investigation could be carried out and the work finished.. Respondents were very busy, especially leaders in their respective duties, because of many political and governmental responsibilities, and the researcher was devoted time to dealing with them so that they can at least respond completely to the open-ended questions on the questionnaires and interviews.

1.7. Organization of the Thesis

This research is organized in five chapters. The first chapter holds the introduction part, problem statement, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and limitation of the study. Chapter two discusses the different works of literature that was reviewed which related to the objectives. . In chapter three, the study designs, methods, and techniques used for data gathering and analysis were given. Data presentation, analysis, interpretations, and debate were covered in the fourth chapter. The study's summary, results, and suggestions were finally incorporated in chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Theoretical Review

2.1.1. The Concept of Women Empowerment

The process of enhancing women's political, social, economic, and cultural power, encouraging their agency, and facilitating their involvement in decision-making at all levels is known as women's empowerment. The United Nations asserts that empowering women advances society as a whole, resulting in increased economic growth and less inequality, in addition to benefiting individuals (UN Women, 2023). All things considered, attaining sustainable development and guaranteeing that women can reach their maximum potential in all spheres of life depend on women's empowerment.

Encouraging inclusive governance and equitable development requires the empowerment of women in public sectors, especially at the town and city levels. Women's representation in various fields is improved, and policy-making and service delivery are improved as well, meeting the varied demands of the population. The United Nations Development Program (2020) asserts that gender parity in leadership roles can result in more responsive and efficient governance, especially in local administrations where choices directly affect the daily lives of inhabitants.

In the African setting, regional organizations like the African Union have made the progress of women in public sectors a priority. The African Women's Decade (2010-2020) was one of several programs designed to hasten women's empowerment in government, especially at the local level. According to a recent World Bank study from 2021, women's involvement in local government processes greatly improves the prioritization of social issues. As more women participate in decision-making, the socioeconomic dynamics of communities are influenced in addition to the policies that are put into place.

Through affirmative action measures designed to increase women's representation in local governance, Ethiopia's government has made significant progress toward women's empowerment

in public sectors. In its 2022 report, the Taskforce on Women's Leadership emphasized that more community-centered policies and public trust in government institutions result from women's empowerment at the city and town levels. Success examples from different parts of Ethiopia have demonstrated that issues like gender-based violence and educational access receive more attention when women participate in the decision-making process (Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth Affairs, 2023). In the end, attaining long-term economic and social results that benefit every member of society depends on the local empowerment of women in government and public sectors.

2.1.2. Women's Empowerment Theory

There are four waves in the feminist movement. The second wave, which took place in the 1960s and 1970s, promoted equal legal and social rights. The first wave took place throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century struggle for women's suffrage. The second wave was followed and responded to by the third wave, which started in the 1990s.

Women's empowerment is the focus of the fourth wave, which started in 2012 and is still continuing strong. The fourth wave emphasizes gendered norms and women's social marginalization in order to promote greater gender equality. Women, especially transgender women and women of color, have historically been viewed as a marginalized category. Fourth-wave feminists argue that policies and practices that take into account the opinions of all people will make society more egalitarian and call for increased representation of these groups in business and politics. In addition to challenging gender norms (such as the freedom to express one's emotions and feelings, the freedom to express oneself physically, and the ability to be an involved parent to one's children), the fourth wave of feminism advocates for equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities for women and girls. It also calls for the pursuit of justice for harassment and assault. According to Creswell (2014), a transformative philosophical worldview centers on the needs of persons and groups who are disadvantaged or excluded in our society. The UN and other international organizations actively promote gender equality and women's empowerment as current global hot topics. Women make about half of the world's population and work in both self-employment and informal economic sectors. Once more,

according to the OECD (2014), women perform unpaid care work two to ten times as frequently as men. Nonetheless, women are invisible in management roles in the public, corporate, and civil society sectors due to the formal employment sector's placement of most women in lower and middle-level posts (Meron, 2018). This unequal distribution of employment is linked to biased social institutions and gender stereotypes (OECD, 2014), which distort gender equality.

2.2. Empirical Studies Review

Numerous studies on the prospects and difficulties of women's empowerment in the public sector at the city/town administration level have been conducted. However, the following is a survey of some local researchers' results, opinions, and suggestions about the relevant subject.

2.2.1. Current practices to empower women

Gender equality has advanced significantly in Ethiopia, especially in the public sector at the town and city government levels. the dominant male culture has a significant impact on women, which impacts their involvement in leadership roles. (Misker,2021). The formal employments at the sector level place the majority of women in lower and middle-level positions, making women invisible in management positions in the government, private, and civil society sectors (Meron, 2018). That there is a challenge which hinder women empowered politically in the city administration and public sectors. , the disparity in women's representation in municipal government is a reflection of larger structural problems that require immediate attention. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of these actions is still dependent on the active demolition of discriminatory practices and the wider recognition of women's rights in society (Hamza, 2023).

2.2.2. Challenges of women empowerment

Beyond representation, women's empowerment in the public sector especially in Ethiopian town and city administrations remains a critical issue. Notwithstanding the advancements in politics, a number of barriers still stand in the way of women's full potential in leadership. The main difficulties encountered in this situation are explained in this section.

Cultural and societal norms

In recent years, women's empowerment in public sectors—especially at the town and city administration levels has attracted a lot of scholarly interest. Cultural and socioeconomic traditions frequently prevent women from participating in government in Ethiopia, a country with a complex tapestry of ethnic diversity and traditional societal institutions. According to research, ingrained patriarchal traditions discourage women from attaining leadership positions in local government organizations by perpetuating gender prejudice (World Bank, 2021). Their agency and possibilities in political spheres are further hampered by these societal beliefs, which are entwined with cultural expectations concerning women's primary roles in the home (Bamfo, 2022).

Teshome et al. (2023) claim that the absence of mentors and role models in administrative structures not only keeps women invisible in politics but also lowers their perceived talents in the eyes of peers and constituents. Therefore, the disparity in women's representation in municipal government is a reflection of larger structural problems that require immediate attention. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of these actions is still dependent on the active demolition of discriminatory practices and the wider recognition of women's rights in society (Hamza, 2023).

To break down negative perceptions and create a supportive atmosphere for female leaders, programs including community awareness campaigns and gender sensitivity training have been suggested.

Structural barriers within governmental organizations

Significant scholarly attention has been paid to the empowerment of women in governmental institutions, especially at the town and city administration levels. Studies show that long-standing patriarchal conventions and antiquated gender roles are major obstacles to women's advancement in public sectors (Mekonnen, 2021). Moreover, gender-sensitive policies that could encourage women's involvement in local governance are frequently not accommodated by institutional frameworks, which frequently remain inflexible (Oromia & Dzato, 2022). Women's

capacity to advance to leadership roles and successfully participate in decision-making processes is significantly hampered by this lack of flexibility.

The lack of resources, networking opportunities, and professional development chances for women in government positions is another significant structural barrier. Research indicates that when it comes to training and mentorship possibilities, women frequently experience notable differences from their male counterparts (Tamirat, 2023). Women's visibility and power inside local government structures are diminished, and current disparities are made worse by this professional seclusion. Furthermore, the lack of supportive systems like childcare centers and flexible work schedules deters women from entering the public sector and fosters an atmosphere that values male involvement (Woldemariam, 2023).

The maintenance of structural barriers in Ethiopian governmental entities is also significantly influenced by cultural attitudes and societal expectations. Traditional perspectives frequently perpetuate the idea that leadership roles are best suited for men, which makes women less confident in their ability to pursue them (Zemene, 2022). Furthermore, gender-based discrimination is a common occurrence for female employees, which makes it difficult for them to function well in governmental settings (Berhanu, 2023). At the local level, addressing these social norms is crucial to establishing an atmosphere that supports women's empowerment in public sectors.

Economic constraints

Achieving gender equality and sustainable development depends on women's empowerment in public sectors of government. However, women's involvement and success in these roles are severely hampered by financial limitations. According to established research, efforts to establish an environment that supports women's leadership in local government structures are hampered by a lack of funding for gender-specific programs and other financial constraints (Kumar & Singh, 2021). Budget allocations frequently favor male-dominated industries, ignoring the need for comprehensive gender-sensitive policies that promote women's representation, making this challenge especially acute in developing countries (UN Women, 2022).

The problem is made worse in Ethiopia by long-standing socioeconomic inequalities that prevent women from accessing the tools, education, and networking opportunities needed for meaningful engagement in politics. Research shows that women are frequently not financially independent, which restricts their capacity to participate in political activities or assume leadership positions in administrative settings (Assefa, 2021). Furthermore, cultural traditions that value male leadership often exacerbate economic limitations, reinforcing gender stereotypes that hinder women's empowerment (Alemayehu, 2020). These structural problems are a reflection of a larger problem that many developing nations face, where social and economic restrictions combine to make it extremely difficult for women to pursue careers in public service.

Lack of networking opportunities

In the public sectors of government, efficient networking is essential for strengthening governance, boosting service quality, and encouraging cooperation between different players. Nonetheless, the research highlights serious issues with the dearth of networking opportunities at the administrative levels of towns and cities, especially in Ethiopia. This shortcoming frequently results from systemic obstacles that prevent the development of strong networking frameworks, such as a lack of resources, inadequate strategic planning, and bureaucratic inertia (Alemayehu & Kassa, 2022).

Inadequate institutional frameworks that impede networking activities are a major problem in Ethiopian towns. Local governments frequently function in silos, which causes agencies and stakeholders to communicate and collaborate in fragmented ways. According to research, this isolation makes it more difficult to share resources and best practices, which is crucial for the successful implementation of policies (Mulugeta & Alemayehu, 2021).

In order to promote a networked public sector environment, two-way activities and information sharing are impeded by the numerical gap (Gobena & Haji, 2023). Therefore, removing these technological obstacles is essential to fostering networking and cooperation among public managers.

Finally, Ethiopia's sociopolitical environment makes local networking chances much more challenging. Prioritizing security and stability over cooperative governance and networking has frequently resulted from the persistent political dynamics and regional tensions (Teferra & Zewde, 2023).

Over burden of domestic responsibilities

For government workers, especially those in the public sectors at the town or municipal administrative levels, the excessive workload of household duties has become a major obstacle. Numerous studies have shown that this phenomena frequently has a negative effect on employee morale, job performance, and overall efficiency. Gender disparities in the workplace are exacerbated for female public officers in particular, who must balance conventional household responsibilities with professional responsibilities (Moges, 2021). According to research, this social expectation frequently puts female employees at a disadvantage, which raises absence rates and lowers job satisfaction levels overall (Tessema & Sari, 2022). The ongoing load of household duties prevents women from advancing professionally and fully participating in public service positions, even in the face of government efforts to increase their employment. The challenges faced by people balancing work and household duties are exacerbated by the absence of supportive legislation, such as flexible working hours or family leave laws (Assefa, 2023). This oversight eventually harms local governance by undermining the potential contributions of talented professionals to public administration and by sustaining cycles of discontent and poor performance.

Policy related challenges

An essential component of public administration, particularly in developing countries like Ethiopia, is the efficient operation of local government entities. The policy-related issues that hinder town and municipal administrations' operational effectiveness have drawn more attention from academics in recent years. Lack of clear policy frameworks is a major issue that frequently leads to inefficiencies and overlapping obligations (Kassahun, 2021). The implementation of developmental initiatives may be hampered by the lack of comprehensive policy guidelines,

which could have a negative impact on municipal service delivery and citizen involvement (Tadesse et al., 2022).

The lack of capacity in local government systems is another major obstacle. The inability of many Ethiopian town and city administrations to properly implement policies is caused by a shortage of qualified staff and insufficient training initiatives (Woldemariam, 2023). Mulu and Tola (2021) assert that the lack of support networks and skilled personnel restricts local governments' capacity to effectively manage resources, resulting in subpar service delivery and discontent among the populace.

2.2.3. Opportunities of women empowerment

To promote participatory government, it is essential to encourage women's participation in town and city administrations. Research indicates that the inclusion of women in decision-making processes improves them by introducing a variety of viewpoints (Norris, 2021). Research from a variety of settings shows that women's involvement in local administration significantly boosts civic engagement and community involvement, especially among underrepresented groups (Karam et al., 2022).

Women in leadership roles are essential change agents and role models who encourage other women and girls to get involved in civic life. In addition to dispelling gender stereotypes, women leaders inspire the next generation to see themselves as active participants in the political and civic arenas (Eagly and Carli, 2020). Initiatives to support female leadership in local governments in Ethiopia have demonstrated that having visible female leaders can improve public perceptions of women's participation in governance (UN Women, 2023).

Particularly at the municipal level, involving women in local administration can lead projects that advance social justice and economic prosperity. Significant advancements in economic policies that prioritize social justice and sustainable development have been associated with women's involvement in local decision-making in Ethiopia (African Development Bank, 2023). Municipalities can attain more fair results and generate chances for comprehensive community development by skillfully incorporating women's viewpoints into local government frameworks.

Implementation of affirmative action policies

One important tool for increasing the number of women in government roles, especially at the local administration level, is affirmative action legislation. Addressing structural injustices and advancing gender parity in public sectors are the goals of these policies. The literature indicates that affirmative action can considerably influence the number of women in decision-making roles, hence encouraging inclusive government. For example, a study by Osei et al. (2021) shows that nations with strong affirmative action policies have seen a significant rise in women's political participation, indicating that these policies can successfully remove obstacles to entering political arenas.

Affirmative action initiatives have been used by the Ethiopian government to increase the number of women in local government. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2018) states that the 2018 Gender Equality Strategy emphasizes the importance of women's active participation in political processes, particularly at the town and city government levels. Woldemariam and Mulugeta's research (2022)

Despite these advancements, Ethiopia still faces difficulties in effectively implementing affirmative action legislation, as social attitudes and cultural agreements often prevent women from fully participating in local governance. However, a study by Abebe (2023) indicates that communities' persistent gender biases call for complementary strategies that support social transformation and the development of female leaders..

Capacity-building programs

For inclusive governance and sustainable development to be promoted, women in public administration must be empowered. In recent years, there has been a lot of interest in capacity-building initiatives that give women the information and abilities they need to participate effectively in the government sector. These initiatives are aimed to address the gender discrepancies that remain in public administration, notably at the town and municipal administration levels. Studies show that these kinds of programs not only improve women's skills but also help local governments make better decisions (UN Women, 2021). The success of

these capacity-building initiatives in increasing the representation of women in public administration has been demonstrated in recent research. Women who took part in these workshops reported feeling more confident and having a better grasp of their roles in local governing institutions, according to a research by Abebe et al. (2023).

To assist women who aspire to leadership positions in local governance, a number of capacity-building programs have been introduced. For example, the Ethiopian Women's Development Fund has put in place training courses that emphasize policymaking, leadership, and negotiating techniques, all of which are essential for efficient public administration (World Bank, 2022). Additionally, collaborations with non-governmental groups have enabled mentorship programs and workshops that seek to develop a network of support for women in local administration.

Community engagement

Promoting inclusive decision-making procedures that take into account the many demands of the community requires the involvement of women in governance, especially at the local level. However, preconceptions and societal norms frequently prevent women from participating in public sectors, particularly in developing nations like Ethiopia. Gender inequality is perpetuated by ingrained gender norms and cultural biases that severely restrict women's access to governance possibilities (Alemayehu, 2022; Kassa et al., 2023). One crucial tactic to combat these damaging conventions and encourage women's active involvement in local government is community engagement.

In order to effectively engage the community, local stakeholders must be mobilized to address gender prejudices and stereotypes through educational efforts and awareness campaigns. Participatory methods, such community discussions and workshops, have been shown to dramatically change attitudes about women's involvement in government (Fisseha, 2023).

To increase women's representation in local councils, for example, the Ethiopian government implemented affirmative action policies (Girma, 2022). However, the degree to which local governments interact with communities to dispel preconceived notions and increase understanding of the value of women's participation will determine how effective these programs

are. To guarantee that these programs reach their target audiences and promote significant change, cooperation between governmental bodies and civil society organizations is crucial.

Networking platforms

The importance of networking platforms for women in public sectors has received a lot of attention lately, especially as a way to create communities of support at the town and city administration levels. These forums are essential venues for women to exchange stories, obtain information, and create business connections that can improve their capacity and clout in the public sector. According to research, these networks ultimately help communities overall by empowering women and promoting more inclusive governance (Baker & Smith, 2022). In situations where women have historically been underrepresented in positions of decision-making, the creation of these networks is especially important.

Ethiopia's dedication to women's empowerment and gender equality, as stated in its national policy, highlights the need for encouraging networking platforms throughout the nation. Even with recent advancements, women are still disproportionately underrepresented in local government leadership roles (World Bank, 2023). To close this gap, local chapters of international organizations and initiatives like the Ethiopian Women's Network have been established. By offering advocacy, training, and mentoring, these platforms help women better negotiate the challenges of public administration (Zewdie, 2023). These networks encourage women to actively participate in policy-making processes and seek leadership positions by creating a sense of community.

It is impossible to ignore the part that technology plays in making these networking platforms possible. Women's networks are now more widely dispersed because to digital tools and social media, which facilitate increased connectedness and resource sharing, particularly in rural areas where conventional networking opportunities may be scarce (Mekonnen, 2023). Women are now able to take part in webinars, training sessions, and debates that improve their knowledge and abilities thanks to virtual platforms. In Ethiopia, where internet connection is becoming more and more common, this technological integration is especially pertinent since it gives women the ability to interact and work together beyond geographic boundaries.

Technology

It is argued that a nation's rate of technological advancement is influenced by political institutions that enhance women's political empowerment (WPE). We used vast time series and data from 182 nations to find support for different implications of our argument. By affecting the quantity of new ideas brought into the market and the selection of more efficient ideas, we expect WPE to enhance economic progress. The most compelling data points to a favorable correlation between WPE and future economic growth (World Bank, 2020).

When accounting for country-and year-fixed effects, historical growth trends, and other possible founders, this relationship remains valid across a range of measuring techniques and statistical specifications. Growth is linked to measures that account for all three of empowerment's sub-components, and there is some evidence linking empowerment to the growth of TFP, a measure of technical advancement. We think that WPE encourages economic growth and technical advancement, which could have practical ramifications. There are normative, intrinsic reasons for women to be in politics, but there is also a more practical "business case" for women's political empowerment. Decision-makers and societal groups that would ordinarily be reluctant to work together might be convinced to do so by this example (World Bank, 2020).

A third of the world's nations restrict women's freedom of movement, 40% have laws that limit women's options in the labor market, and 40% discriminate against women in their property rights laws, preventing women from engaging in politics and the economy on an equal basis with men. There is still opportunity for more female political participation and representation, since in 2019, women only accounted for 20.7% of cabinet seats and 24.6% of legislative seats. These results suggest that these nations have the capacity for quicker economic growth and technical advancement. According to our research, these nations could experience quicker economic growth and technical advancement (UNION, 2019).

2.3. Conceptual Framework of the study

Promoting inclusive development in Ethiopia requires the growth of women in public sector governance. Even though gender equality is acknowledged as a basic human right, women

nevertheless encounter numerous obstacles that prevent them from participating and moving up the government administrative ladder. With a focus on town and city administration, this section offers a conceptual framework that highlights the main obstacles to women's empowerment, as well as the opportunities and techniques that are currently being used in the public sector.

Given Ethiopia's dedication to gender equality and sustainable development, research on women's empowerment in government and public sectors, particularly at the town and city administration level, is crucial.

The following crucial dimensions can be used to classify the obstacles preventing women from participating in Ethiopian governance:

Social and Cultural Norms: Gender stereotypes are frequently reinforced by deeply ingrained societal ideas that restrict women's roles to the home. Women's access to positions of political leadership and decision-making is hampered by traditional ideas about gender roles (Abebe, 2021).

Structural Barriers: Male-dominated hierarchies and a lack of support for women in leadership positions are two common examples of structural barriers found in government institutions. These obstacles hinder their ability to advance professionally and limit their chances to make significant contributions (Tafesse, 2022).

Economic Restraints: Women's capacity to engage in governance is greatly impacted by economic inequality. Due to financial constraints, women are less likely to seek for government or pursue political careers, which lowers their representation in decision-making processes (Yilma, 2023).

Absence of Networking Opportunities: Women's access to powerful circles within governmental organizations is hampered by a lack of networking opportunities and mentorship programs. Their capacity to utilize resources and assistance is limited by their absence of professional networks (Melaku, 2022).

Domestic Responsibilities: Women are disproportionately burdened with domestic responsibilities, which restricts their ability to participate in political and public service activities (Getachew, 2023).

Challenges pertaining to policy: There are laws that support gender equality, but they are not being implemented well enough. Women's actual engagement in public sectors is impacted by bureaucratic slowness and a lack of accountability, which impede the implementation of these programs (Endeshaw, 2021).

Women's participation in town and city administrations offers a critical chance to promote inclusive decision-making and improve participatory government. With the implementation of affirmative action policies, capacity-building programs, community engagement, and networking platforms aimed at empowering women in local governance, this conceptual framework outlines three interconnected opportunities: encouraging women's participation in local governance, using female leadership as a basis for role modeling, and involving women in initiatives aimed at social justice and economic development.

Although the number of women in local government has increased as a result of these policies, recent studies show that there are still issues with their sustainability and efficient implementation (Mekonnen, 2023).

Studies demonstrate that these initiatives improve women's self-esteem and capacity to actively engage in governance (Tadesse, 2022). More focused initiatives to address the individual difficulties encountered by women in various Ethiopian regions, especially in rural areas, are necessary, though.

Research indicates that community-led efforts, like local forums and awareness campaigns, have been effective in galvanizing support for women in public office (Abebe, 2021). However, the active participation of local leaders and stakeholders frequently determines how successful these programs are.

According to recent data, women who network have a higher chance of achieving leadership roles and influencing legislative decisions (Kebede, 2023). However, more extensive and easily accessible networking opportunities are needed, especially for women living in rural regions. Thus, the researcher developed the following conceptual framework based on the aforementioned perspectives.

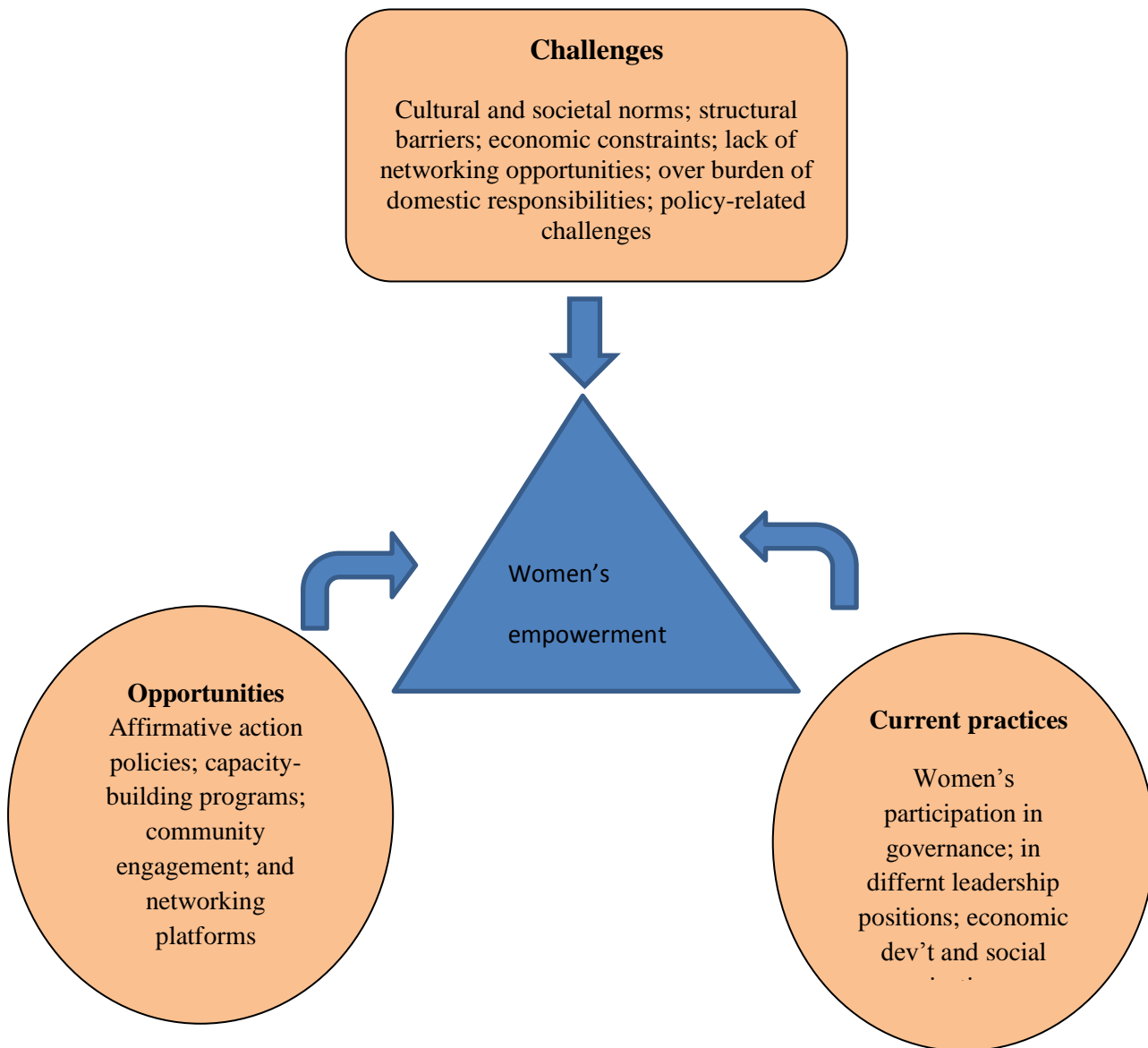


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Source: Own construct from the review literature

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.2. Description of the Study Area

The study area covers Buee City Administration public sector. Buee City Administration is found in Eastern Gurage Zone Central Ethiopia Regional State. It is one of administration town among Eastern Gurage Zone administration towns which gate recently. Also this town found east of Wolkite and south of Addis Ababa also surrounded by Sodo wereda. It has 2 kebeles called Buee 01 and Buee zuria. It's population size is 39796, (, Buee City Municipality, 2024) and it's altitude is 2200 to 2300 meter above sea level average and also it's temperature is 22⁰ c with annual rain fall of 900to 1400. This administration town is progressively in development, it is peace and secured its weather condition is weynadega.

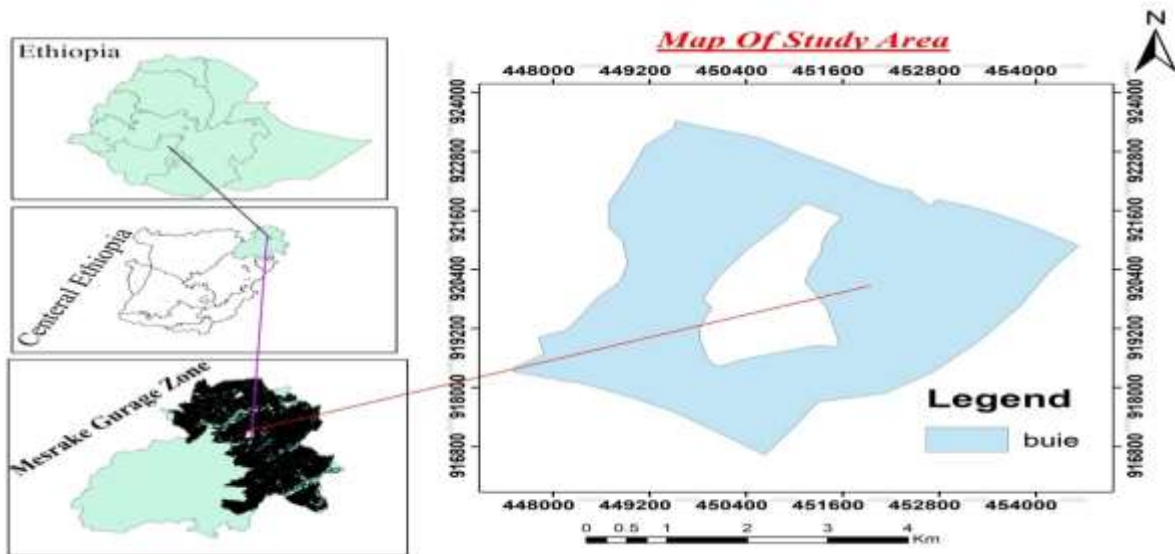


Figure 2. Map of the Study Area

3.2. Research Approach

The study was employed mixed approach. More reliable empirical results are produced when qualitative and quantitative methodologies are combined, since it makes data interpretation and

analysis easier (Mengshoel, 2012). Combining the two strategies allows for the advantages of each while also perhaps lowering the drawbacks of each (Johnsonetal, 2007). In qualitative research, attitudes, opinions, and perceptions are gathered through interviews. The results of this type of study are either non-quantitative or have not undergone rigorous quantitative analysis (Kothari, 2004). Both the quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to analyze the numerical and qualitative data obtained from questionnaires, interviews, open-ended questions, and document analyses, respectively. In order to compute and analyze numerical data as well as to describe and explain information gleaned from qualitative data, the researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative research approaches throughout the study.

3.3. Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was used to answer the study questions. Because, as Kumar (2005) noted, descriptive survey research methodology aims to methodically explain a condition, problem, phenomenon, program, organizational administrative structure, and community needs. Based on the above theoretical arguments and since the main purpose of this study focused on the challenges and opportunities in empowering women in Buee city administration government public sectors through collecting data related to peoples opinion, descriptive survey design was appropriate.

3.4. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size Determination

3.4.1. Sampling Techniques

Researcher used sampling techniques to reduce the number of samples because, the researcher do not have enough time and resource to conduct whole population as much as possible. Both probability and non-probability sampling methods were employed as stated by (Hamed, 2020).

By minimizing bias and aiding in the generalization of the data collected from sample respondents, simple random sampling helps to prevent sampling errors (Hamed, 2020). In order to select female employees from the target population among female permanent employees in each sample sector, the researcher used simple random sampling, which involves first creating a sampling frame and then selecting a sample from the sampling frame using a computer program

that generates random numbers (Zikmund, 2002).. Furthermore, the researcher used purposive sampling to select city administration, public sectors, leaders of the public sectors and leaders of women's associations for interview. The researcher employed purposive sampling, in which she knew where the data would be collected properly obtained direct and reliable information about the problem.

3.4.2. Target Population

Population of this study was all permanent female employees who worked in Buee City Administration government public sectors. The full set of cases from which the researcher's sample is taken is referred to as the population (Hamed, 2020).

3.4.3. Sample Size Determination

The sample size of the study was 149. To conducted this study the researcher employed simple random method and select 149 female respondents from the target population (239) which are permanently employed in selected public sectors as respondents. Moreover, 10 leaders from 20 selected sectors and three women from women association were selected for interview part by using purposive sampling. This is decided purposively because the researcher believes the sample size is sufficient for the study's reliability and can reveal the true situation. Generally the researcher calculated sample size by using Yamane (1967) sample size determination at 95% confidence.

Population of the study was female employees who are employed in city administration's public sectors (239).

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

$$n = \frac{239}{(1 + 239(0.05)^2)}$$

$$n = 149$$

Where n = sample size, N = population, e = margin of error (0.05). The researcher used margin of error (0.05) to make it more reliable sample size of the study

3.5.Methods of Data Collection and Instruments

3.5.1. Sources of Data

The researcher used both primary and secondary data sources for the study. The primary data sources were female employees, political leaders and leaders of women's associations'. The secondary data gathered from secondary source which are documented data, plans, and reports of each sample sectors and document which found in human resources departments. The structured questionnaire consists of closed questions and open ended questions were used to collect quantitative data from the respondents.

3.5.2. Data Collection Instruments

The methods of collecting data for descriptive survey research can be employed singly or in various combinations, depending on the objectives of the study at hand. Therefore, questionnaire, interview and document review were the data collecting tools.

Questionnaire

A survey was developed and administered to 149 women who were chosen from among government employees. Since questionnaires are seen to be the most effective way to obtain a lot of data from respondents in a short amount of time and with the least amount of money, the researcher employed them as the primary data collection instrument (Kothari, 2004). For big and scattered branches, the questionnaire was self-administered and organized to make the best use of time and resources.

The questionnaire contained both closed-ended, structured questions and semi structured items. There are four sections in the survey instrument. Demographic details including age, sex, and educational background were covered in the first part. Current initiatives to empower women in public sectors of government were covered second. The challenges to women's empowerment in different government sectors were covered in the third section. Opportunities for women's

empowerment were the subject of the segment in the fourth part. In order to measure the respondents' thoughts, the items were produced as affirmative statements that related to the study's aims and were meant to identify the three variables. The study variables' items were modified from relevant literature reviews. A Likert scale with 1 representing strongly disagree, 2 representing disagree, 3 representing undecided, 4 representing agree, and 5 representing strongly agree was used to score the replies to the closed-ended questions. These measures were employed to examine the degree to which the practices that each of the variables was subjected to had an impact.

Interview

In this study, semi – structured interview guide questions were prepared and conducted with 10 heads of the selected government public sectors, with leaders of women's associations, and with 3 political leaders. The content of the interview deals about challenges that hindered women empowerment, opportunities for empowering women in various government public sectors, and on current practices carried out to empower women, Because conducting interviews is crucial to a qualitative research approach, this tool was used (Creswell, 2006). It provided a chance to simultaneously and methodically collect data on respondents' attitudes, perceptions, views, and experiences for specific goals. This method gave the interviewer additional time to delve deeper than the interviewee's response and engage in conversation to obtain reliable information for cross-referencing and enhancing the findings of quantitative data analysis.

Document Review

Documents pertaining to the study variables were reviewed in this investigation. Because document reviews offer a variety of data sources that are necessary for a study to gather preliminary information about the topic under investigation. Furthermore, using quantitative techniques to improve the caliber of the results is crucial. As a result, pertinent documents pertaining to demographic traits and the study's primary variables were examined.

3.6. Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011), validity is "the extent to which the measuring instrument assesses the qualities or dimensions that the researcher wishes to measure." The questionnaire, a data collection tool, was created with the fundamental research issues in mind. Every item on the questionnaire was taken straight from relevant literature and aligned with the study's goals. The advisers examined the questionnaire's items in light of the definition and various validity viewpoints. Lastly, a pilot study was carried out on the questionnaire prior to the actual data collection.

Reliability is the stability and consistency of the measurement tool throughout time (Sürücü & Maslakç, 2020). In other words, the dependability of the measurement equipment is associated with its capacity to yield similar results when utilized at different times. Therefore, if consistent results have been produced in same scenarios but under different circumstances, the researcher's findings are deemed dependable. To make sure the questionnaire's items were internally consistent, the researcher employed a reliability test. There are various techniques for assessing the validity of measurement instruments for social science research.. These include split-halves, alternate forms, inter-rater reliability, test-retest reliability, and internal consistency tests. The internal consistency test is the most commonly utilized in the social sciences (Sürücü & Maslakç, 2020). Cronbach alpha values were utilized to gauge the dependability as described in (Baharin et al., 2015). An inter-item correlation coefficient is provided by the Cronbach alpha. The internal consistency of the tool's items is gauged by this. It is used for multi-item scales and questionnaires and is the average correlation between all the items in question. The reliability test was conducted using the rule stated in (Baharin et al., 2015). Cronbach's Alpha value that ranges from 0.9 – 1.0 taken as excellent, 0.8 - 0.89 as very good, 0.7 - 0.79 as acceptable, 0.6 - 0.69 questionable while 0.5 - 0.59 as a poor and the value less than 0.5 as unacceptable, whereas the closer Cronbach's alpha is to 1.00, the higher the internal consistency reliability will be.

3.7. Piloting the Instrument

The questionnaire which considered 68 items was administered to 30 respondents (20.13% of the total population) so as to see their reliability. 30 respondents were randomly selected and

filled out the questionnaire. The reliability statistics indicate that Cronbach alpha for total item was 0.83 and Cronbach alpha for challenges of women empowerment item was 0.741. Similarly Cronbach alpha for opportunities of women political empowerment item was 0.813 and Cronbach for Strategies of women political empowerment item was 0.840. Moreover, after pilot test 49 items were modified and distributed for actual data collection.

Table 1. Reliability Statistics Coefficient

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	No of Items
Challenges of women's empowerment	0.741	24
Opportunities of women's empowerment	0.813	8

Source: Own survey, 2024

3.8.Method of Data Analysis

Collected data were reviewed for any missing data or errors and tested through descriptive analysis. While quantitative data was analyzed using the SPSS for Windows version 24.0 computer program and displayed in tables and various graphs, descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, and graph were utilized for general discussion. The quantitative explanation in the discussions portion by narrative was supported by the qualitative information obtained through interviews, document analysis, and open-ended question items..

3.9.Ethical Considerations

According to Polit and Beck (2004), research ethics is a set of moral principles that address how closely research practices conform to the commitments that researchers have to study participants on a professional, legal, and social level. According to Creswell (2012), gathering data ought to be morally righteous and respectful to people and sources. In addition to being an ethical practice, getting consent before beginning data collection is a component of the informed consent procedure. Therefore, voluntary participation of respondents was encouraged. Responding to interviews and filling of questionnaires require significant time and energy and its

participation may be disrupt the respondents' regular activity. For this reason, the researcher explained the objectives and significance of the study to the respondents and allowed them to exercise their right to voluntarily participate. To avoid any psychological harm, questions/questionnaires were designed in a manner that were not offensive and disturbs their personality. The information respondents provided was kept confidential.

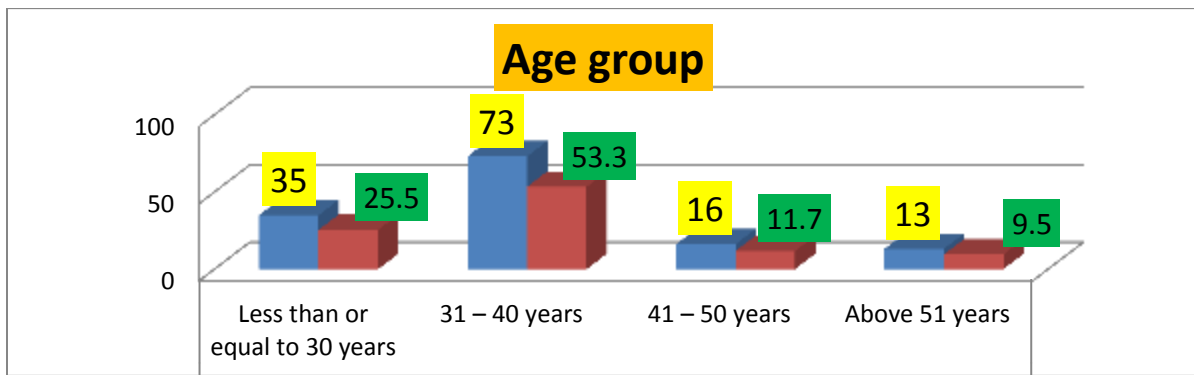
CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first section of the chapter reports the socio-economic, demographic background and resource endowment of the respondents. This chapter presents and discusses the results of the study. A total of 149 questionnaires were distributed to sample respondents which were selected from Buee city administration government sector offices. From distributed questionnaires 137 (92%) were returned successfully, whereas eight (8%) questionnaires were not returned from respondents. The general structure of this section is as follows. Initially, the sampled respondents' demographic details are displayed. These sections are meant to give an initial impression of the responders. The existing state, obstacles, and prospects of women's empowerment in the research region are discussed in the following three sections. The presentation and discussion of coping and adapting tactics, along with the associated obstacles, follows.

4.1. Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

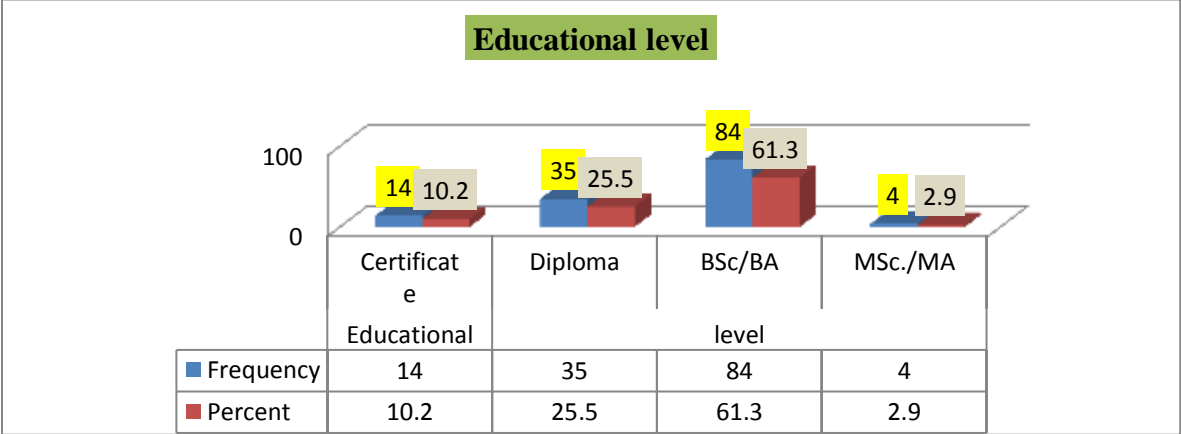
This section presents a descriptive analysis of the personal profile of the respondents of female employees in Buee city administration. The personal profile includes, age, education level, work experience, job description and marital status. Therefore, socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are summarized as below.



Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Figure 3. Age of Sampled Respondents

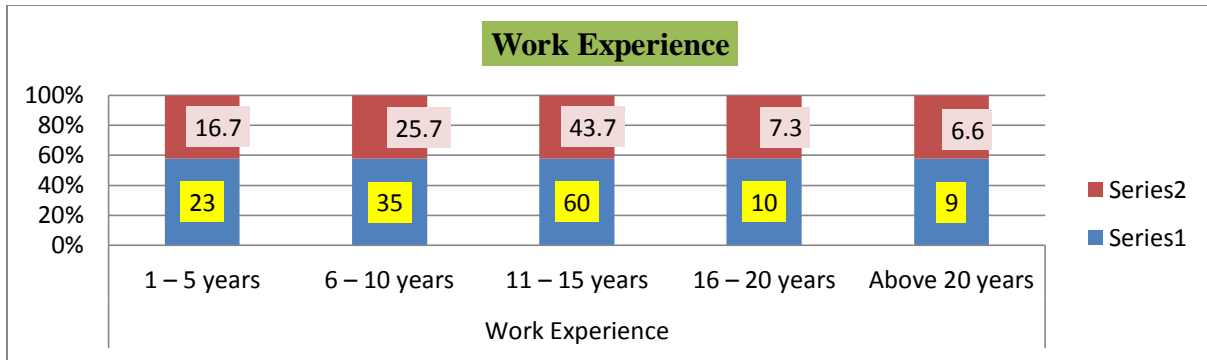
Figure. 3 showed that about 35 (25.5 %) of the respondents were in the age group less than or equal to 30 years. 73(53.3. %) were in the age group of 31-40 years. Whereas 16 (11.7%) were in the age group of 41-50 and the remaining 13(9.5%) of the respondents were the age of above 51 years. This shows that around fifty three present (53%) of female employees in the city administration were the age between 30 and 40 years. This shows that a huge number of employees were younger



Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Figure 4. Educational Level of Sampled Respondents

Figure 4 Regards to educational level, depicts the academic qualification of women employees in Buee city administration. Among the respondents, 14(10.2%) of them have certificate; 35(25.5 %) of the respondents hold a diploma the majority were degree holders which were 84 (61.3%). Only 4(2.9%) respondents have master's degree. This indicates that the majority are degree holders.



Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Figure 5. Work experience of Sampled Respondents

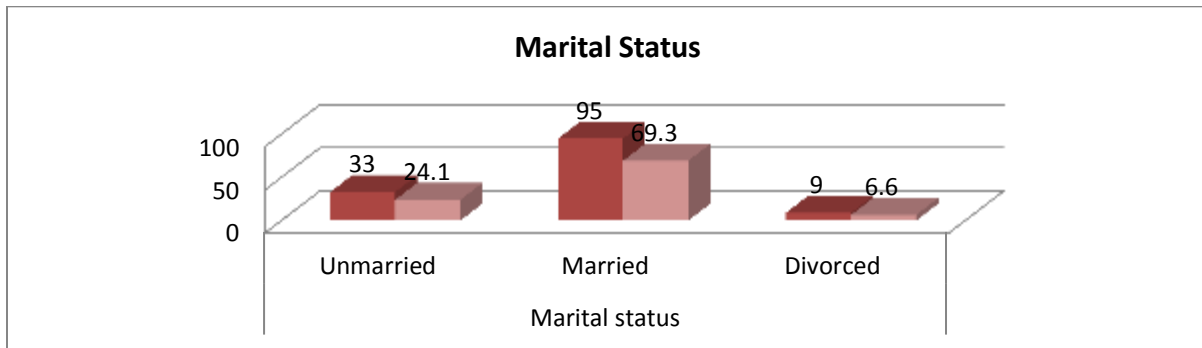
As Figure 5 indicate that about 23 (16.7%) of women employees in the city have below five years of experience. 35(25.5%) of the respondents have between 6 and 10 years' experience, about 60(43.9%) of the respondents have between 11 and 15 years' experience, 10 (7.3%) between 16 and 20, and only 9(6.6%) of the respondents have more than 20 years of experience. This result indicates that majority of employees have good work experience.



Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Figure 6. Job Position of the Sampled Respondents

Figure 6 In respect of current job position of the respondents, 133 (97.1%) of the respondents were experts. Only 4(3%) were in the leading position. This finding shows that majority of the females were experts and few numbers of female employees were positioned as leaders. The finding that show Socio-demographic profile of respondents most of female employees are degree holder, experienced and good productive age range.

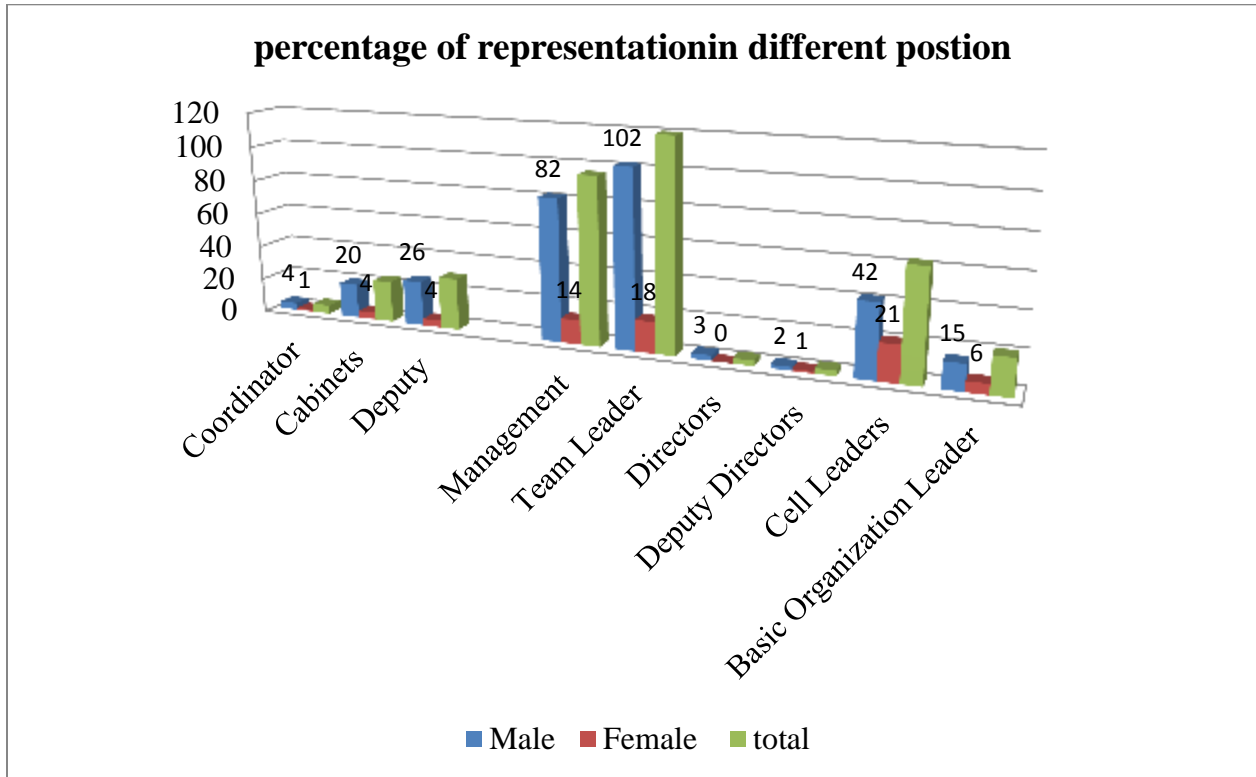


Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Figure 7. Marital Status of Sample Respondents

Finally, Figure 7 indicates marital status of the respondents, according to the survey data analysis results, 33(24.1%) of the respondents were unmarried; majority of the respondents 95 (69.3%) were married; while 9(6.6%) of the respondents were divorced. This shows that a large number of employees were married. When Female employees married they have dual responsibilities at home and public sectors (Daniel, 2019). In addition, women are disproportionately apply more time in the house to manage the family need that influences their presentation in the organization.

4.2.Current Practice of Women’s Empowerment

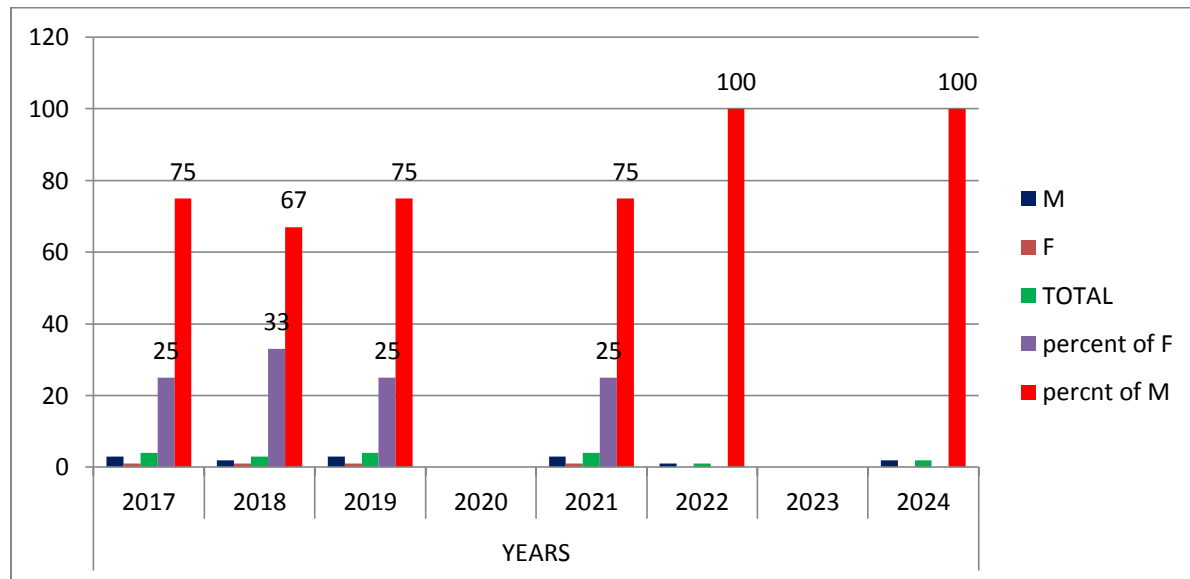


Source: Buee City Administration Human Resource Report, 2024

Figure 8. Women’s Representation in Decision Making Position

Figure 8 indicate that from 5 coordinators only 1 female the other 4 are male; from 24 cabinets only 4 female the other 20 are male; from 30 deputies only 4 female the other 26 are male; and from the total 96 managements bodies’ only 14 occupied by female the other 82 male. The data showed that majority of women employees underrepresent in team leader, directors, deputy directors cell leaders and basic organization leaders this indicate underrepresent women in important position. in line with (Alsharif, 2018). Despite the fact that everyone is born free, equal in dignity, and protected by the law, gender-based discrimination still prevents women from formally participating in decision-making. The researcher confirm the dominant male culture has a significant impact on women, which impacts their involvement in leadership roles (Misker,2021). The formal employments at the sector level place the majority of women in lower

and middle-level positions, making women invisible in management positions in the government, private, and civil society sectors (Meron, 2018). In general based on this study the researcher infers that the number of women in higher level position is very less. so, political empowerment of women in the study area had big gap therefore it's possible to make it narrow between male and female decision making position to; finally understand there are challenges which hinder women to empowered politically in the city administration public sectors.

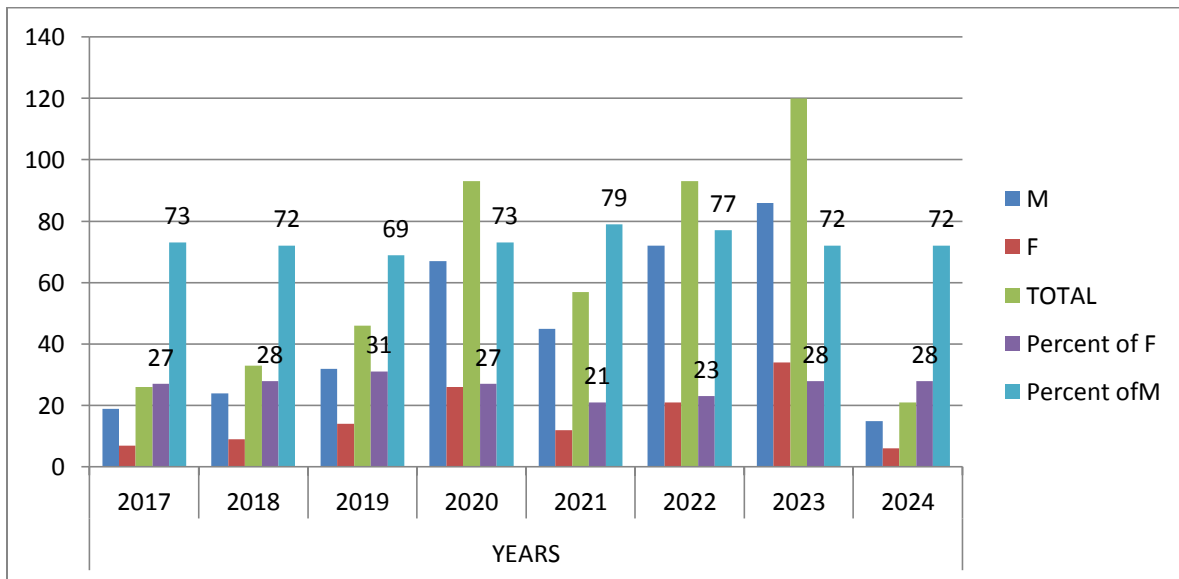


Source: Buee City Administration Human Resource Report, 2024

Figure 9. Access to Further Education Opportunities (Postgraduate Program)

Capacity building programs have a paramount role in empowering women. The trend for the last eight years in the study sector revealed that access to further education was very unequal between male and female public servants. From the postgraduate program opportunity, only 25% of women got the opportunity in 2017. In 2024, almost all the opportunity taken by males. This data show that the number of females beneficial for master's education is very low as compare to male. The fundamental instrument for bringing about the expected social change in the areas of politics, the economy, equality, health, and development is education. Nondiscriminatory, high-quality education gives women a chance to participate in the process of development and promotes women's mobility in society (Nigist, 2019). Often, girls are given less opportunities for

education than boys, and women's ability is then based on their educational background in addition to other obstacles and domestic duties (Woynshet, 2014; Elilta, 2013). An educated workforce is capable of proactively addressing the world's complicated issues and being responsive to organizational concerns. The future will be perpetuated and organizations will offer effective services if women are given the chance to pursue higher education and are capable of doing so. The sustainable development of a nation depends on the participation of both men and women in an organization (UN Women, 2014). Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that since there is a gender gap that is advantageous for master's education, the government should provide opportunities for further education because women's abilities improve their social standing, economic stability, and independence, which will surpass their power demands.



Source: Buee City Administration Human Resource Report, 2024

Figure 10. Access to loan services

The above figure indicate that access to loan services for female public servants was low comparing with male. Only 27% in 2017 and 28% in 2024 have accessed credit services. The study revealed that loan services access for women is very low which may affect their economic empowerment. Women's capacity to engage in governance is greatly impacted by economic

inequality (Misker, 2021). Due to financial constraints, women are less likely to seek for government or pursue political careers, which lower their representation in decision-making processes (Yilma, 2023). Ensuring that people have the necessary resources, skills, and abilities as well as access to stable and sustainable sources of income and livelihood is the goal of economic empowerment. And literacy, as well as a person's increased position and role in decision-making, can lead to this type of empowerment. Generally speaking, in order to change development, women and girls should have equal access to high-quality education, financial resources, and political engagement in addition to equal chances for leadership, decision-making, and employment at all levels.

4.3. Challenges of Women Empowerment

4.3.1. Cultural and Societal Norms

Table 2. Cultural and Societal Norms

No	Item		SD	DA	U	A	SA
1.	Traditional gender roles discourage women from pursuing leadership positions within local government.	F	4	6	9	29	89
		P	3	4	7	21	65
2.	Societal attitudes towards women in public administrative roles are largely negative.	F		2		33	102
		P		1		25	74
3.	Cultural expectations place undue pressure on women to prioritize family responsibilities over professional ambitions.	F			5	48	84
		P			4	35	61

Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Table 2 No, 1.show that 89(65%) of respondents strongly agree with the traditional gender roles discourage women from pursuing leadership positions within local government, 29(21%) of respondents agree with the traditional gender roles discourage women from pursuing leadership positions within local government the other 4(3%), 6(4%) and9 (7%) strongly dis agree, disagree and undecided with the traditional gender roles discourage women from pursuing leadership

positions within local government respectively. so, that this finding indicate traditional gender roles discourage women from pursuing leadership positions within local government again this idea reputed by interviewees as they said that Women are deterred from seeking leadership roles in local government by gender stereotypes. Traditional notions of gender roles hinder women's access to political leadership and decision-making positions. (Abebe, 2021).

Table 2 No, 2.show that 102(74%) of respondents strongly agree with the Societal attitudes towards women in public administrative roles are largely negative, 33(25%) of respondents agree with the Societal attitudes towards women in public administrative roles are largely negative. This indicate that almost all respondents strongly agree and agree with this idea additionally the interviewees confirm during interview because women's access to positions of political leadership and decision-making is hindered by traditional notions on gender roles (Abebe, 2021).

Table 2 No, 3.show that 84(61%) of respondents strongly agree with the Cultural expectations place undue pressure on women to prioritize family responsibilities over professional ambitions. 45(35%) of respondents strongly agree with the Cultural expectations place undue pressure on women to prioritize family responsibilities over professional ambitions. This idea directly and indirectly repeated by interviewees Cultural norms dictate that women should take care of the home and not work in offices like men do. Deeply rooted cultural beliefs that limit women's roles to the house sometimes reinforce gender stereotypes. These societal views, which are intertwined with cultural expectations regarding women's primary roles in the house, further restrict their agency and opportunities in political arenas (Bamfo, 2022).

4.3.2. Structural Barriers within Governmental Organizations

Table 3. Structural Barriers within Governmental Organizations

No	Item		SD	DA	U	A	SA
1.	Women face limited opportunities for advancement within governmental organizations.	F		11		112	14
		P		8		82	10
2.	Recruitment practices in public administration are biased against female candidates.	F		2	9	86	37
		P		1	12	63	27
3.	There is inadequate mentor ship offered to women aspiring to leadership roles in government.	F	3	4	2	119	9
		P	2	3	1	87	7

Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Table 3: No, 1.show that 112(82%) of respondents agree with the Women face limited opportunities for advancement within governmental organizations, 14(10%) of respondents strongly agree with the Women face limited opportunities for advancement within governmental organizations, the interviewees also said that women regularly face substantial inequalities in training and mentorship opportunities compared to their male corresponding item (Tamirat, 2023). This professional isolation exacerbates existing inequalities and diminishes women's visibility and influence within local government structures. Governmental administrations commonly exhibition structural barriers, including male-dominated grading and inadequate support for women in management roles. Such barriers strangle their professional progress and control their chances for significant contributions (Tafesse, 2022).

Table 3: No, 2.show that 86(63%) of respondents agree with the Recruitment practices in public administration are biased against female candidates, 37(27%) of respondents strongly agree with the Recruitment practices in public administration are biased against female candidates. Gender-based discrimination is a common occurrence for female employees, which hinders their capacity to function efficiently in governmental environments (Berhanu, 2023). Therefore, addressing these social norms is crucial to establishing a favorable atmosphere for women's empowerment in local public sectors.

Table 3: No, 3.show that 119(87%) of respondents agree with inadequate mentor ship offered to women aspiring to leadership roles in government, 9(7%) of respondents strongly agree with inadequate mentor ship offered to women aspiring to leadership roles in government. All interviewees repeat this. For women working in government, this structural barrier is a major obstacle that restricts their access to resources, networking opportunities, and professional growth chances. Research indicates that when it comes to training and mentorship possibilities, women frequently experience notable differences from their male counterparts (Tamirat, 2023). At the local level, addressing these social norms is crucial to establishing an atmosphere that supports women's empowerment in public sectors.

4.3.3. Economic constraints

Table 4. Respondents view on Economic Constraints

No	Item		SD	DA	U	A	SA
1.	Women have limited access to financial resources to support their political ambitions.	F		8	11	39	79
		P		6	8	28	58
2.	Existing salaries for public service positions are insufficient to empower women in government.	F			12	74	51
		P			9	55	36
3.	Economic pressures hinder women's ability to devote time to public service responsibilities.	F			12	87	38
		P			9	64	27

Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Table 4: No, 1.show that 79(58%) of respondents strongly agree with the Women have limited access to financial resources to support their political ambitions, 39(28%) of respondents agree with the women have limited access to financial resources to support their political ambitions. the interviewees also answer this question as the same manner parallel to with the study that Women frequently lack financial independence, which restricts their capacity to hold leadership positions in administrative structures or participate in political activities. (Assefa, 2021).

Table 4 : No, 2.show that 74(55%) of respondents agree with the Existing salaries for public service positions are insufficient to empower women in government, 51(36%) of respondents strongly agree with the Existing salaries for public service positions are insufficient to empower women in government .almost all interviewees agree with these respondents they given additional idea to improve this results and based on this the researcher argue the fading that attempts to establish an atmosphere that supports women's leadership in local governmental organizations are hampered by a lack of funds for gender-specific initiatives, among other financial constraints. (Kumar & Singh, 2021).

Table 4: No,3.show that 87(64%) of respondents agree with the Economic pressures hinder women's ability to devote time to public service responsibilities, 38(27%) of respondents agree

with the Economic pressures hinder women's ability to devote time to public service responsibilities in general this realizes by all interviewees as the same manner as Women frequently lack financial independence, which restricts their capacity to hold leadership positions in administrative structures or participate in political activities. This suggests that women experience distinct financial limitations (Assefa, 2021).

4.3.4. Lack of Networking Opportunities

Table 5. Access to Networking Opportunities

No	Item		SD	DA	U	A	SA
1.	Networking events that are welcoming and inclusive to women are infrequent.	F		12	4	98	23
		P		9	3	71	17
2.	Mentor ship programs for women remain underdeveloped within public sectors.	F			8	89	40
		P			6	65	29
3.	Collaborative platforms to promote women’s engagement in governance are lacking.	F		6	10	100	21
		P		5	7	73	15

Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Table 5: No, 1.show that 98(71%) of respondents agree with the Networking events that are welcoming and inclusive to women are infrequent, 23(17%) of respondents strongly agree with the networking events that are welcoming and inclusive to women are infrequent.

Table 5: No, 2.show that 89(65%) of respondents agree with the Mentor ship programs for women remain underdeveloped within public sectors, 40(29%) of respondents strongly agree with the Mentor ship programs for women remain underdeveloped within public sectors

Table 5 No, 3.show that 100(73%) of respondents agree with Collaborative platforms to promote women’s engagement in governance are lacking, 21(15%) of respondents strongly agree with Collaborative platforms to promote women’s engagement in governance are lacking as the above table the data which gets from questionnaires the all interviewees interpret generally networking is important things for sharing experience and information but Lack of networking opportunities is present in the study area. Women's access to powerful circles inside

governmental organizations is hampered by a lack of networking opportunities and mentorship programs. Their capacity to utilize resources and assistance is limited by their absence of professional networks (Melaku, 2022). Therefore, removing these technological obstacles is essential to fostering networking and cooperation among public managers.

4.3.5. Overburden of Domestic Responsibilities

Table 6. Burden of Domestic Responsibilities

No	Item		SD	DA	U	A	SA
1.	Women often face expectations to fulfill extensive domestic roles alongside their professional duties in government, impacting their performance.	F				125	12
		P				91	9
2.	Public policy does not adequately address the needs of women balancing domestic responsibilities and career advancement.	F			9	109	19
		P			7	76	17
3.	Gendered divisions of labor within households remain entrenched, further complicating women's participation in public sector roles.	F				50	87
		P			7	36	64

Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Table 6: No, 1. show that 125(91%) of respondents agree with the Women often face expectations to fulfill extensive domestic roles alongside their professional duties in government impact their performance, 12(9%) of respondents strongly agree with the Women often face expectations to fulfill extensive domestic roles alongside their professional duties in government impact their the same as of this the interviewees interpret as the same perception based on this the researcher argue idea that Women are disproportionately burdened with household responsibilities, which restricts their ability to participate in politics and public service activities. (Getachew, 2023).

Table 6: No, 2. show that 109(76%) of respondents agree with the Public policy does not adequately address the needs of women balancing domestic responsibilities and career advancement, 19(17%) of respondents agree with the Public policy does not adequately address

the needs of women balancing domestic responsibilities and career advancement the interviewees infer that the

Lack of enabling systems, such as childcare centers and flexible work schedules, further deters women from entering the public sector and fosters an atmosphere that values male involvement. (Woldemariam, 2023). In addition, women are disproportionately applying more time in the house to manage the family need that influences their presentation in the organization (Daniel, 2019).

Table 6: No. 3 shows that 87(64%) of respondents agree with the gendered divisions of labor within households remain entrenched, further complicating women's participation in public sector roles, 50(36%) of respondents agree with the Gendered divisions of labor within households remain entrenched, further complicating women's participation in public sector roles. The interviewees said as similar to Nejat (2017)

found that among other things, one of the biggest obstacles preventing women from rising to leadership roles is the strain that domestic duties inflict on them.

4.3.6. Policy Related Challenges

Table 7. Policy Related Challenges

No	Item		SD	DA	U	A	SA
1	The implementation of women concerned policy is not effectively.	F			21	90	26
		P			15	66	19
2.	Legislative measures addressing gender inequalities in governance are ineffective or poorly implemented.	F			23	95	19
		P			17	69	14
3.	The absence of a gender-focused governmental framework limits progress toward women's empowerment in local administration.	F		11	36	71	19
		P		8	26	52	14

Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Table 7: No, 1.show that 90(66%) of respondents agree with The implementation of women concerned policy is not effectively. 26(19%) of respondents strongly agree The implementation of women concerned policy is not effectively.

Table 7: No, 2.show that 95(69%) of respondents agree with the Legislative measures addressing gender inequalities in governance are ineffective or poorly implemented, 19(14%) of respondents strongly agree with the Legislative measures addressing gender inequalities in governance are ineffective or poorly implemented Table 7: No, 3.show that 71(52%) of respondents agree with the absence of a gender-focused governmental framework limits progress toward women's empowerment in local administration, 36(26%) of respondents undecided with the absence of a gender-focused governmental framework limits progress toward women's empowerment in local administration 19 (14%) of respondents undecided with the absence of a gender-focused governmental framework limits progress toward women's empowerment in local administration, the data presentation above table indicate that almost all respondents agree with the presence of Policy related challenges this idea again express by interviewees as major challenge is the absence of clear policy structures, which often results in coinciding responsibilities and ineffectiveness in the study area ((Kassahun, 2021). the researcher argue that the lack of inclusive policy guideline can impede the application of developmental strategies, undesirably affecting service distribution and citizen appointment at the public level(Taddesse et al. (2022). The inability of many Ethiopian town and city administrations to properly implement policies is caused by a shortage of qualified staff and insufficient training initiatives (Woldemariam, 2023).

4.4. Opportunities of Women’s Empowerment

Table 8. Opportunities of Women’s Empowerment

No	Item		SD	DA	U	A	SA
1.	The affirmative action policies in place effectively promote the participation of women in local government roles.	F				119	18
		P				87	13
2	The capacity-building programs offered to women in local government effectively enhance their skills and competencies but not women offered this chance properly.	F				123	14
		P				90	10
3	Community engagement initiatives actively involve women in the decision-making processes at the local government level.	F				122	15
		P				89	11
4	The networking platforms established for women in local government facilitate valuable connections and support among peers.	F				120	17
		P				88	12
5	Present of women and child sector is an opportunities to empower women	F		3		121	13
		P		2		88	10
6	Gender preference and quota system which use currently is opportunities	F		6	4	101	26
		P					
7	innovation of technology is most important opportunities to empower women	F		8	3	98	30
		P					

Source: Own Survey Data, 2024

Table 8: No, 1.show that 119(87%) of respondents agree with the affirmative action policies in place effectively promote the participation of women in local government roles, 18(13%) of respondents strongly agree with the affirmative action policies in place effectively promote the participation of women in local government roles this idea confirm by interviewees all interviewees said that Affirmative action policies have emerged as a critical mechanism for

enhancing women's representation in government positions, particularly at the local administration level and believe that the implementation of affirmative action policies has led to an increase in women's representation in decision-making positions within local government. These policies aim to address systemic inequalities and promote gender equity within public sectors. The literature indicates that affirmative action can significantly influence the number of women in decision-making roles, thereby fostering inclusive governance. Osei et al. (2021) According to a study by Abebe (2023), The research suggests that while affirmative action policies have created opportunities for women, the persistent gender biases within communities necessitate complementary strategies that promote societal change and support women's leadership development.

The above Table 8: No, 2 show that 123(90%) of respondents agree with the capacity-building programs offered to women in local government effectively enhance their skills and competencies but not women offered this chance properly, 14(10%) of respondents strongly agree with The capacity-building programs offered to women in local government effectively enhance their skills and competencies but not women offered this chance properly. The interviewees agree with this idea during interview; they said that empowerment of women in public administration is essential for fostering inclusive governance and sustainable development. Capacity-building programs aimed at equipping women with the necessary skills and knowledge for effective participation in government sector has gained significant attention in recent years. These programs are designed to address the gender disparities that persist in public administration, particularly at the town and city administration levels.

Research indicates that such initiatives not only enhance women's competencies but also contribute to improved decision-making processes within local governments (UN Women, 2021). A study by Abebe et al. (2023) found that women who participated in these programs reported increased confidence and a greater understanding of their roles within local governance structures.so; this program is one of the opportunities to empowered women in public sectors in the study area.

The above table 8: No, 3 show that 122(89%) of respondents agree with Community engagement initiatives actively involve women in the decision-making processes at the local government level, 15(11%) of respondents strongly agree with Community engagement initiatives actively involve women in the decision-making processes at the local government level. Most of the respondents agree community engagement is important opportunity for women empowerment in local government public sectors this idea is accepted and confirmed by interviewees during interview the interviewees said that when women engage in communities program increase their participation and experience for decision making. Engaging communities in dialogue about gender roles and the importance of women's participation can shift societal perceptions and reduce barriers to women's empowerment. Studies show that community-led initiatives, such as awareness campaigns and local forums, have successfully mobilized support for women in public office (Abebe, 2021). So that, Community engagement is vital for fostering an inclusive environment that supports women's leadership in local governance

The above table 8: No, 3 show that 120(88%) of respondents agree with the networking platforms established for women in local government facilitate valuable connections and support among peers, 17(12%) of respondents agree with the networking platforms established for women in local government facilitate valuable connections and support among peers. This idea supported by interviewees by saying when the present of networking plat form women share experiences from model leaders, access resources, and build professional relationships that can enhance their capabilities and influence within the public sector. In recent years, the significance of networking platforms for women in government public sectors has gained significant attention, particularly as a means to foster supportive communities at the town and city administration levels.. Research indicates that such networks not only empower women but also contribute to more inclusive governance, ultimately benefiting communities as a whole (Baker & Smith, 2022). The establishment of these networks is particularly crucial in contexts where women have historically been underrepresented in decision-making roles.

Above table 8 No, 5 Indicate that the sentence, Present of women and child sector is an opportunities to empower women. About eighty eight percent (88.3%) of the respondents said that agree, about nine percent (9.5%) of the respondents said that strongly agree, this show that

Presence of women and child sector is an opportunities to empower women politically in public sectors.

Above table 8 No, 6 Indicate that the sentence, Gender preference and quota system which use currently is opportunities during selection to increase women political empowerment. About sixty three percent (63.5%) of the respondents said that agree, about thirty tow percent (32.8%) of the respondents said that strongly agree, this shows that, Gender preference and quota system which use currently is opportunities during selection to increase women empowerment. Thereseacher argue. Another effective tool for granting equal opportunities in employment and promotion is gender-inclusive policy. Structural hurdles, such as male dominated hierarchies and a lack of support for women in leadership positions, are commonly seen in government institutions. These obstacles hinder their ability to advance professionally and limit their chances to make significant contributions. (Tafesse, 2022).

Above table 8 No, 7 indicate that the sentence, innovation of technology is most important opportunities to empower women politically. About sixty three percent (63.5%) of the respondents said that agree, about thirty five percent (35.8%) of the respondents said that strongly agree. This shows that, innovation of technology is most important opportunities to empower women politically, by offering advocacy, training, and mentoring, these platforms help women more successfully negotiate the challenges of public administration (Zewdie, 2023). In general; the data show in the above; affirmative action, capacity building, community engagement initiatives, network platform, present of women and children sectors and technology innovation are opportunities to empower women, but these opportunities not implement properly in the advantage of women so, any concerned bodies implement these properly and evaluate others.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

The researcher summarize that in many developing nations, historical and systemic barriers have hindered women's empowerment in governance based on the finding of other researchers; According to the World Economic Forum (2022), gender parity in political leadership remains elusive in developing nations, with women holding only 22% of parliamentary seats on the continent. This underrepresentation in political spheres indicates a significant gap that needs to be addressed for substantial progress in gender equality to be realized recent studies underscore the importance of institutional support and training in cultivating women's leadership capacities within city administrations.

Cultural norms, limited access to education, and socio-economic constraints perpetuate gender disparities in decision-making roles A report by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2021) emphasizes that mentorship programs, capacity-building initiatives, and gender-sensitive policies can foster an environment conducive to women's leadership. These strategies facilitate women's active involvement in local governance, thus enabling them to influence decisions that directly impact their communities.

Nevertheless, challenges persist. Despite documented advances, women engaged in city administrations often face discrimination and systemic barriers that limit their effectiveness and authority. According to research conducted by the Ethiopian Women's Federation (2020), women in local governments frequently encounter bureaucratic challenges and societal pushback that undermine their contributions. Furthermore, women's responsibilities in informal care giving roles can detract from their professional engagement, impacting their ability to perform in governance capacities fully. In summary, the empowerment of women in public sectors, particularly within city administrations in Ethiopia and the broader African context, reflects significant progress alongside ongoing challenges Again, women spend two to ten times as much time as men on unpaid care work (OECD, 2014). However, the formal employment sector places the

majority of women in lower and middle-level positions, making women invisible in management positions in the government, private, and civil society sectors (Meron, 2018). This unequal distribution of employment is linked to discriminatory social institutions and gender stereotypes (OECD, 2014), which skew gender equality.

The researcher summarize the result based on the findings as follows, which drown out the findings of the study in buee city administration: the researcher concludes that the attitude of society towards women's political empowerment is negative and does not encourage women to participate in politics to become empowered politically; culture and religion became challenges to women by hindering their participation in politics and negatively influencing them. Overburden at home is another challenge for women, which hinders their participation in political affairs. The same is true for husbands who do not encourage and appreciate their wives; they also do not share home responsibilities. Women do not get additional education and training. They have an interest in participating in political affairs to increase their empowerment, but they do not give women the same chance to lead as men. This indicates men undermine women, and these women are not outshined by their responsibility. From the finding the researcher understand that there are opportunities to empower women politically BCA public sectors but these opportunities are not put into practice properly for the advantage of women. Additionally, there are different strategies to improve women political empowerment when used properly

5.2 Conclusion

The researcher Conclude the result based on the findings as follows, which drown out the findings of the study in Buee city administration

The researcher Conclude that; the formal employment sector places the majority of women in lower and middle-level positions, making women invisible in management positions in the government; this unequal distribution of employment is linked to discriminatory social institutions and gender stereotypes historical and systemic barriers have hindered women's empowerment in governance based on the finding researchers confir; women only holding lower percent in representative, gender parity in political leadership is still elusive This

underrepresentation in political arenas points to a critical gap that must be filled in order to achieve meaningful advancements in gender equality .

On the other hand, challenges persist based on documented data show, women engaged in city administrations often face discrimination and systemic barriers that limit their effectiveness and authority women in local governments frequently encounter bureaucratic challenges and societal pushback that undermine their contributions. Furthermore, women's responsibilities in informal care giving roles can detract from their professional engagement, impacting their ability to perform in governance capacities fully, the researcher concludes that the attitude of society towards women's empowerment is negative and does not encourage women to become empowered; Overburden at home is another challenge for women empowerment and absent of additional education and training chances.

The finding emphasizes that affirmative action, capacity-building initiatives, and preference quota system, gender sensitive policies and technology opportunities of women's empowerment when employment properly with the advantage of them. These opportunities facilitate women's active involvement in local governance, thus enabling them to influence decisions that directly impact their communities.

5.1.Recommendations

The researcher makes the following suggestions for all relevant bodies in light of the study's findings:

- More focused programs that address the unique challenges that women experience, such as access to education, work opportunities, microfinance initiatives, Social media and digital tools increase the reach of women's networks enabling better connectivity and resource sharing and community lead efforts
- The government should to adopt participatory strategies, such community discussions, , gender sensitivity training, community awareness campaigns, workshops and mentorship programs that aim to cultivate a supportive network for women in local

government which are considerably them and Non-governmental organizations should facilitate this

- The government should oversee the correct and efficient application of different opportunities like affirmative action laws, capacity building program ,gender preference quota system and so on
- In order to execute policies pertaining to women's empowerment effectively, researchers should exchange resources and best practices.
- Since technology is essential for fostering networking and teamwork among public officials, women should use it appropriately.
- Gendersensitive measures that could encourage women's involvement in local governance should be supported by adaptable institutional frameworks.
- The government should adopt gender responsive governance, which calls for a multifaceted strategy that tackles systemic injustices and cultural attitudes
- Women workers should be encouraged to participate in grassroots and multi-level government systems and the government should offer counseling services.

5.2.Future Research Directions

- To get a detailed and complete picture of challenges and opportunities of women political empowerment the researcher suggests that the scope needs to be broadened to Zonal and Regional level.
- Future studies could be done in a larger scope that incorporates different stakeholders
- Other researchers could use other variables that challenges and opportunities.

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7. List Of Appendixes

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

WOLKITE UNIVERSITY

Department of developmental planning management

A questionnaire to be filled by concerned bodies

This study is aimed to explore challenges & opportunities of women's political empowerment in Buee city administration's public sectors. The information collected through this instrument will be used for the accomplishment of master's thesis entitled on “challenges & opportunities of women's political empowerment in Buee city administration's public sectors. Thus, your commitment and cooperation to carefully fill these questionnaires will have so much contribution to know the challenges & opportunities of women's political empowerment. Therefore, you are kindly requested to honestly complete the questions. I guarantee that your responses will be kept confidential and used for academic purposes.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

General direction

- ✓ no need of writing name in any part of the questionnaire
- ✓ Make your response in the space provided by putting "X" mark
- ✓ For your additional opinion or explanation, you are kindly requested to write briefly as much as possible in the space provided
- ✓ Name of your sector -----

Section I: Demographic characteristics of respondents

1. Sex: a. Female

2. Age in years:

A. < 30 B. 31-40 C. 41-50 D. >50

3. Educational Qualification

A certificate B. Diploma C. BA D. MS

4. Work experience in years

A. 1-5 B. 6-10 C. 11-15 D. 16-20 E. > 21

5. What is your current position at the sector you are working?

A. Leader B. Expert

6. Marital status

A. Unmarried B. Married C. Divorced

Section II: Evaluating current practices to empower women in Ethiopian government public sectors The empowerment of women in government public sectors,

particularly at the town and city administration level in Ethiopia, is critical for achieving gender equality and fostering inclusive governance. To assess the effectiveness of current practices aimed at empowering women; for this question the researcher analyses documented data means the report of human resource department

Section III: Challenges that can hinder women empowerment

Women’s empowerment in government public sectors, particularly at the town or city administrative levels in Ethiopia, remains a critical issue that warrants extensive examination. Several challenges obstruct the pathway to gender equality in public administration. This study proposes a set of four a 1 to 5 point Likert scale items for assessing key challenges: cultural and societal norms, structural barriers within governmental organizations, economic constraints, lack of networking opportunities, domestic responsibilities, and policy-related challenges. Please tick (√) the appropriate scale that indicates your agreement in the tables given below. The values of the scales are 1 = Strongly Disagree(SD), 2 = Disagree (DA), 3= Undecided (U), 3 = Agree (A), 5 = Strongly Agree (SA).

No	Variables with their items	Likert Scales				
		1	2	3	4	5
Cultural and Societal Norms						
1.	Traditional gender roles discourage women from pursuing leadership positions within local government.					
2.	Societal attitudes towards women in public administrative roles are largely negative.					
3.	Cultural expectations place undue pressure on women to prioritize family responsibilities over professional ambitions.					
Structural Barriers within Governmental Organizations						
1.	Women face limited opportunities for advancement within governmental organizations.					
2.	Recruitment practices in public administration are biased against female candidates.					
3.	There is inadequate mentorship offered to women aspiring to leadership roles in government.					
Economic Constraints						
1.	Women in Ethiopia have limited access to financial resources to support their political ambitions.					

2.	Existing salaries for public service positions are insufficient to attract women into government.					
3.	Economic pressures hinder women's ability to devote time to public service responsibilities.					
Lack of Networking Opportunities						
1.	Networking events that are welcoming and inclusive to women are infrequent.					
2.	Mentorship programs for women remain underdeveloped within public sectors.					
3.	Collaborative platforms to promote women's engagement in governance are lacking.					
Overburden of Domestic Responsibilities						
1.	Women often face expectations to fulfill extensive domestic roles alongside their professional duties in government, impacting their performance.					
2.	Public policy does not adequately address the needs of women balancing domestic responsibilities and career advancement.					
3.	Gendered divisions of labor within households remain entrenched, further complicating women's participation in public sector roles.					
Policy-Related Challenges						
1.	Women are underrepresented in the formulation of policies affecting public administration.					
2.	Legislative measures addressing gender inequalities in governance are ineffective or poorly implemented.					
3.	The absence of a gender-focused governmental framework limits progress toward women's empowerment in local administration.					

Section VI: Opportunities for promoting women's involvement in city administrations government public sectors

In the context of Ethiopia, in particular Buee city administration, promoting women's involvement in local governance is crucial for fostering economic development and social justice.. This study proposes two a 1 to 5 point Likert scale items for each of the following practices: implementation of affirmative action policies, capacity-building programs, community engagement, and networking platforms. These items are designed to gauge female employees' perceptions and experiences related to these initiatives. Please tick (√) the appropriate scale that indicates your agreement in the tables given below. The values of the scales are 1 = Strongly

Disagree(SD), 2 = Disagree (DA), 3= Undecided (U), 3 = Agree (A), 5 = Strongly Agree (SA).

No	Item		1	2	3	4	5
1.	The affirmative action policies in place effectively promote the participation of women in local government roles.						
2	The capacity-building programs offered to women in local government effectively enhance their skills and competencies.						
3	Community engagement initiatives actively involve women in the decision-making processes at the local government level.						
4	The networking platforms established for women in local government facilitate valuable connections and support among peers.						
5	Present of women and child sector is an opportunities to empower women						
6	Gender preference and quota system which use currently is opportunities						
7	innovation of technology is most important opportunities to empower women						

Appendix 2. Interview [English version]

1. Interview for heads of the selected government public sectors

Interview guide questions

On current practices

1. **Implementation of Affirmative Action Policies:** Can you describe the specific affirmative action policies that your office has implemented to promote women's representation and participation in public sectors? How effective have these policies been in increasing the number of women in leadership positions within your office?
2. **Capacity-Building Programs:** What capacity-building programs have been established in your sector to equip women with the necessary skills and knowledge for effective participation in public administration? Could you provide examples of successful initiatives and their outcomes?
3. **Community Engagement:** How does your administration engage with local communities to raise awareness about women's rights and the importance of female participation in governance? What strategies have proven most effective in fostering community support for these initiatives?
4. **Networking Platforms:** What networking platforms or collaborative initiatives does your administration support to connect women in public sectors with mentors and peers? How do these platforms contribute to the empowerment and professional development of women in your area?

On challenges

1. Cultural and societal norms: How do prevailing cultural and societal norms in your community affect women's participation in public service roles? Are there specific attitudes or beliefs that you believe reinforce gender disparities in the workforce?
2. Structural barriers within government organizations: What structural barriers exist within your governmental organization that may hinder women's career advancement? Can you identify specific policies or practices that may contribute to this issue?

3. Economic constraints: In what ways do economic constraints limit the opportunities available to women in your sector? Are budgetary allocations for gender-specific programs adequate to address these constraints?
4. Lack of networking opportunities: How does the lack of networking opportunities affect women's professional development and support in your sector? Are there initiatives in place to facilitate networking among women in public service?
5. Overburden of domestic responsibilities: How do domestic responsibilities disproportionately affect women in your organization, and what measures are being implemented to alleviate this burden?
6. Policy-related challenges: What specific policy-related challenges do you face in promoting gender equality and empowering women within your sector? How effective are current policies in addressing these challenges?

On opportunities

1. What specific strategies have you implemented to promote the involvement of women in town and city administrations, and how do these initiatives align with national policies regarding gender equality?
2. How do you leverage the presence of women in leadership positions to serve as role models and catalysts for change within local communities?
3. In what ways do you involve women in local governance initiatives aimed at promoting economic development and social justice? Can you provide examples of successful programs?

For leaders of women association

On challenges

1. Cultural and societal norms: How do prevailing cultural and societal attitudes in your community impact women's participation in decision-making roles within local government?

2. Structural barriers within government organizations: What specific structural obstacles have you encountered within governmental organizations that hinder the advancement of women into leadership positions?
3. Economic constraints: In what ways do economic challenges, such as inadequate funding and resource allocation, affect the capacity of women's associations to pursue their empowerment initiatives?
4. Lack of networking opportunities: Can you discuss the extent to which limited networking opportunities have impacted women's ability to connect with mentors and other leaders in your area?
5. Burden of domestic responsibilities: How does the disproportionate burden of domestic and care giving responsibilities affect women's ability to engage in civic activities or take on leadership roles in the community?
6. Policy-related challenges: What policy gaps do you believe exist within local governance that hinders the effective implementation of programs aimed at empowering women?

On opportunities

1. Implementation of Affirmative Action Policies: What specific affirmative action policies have been implemented in your association to promote women's participation in local government, and how effective have these policies been in increasing women's representation in decision-making roles?
2. Capacity-Building Programs: Can you describe the capacity-building programs your association has established to equip women with the necessary skills and knowledge for effective participation in local governance? What measurable outcomes have resulted from these programs?
3. Community Engagement: How does your association engage with the community to raise awareness about the importance of women's roles in local governance, and what strategies have proven most successful in mobilizing community support?
4. Networking Platforms: What networking platforms have been established by your association to facilitate connections among women leaders in local government, and how have these platforms contributed to their professional development and collaboration?

For political leaders

On challenges

1. **Cultural Norms:** How do you perceive the influence of prevailing cultural and societal norms on women's participation in local governance and public service roles within your jurisdiction? Are there specific examples where these norms have been particularly restricting?
2. **Structural Barriers:** What structural barriers exist within your governmental organizations that disproportionately affect women's advancement in public sectors? Can you identify any specific policies or practices that you believe need reform to enhance women's involvement in decision-making processes?
3. **Economic Constraints:** In what ways do economic constraints, such as budget limitations or lack of funding for gender-focused initiatives, hinder the empowerment of women in your administration? How do these economic issues manifest in day-to-day operations?
4. **Networking Opportunities:** What measures, if any, have been taken to create networking opportunities for women within your administration? Do you think that enhancing these networks could lead to more significant advancements in women's roles in governance?
5. **Domestic Responsibilities:** Given the cultural expectations around domestic responsibilities, how does this burden affect women's ability to engage in political roles in your community? What initiatives, if any, have been developed to assist women in balancing these responsibilities with their professional aspirations?
6. **Policy-Related Challenges:** What specific policy-related challenges have you identified that hinder the effective implementation of women empowerment initiatives in your local government? How can these policies be improved to ensure better outcomes for women in the public sector?

On opportunities

1. **Affirmative Action Policies:** What specific affirmative action policies have been implemented in your administration to ensure increased representation of women in local government, and how do you measure their effectiveness?
2. **Capacity-Building Programs:** Can you elaborate on the capacity-building programs available for women in your administration, and how do these programs address the unique challenges faced by women in public service?
3. **Community Engagement:** In what ways does your administration engage the community to promote women's leadership in local governance, and what feedback mechanisms are in place to ensure that women's voices are heard?
4. **Networking Platforms:** What initiatives has your administration undertaken to create networking platforms for women in government, and how do these platforms facilitate collaboration and support among women leaders?
5. **What specific strategies do you believe are necessary to promote women's involvement in local administrations, and how do you envision overcoming the barriers they face in entering public sector roles?**
6. **How do you perceive the role of women in leadership positions as catalysts for change within your administration, and what initiatives are being undertaken to support them as role models for younger generations?**
7. **In what ways do you believe involving women in local governance can spearhead initiatives aimed at promoting economic development and social justice, particularly within the Buee city administration context?**