



**ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES INSTITUTE OF
AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**

**THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN ENHANCING WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT: THE CASE OF ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN IN SELF EMPLOYMENT**

BY

HEWAN GEBRESELASSIE

July, 2024

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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SCHOOL OF GRADUATES STUDIES
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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis entitled by ‘*The Role Of Civil Society Organizations In Enhancing Women’s Empowerment: The Case Of Organization For Women In Self Employment*’ is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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Acronyms

EP:	Empowered Women
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
UN:	United Nations
WEP:	Women Empowerment Program
WHO:	World Health Organization
WISE:	Organization for Women in self-employment

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Abstract

The empowerment of women is crucial for the development of countries worldwide. Despite this recognition, women often remain marginalized. This study investigates the role of Civil Society Organizations, specifically the Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE), in enhancing women's empowerment in Addis Ababa. The study addresses the persistent marginalization and limited economic opportunities for women in the area. Using a mixed-method approach interviews, surveys, and document analysis—the research reveals that WISE's holistic approach, which includes skills training, capacity-building, and advocacy, significantly improves women's economic independence, education levels, and overall well-being. However, challenges such as funding constraints and cultural barriers were identified. The study recommends increased funding, broader community engagement, and strategies to overcome cultural barriers to amplify the impact of women's empowerment initiatives.

Keywords: Women's empowerment, NGOs, WISE, gender equality, community engagement.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with introduction of the study, which includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study, operational definition of terms and finally organization of the study.

1.1. Background of the study

Power is defined as having dominion, influence, and control over someone or something (Chandler, 1992). To understand the process of empowerment, there is a need to recognize that power takes different dimensions such as power over victimization, power to be generative or productive, power with others in tackling problems, and power from within which gives spiritual strength and uniqueness seasoned with self-acceptance and self-respect (Ratmen, 2013).

Empowerment is a collective rather than just an individual process. It is no doubt important for individuals to take control over their fears, addictions, and other self-destructive or socially disruptive thoughts and behaviors. Psychologists call that individual trait by different names, such as self-efficacy, mastery, or internal locus of control. But that is not empowerment, regardless of what self-improvement books may say. Empowerment through participatory action with others is, in fact, one of the most effective ways to master one's fears, obsessions, or disdain for self or others.

It has many important individual benefits, including greater health, well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness (Prestby, Wandersman, Florin, Rich, & Chavis, 1990; Wallerstein, 1993). But think of those as side benefits because empowerment is mainly about working together for our shared interests, to improve our communities and institutions, and build a more just society.

The absence of women's empowerment is one of the most critical attributes behind the increase in maternal mortality and morbidity that can be prevented. Women empowerment should surpass the stating of facts regarding an event but should involve critical synthesis of facts, meaning, interpretation, and application of these into practice seasoned with ethical considerations of the rights of others. It is an art of the ability to act out principles stated at the Beijing Conference on Women's Rights in a mutual manner that fosters understanding and growth between the parties involved (Beijing Conference Women's Rights, 1995).

Accepting one's capabilities and limitations for the proper growth of the global society at large is of paramount importance. Empowering women socially and economically by training them to do self-help projects and accessing health care services are among the appreciated dimensions. Most rural women are the stewards of natural resources; hence they need to be empowered to use a safe water supply, good sanitation practices, and use of mosquito nets in malaria zones. Women need to educate girls and boys to prevent child marriages and unwanted pregnancies. Counseling women on the prevention of sexual gender-based violence and promotion of gender equality is important in terms of women's empowerment (Yesim Global Compact, 2017). These skills are important in preventing the disempowerment of women, which can help raise maternal and neonatal survival (Yesim Global Compact, 2017).

Women remain the world's most unemployed resource (Tripalli, 2011). Women comprise 50% of the world's population, but they hold less than 12% of parliament seats. Out of 177 countries in the world, only 14 countries have women holding more than 30 seats in their national parliament (Rahman, 2013). Dependent personality traits and poor negotiating skills place women on the negative side of women's empowerment (Benotsch & Sinha Ray, 2017). Disabled women need nurse advocates to stand for them in cases of oppression (Rottercum, 2017).

According to a UN report, the Ethiopian government has improved the situation of women in the country by working towards closing gender gaps in all education levels, including creating access and equity in the schooling system at all levels, including higher education, technical, and vocational schools (UN, 2002). When the FDRE regime came to power, there were only two public universities and sixteen self-regulating junior colleges in the country. Currently, due to the massive expansion of higher learning

institutions, there are 37 public universities and colleges and several private higher education institutions (Yizengaw, 2007; ESAA, 2016).

There is sufficient legal regime ranging from the constitution to women-focused legal frameworks designed to empower women in Ethiopia but the problem is how empowerment is conceptualized in those legal documents (basically they leave out the 'ideological' aspect of empowerment) and how the existing ones are translated into practice in the local context. To critically analyze how women's empowerment is understood in the policies and strategies of the government in Ethiopia, and examine how women define or understand their empowerment about their education the paper compares the competence and autonomy of women in deciding on matters that affect their lives by taking two groups - women who have higher education and those who does not.

The Organization for Women in Self-Employment (WISE) is a charity registered with the Ministry of Justice since August 1997 and has been operating since January 1998. WISE envisions a nation where women are economically empowered and absolute poverty is eradicated. The Organization exists to help poor self-employed women and girls in their efforts to attain self-reliance, improve the quality of their lives, and thereby enhance their contribution to the development of Ethiopia. (WISE, 2024).

WISE attempts to pursue a holistic approach to addressing the problems of poverty among this target group. Its engagement is based on core values that have been nurtured since its inception and continue to inspire and motivate its staff and govern the day-to-day activities of the organization. These core values include accountability, participation, empowerment, compassion, commitment to excellence, and partnership. (WISE, 2024)

WISE has been contributing to the improvement of the living conditions of its target group members through providing financial and non-financial services. During the past 15 years, over Birr 88 million in loans has been disbursed through the SACCOs and the Union to finance target group members for start-up or expansion of their small businesses. On the other hand, savings of over Birr 27 million were mobilized from the members. The organization has also benefited members through the provision of loans to cover the down payment for condominium housing units, building and renovation of their

houses, and covering their children's school expenses. Moreover, in-built microinsurance services are provided for loans and health. (WISE, 2024)

Furthermore, to improve the women's chances of success and to strengthen their knowledge base, various trainings are given in the areas of leadership, entrepreneurship, business management, health education, literacy and numeracy, and life skills to strengthen members' knowledge base, improve their skills and develop their attitudes so that they can run their businesses profitably and improve the quality of their livelihoods.

Target groups are low income women in general and young unemployed women in particular, self-employed women micro-enterprise operators, women migrant workers (aspiring and returning), and new graduate girls or dropouts in technical and vocational education and training that are being empowered by the organization (WISE). The researcher was interested in researching because empowering women has numerous benefits for individuals, communities, and societies as a whole. Studies have shown that when women are empowered, they have better access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, which leads to improved health, reduced poverty, and increased economic growth. Empowered women also tend to have greater political representation, which can lead to more inclusive and equitable policies.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

According to the report of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) on the implementation of the AU Solemn declaration on gender equality in Africa (2006), like in many African countries, the majority of women in Ethiopia hold low status in the society. They have been left without equal access to education, training and gainful employment opportunities and their involvement in policy formulation and decision-making processes has been very minimal. Yet, women constitute half of the Ethiopia population. Thus, any educational, economic and social activity that does not involve and benefit women because such an activity is based on half the manpower, half the knowledge, half the effort, etc. (WCYA, 2013). Though women's rights to equal participation and benefits with men cannot be seen separately from the overall economic and educational progress in society, it is an established fact that women's rights need special attention in the change process.

Women's rights require special attention in processes of societal change due to enduring historical

injustices and systemic gender disparities. Throughout history, women have faced entrenched discrimination and exclusion from various spheres of life, including education, employment, and political participation (Sen, 2001). These disparities persist despite global advancements in gender equality efforts. Moreover, intersectional factors such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and other identities further exacerbate inequalities, rendering certain groups of women particularly vulnerable to discrimination and marginalization (Crenshaw, 1989).

Investing in women's rights is not only a matter of social justice but also crucial for sustainable development and economic growth. Research consistently shows that empowering women through education, health services, and economic opportunities yields significant benefits for communities and nations (UN Women, 2020). Efforts to promote gender-equitable laws, policies, and cultural norms are essential to dismantle systemic barriers and ensure that women can fully participate and contribute to society's advancement (Kabeer, 1999)

According to Afroz (2010), the sustainability of the economy of a country depends on the extent of the integration of women in government primary schools educational decision-making and the inclusion of their needs and interests in policy which ultimately helps to ensure good governance.

In Ethiopia, as women were 49.5% of the population (CSA, 2012), it was very important to utilize the potential of this part of the population so that the talent of whole population was optimally utilized. Internationally, women's right to participate in Educational Leadership decision-making processes at local, national and international levels were recognized by the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women.

Several researchers have, in recent past, began to conduct study on status of women in educational leadership positions including schools and indicated that the reasons for under representation of women are socialization and stereotyping, internal barriers such as one's lack of confidence, lack of competitiveness, and fear of failure.

As indicated by Firesenbet (2015) the progress of women in leadership and development activities over the last five year was fast. However, still there is a gap when compared with men counterparts. Most of

the time women join mostly low level work conditions. In addition, as shown by Genet Abebe (2017), factors related to educational initiations; educational institutions do not have transparent selection and promotion policies and implements are less committed to apply affirmative action in practice are identified as the major challenges that have slowed down female teachers right of entry to educational leadership positions.

Ultimately, understanding of the specific challenges faced by women in Addis Ababa and the effectiveness of NGOs in addressing these challenges is essential for the development of evidence-based, context-specific interventions. The findings of this research are anticipated to not only inform policy and programming in Addis Ababa but also serve as a valuable resource for urban development initiatives striving to advance women's empowerment in diverse urban settings worldwide.

Furthermore, as urbanization accelerates globally, the lessons learned from the case of Addis Ababa can contribute to a broader understanding of the intersections between urban dynamics and gender empowerment. The implications of this research extend beyond the immediate context, offering insights into the evolving challenges faced by women in urban spaces and the evolving role of civil organizations and NGOs in fostering empowerment.

In conclusion, this research endeavors to shed light on the intricate interplay between urbanization, gender dynamics, and the role of WISE in enhancing women's empowerment. By unraveling the complexities of this multifaceted issue in the specific context of Addis Ababa, the study aspires to contribute to a broader global discourse on the transformative potential of localized efforts in addressing women empowerment effectiveness. The findings are anticipated to pave the way for more informed, targeted, and sustainable interventions that empower women in urban environments.

1.3. Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following research questions;

- What are the specific objectives and programs of the organization geared towards achieving women empowerment?

- To what extent has WISE succeeded in enhancing economic independence, educational attainment among women?
- What are the main challenges encountered by WISE in implementing empowerment programs?

1.4. Objective of the Study

1.4.1. General Objective

The general objective of the study is to investigate the role of WISE in enhancing women's empowerment,.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

- The research seeks objectives and programs of the organization in light of women empowerment principles and frameworks.
- Identify to what extent has WISE succeeded in enhancing economic independence and educational attainment, among women .
- Figure out the main challenges encountered by WISE in implementing empowerment programs.

1.5. Significance of the study

Empowering women means equipping them with the tools they need to have power and control over their own lives. Empowered women have independence, equal opportunities, and the ability to make strategic choices in all areas of their lives.

This Research is made with the aim to provide crucial information and knowledge regarding the role of WISE on women empowerment.

Their building capacity and skills development that contribute to social sustainability through measuring the inequalities in women' access to goods and services, which is a key component to reach equality and diversity.

The context of women's share of the public space as reflected in their access to education, health, social protection, and decent work opportunities and how does empowering a women contribute to the whole society.

This study holds several implications across various sectors, offering valuable insights for different Stakeholders. This knowledge can be strategically applied to refine existing initiatives and tailor interventions to address specific needs. Additionally, community members, particularly women, can leverage the study's insights into effective community engagement strategies employed by organizations like WISE. This empowers communities to actively participate in their own development and advocate for positive change.

1.6. Operational Definition of term

Empowerment: Empowerment is a process enabling individuals to understand the relationship between their actions and outcomes.

Women's empowerment: Women's empowerment can be defined as promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence social change for themselves and others.

Economic Empowerment: Measured through indicators such as income levels, employment status, and participation in economic activities.

Community Engagement: Measured through indicators such as participation in community events, involvement in decision-making processes, and collaboration with local residents.

Socio-Economic Challenges: Identified through factors such as income disparities, lack of access to education or healthcare, and employment opportunities.

1.7. Scope of the study

Geographically, this study was conducted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at WISE as a case study. Methodologically, the study employed a mixed research approach with a descriptive research design. Data were gathered using questionnaires and interviews. Hence, the study applied a qualitative research approach and a descriptive research design in order to meet the research objective. The population of

the study was made up of women who were receiving services from WISE .

Overall, the scope of the study is to provide an in-depth analysis of the role of WISE in enhancing women's empowerment specifically within the context of, contributing to a better understanding of effective approaches for promoting gender equality and social inclusion in urban settings.

1.8. Limitation of the study

This study acknowledges several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. Firstly, the challenge of generalization arises as the study's conclusions are specific to the context of Addis Ababa. The unique socio-economic, cultural, and urban dynamics of the city may limit the applicability of these findings to other urban or rural settings.

Sampling Bias: The study may be subject to sampling bias if the participants recruited from WISE do not represent the full diversity of women in Addis Ababa, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings.

Acknowledging these limitations is essential for interpreting the study results accurately and ensuring transparency in the research process. Future studies could address these limitations through careful methodological design and broader stakeholder engagement.

1.9. Organization of the Study

This part gives a description in summary form of the main content and the ways study is organized and structured. This study was organized in five chapters. The first chapter shows the background of the study, defining the research problem, objectives, significance of the study, scope/delimitations of the study and operational definitions of the study. Then the second chapter covered theoretical and empirical literatures related to the area. The third chapter discussed about research methodology that the researcher used. The fourth chapter was covered data analysis, interpretation, discussion and findings. Finally, findings, conclusion, possible recommendations and implications for the company and Sourcing Department are depicted in chapter five

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Women's empowerment has become a central theme in development discourse, with increasing attention given NGOs in driving transformative change. This literature review aims to explore the existing knowledge on the role NGOs in enhancing women's empowerment in Addis Ababa.

2.1. Empowerment of Women: The Concept and Approach

Today, women empowerment is considered an essential components of international development and poverty reduction. The concept of women empowerment has gained increased attention over the past two decades. This concept first held at international prominence at the international conference on women, on population and development in Cairo in 1994 and then again at the fourth world Conference on women, Beijing 1995. But the central role of women in development originated during grassroots movement occurring years earlier.

The international Conference at Cairo and Beijing announced to development agencies the shift from thinking of women as targets for fertility control policies to acknowledging women as autonomous agents with rights. By 2000, the united Nation was including women's empowerment and advancement as central part of their agenda (UN women).as result of these Conferences, abroad assessment of women empowerment through the UN system was undertaken. Theses assessment helped shift resources and ideologies towards women role in development, the emergence of women empowerment as central concept in development was the result of earlier grass roots movement aimed at empowering disenfranchised communities with women playing a central role. Grassroots organizing included the formation of self help groups, which became central ground for women's activism and participation and helped to shape the changing developmental landscape. (The Campbell Collaboration .2013, a systematic review The Effect of Economic Self Help Group Programs on women empowerment)

Women are an integral part of every economy. All round development and harmonious growth of a nation would be possible only when women are considered as equal partners in progress with men. However, in most developing countries, women have a low socio and economic status. In such countries effective empowerment of women is essential to harness the women labor in the main stream of economic development. Empowerments is the process of enabling or authorizing an individual to

think, behave, take action and control work in an autonomous way. It is the process by which one can gain control over one's destiny and the circumstances of their lives. Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social environment in which one can make decisions and make choices either individually or collectively for social transformation.

Empowerment is a construct which includes skills and capabilities of individuals, existing support system, bold and dynamic attitude towards societal policies and changes (Rappaport, 1981, 1984). Empowerment theory defines empowerment in the form of process and outcome for organizations and communities (Perkins and Zimmerman, 1995). Empowerment process is when individuals participate in collective decision-making and shared leadership in the organizations or take a collective action in community to attain government resources. Similarly, when individuals use the attained skills to mobilize organizational resources and control the situations to attain organizational goals, then it is considered as empowerment outcome. Women empowerment is also considered as a complex phenomenon of processes and outcomes. The United Nations Development Fund for Women has defined women's empowerment as "having access to and control over the means to make a living on a sustainable and long-term basis and receiving material benefits for this access and control" (Carr, 2000). Empowerment has been explained by the World Bank as the "expansion of freedom of choice and action to shape one's life" (Narayan-Parker, 2005).

2.2. Women empowerment

Women empowerment is a method through which people attain the ability to acquire strategic life which they have been denied earlier (Kabeer, 1999). It is a process with which women challenge the existing norms and culture to effectively improve their life and earn their livelihood (Bali Swain, 2006). Women convert their knowledge, skill and abilities to gain access of organizational resources and mobilize them to earn their livelihood. It supports them to strengthen and use their talent and skills to support their families.

Within the context of women's empowerment, the United Nations Development Fund for Women defines it as having access to and control over the means to make a sustainable living, receiving material benefits for this access and control (Carr, 2000). Empowerment for women is seen as a complex phenomenon involving processes and outcomes that challenge existing norms and cultures to improve

their lives and livelihoods (Bali Swain, 2006).

Women's empowerment not only contributes to social growth but also fuels economic development through innovative and entrepreneurial activities (Agarwal and Lenka, 2017). This involvement in economic wealth creation and innovation is evident as women transition from corporate jobs to entrepreneurship, creating jobs and supporting each other. The relationship between economic development and women's empowerment is reciprocal, with improvements in economic conditions leading to empowerment and empowered women contributing to national growth (Duflo, 2012).

In the pursuit of women's empowerment, entrepreneurship plays a crucial role, challenging gender-related issues prevalent in society (Agarwal, Agarwal, and Agarwal, 2018; Jennings and Brush, 2013). Despite government initiatives, there are gaps that need addressing, with NGOs playing a major role in empowering women to initiate their entrepreneurial ventures (Lenka and Agarwal, 2017).

Economic and personal empowerment are essential aspects of research, with economic empowerment reflecting financial strength, and personal empowerment emphasizing self-sufficiency, inner strength, and the right to make choices (Moyle et al., 2006; Moser, 1989).

Motivation and determination are crucial factors for women's empowerment and creativity, as intrinsic motivation theory suggests (Oldham and Cummings, 1996). Amabile's creativity theory highlights skills, intrinsic motivation, personality, knowledge, determination, and cognitive style as factors fostering creativity (Amabile, 1985). The social learning theory underscores the importance of interactions among individuals within and outside their community to discuss and solve problems, contributing to goal attainment (Bandura, 1977).

in examining the intersection of empowerment, motivation, determination, and creativity, this study aims to shed light on the intricate processes and outcomes of women's empowerment. This literature review provides a unique perspective on the interconnectedness of these concepts, emphasizing the need for collaborative efforts, particularly with the involvement of NGOs, to foster empowerment and creativity among women.

Creativity and innovation, as argued in the literature, not only contribute to economic growth but also provide a sustainable competitive advantage (Lenka et al., 2016). By empowering women to participate

in the workforce, economies can achieve equality and long-term competitiveness. The study emphasizes the need to empower women not only for their individual benefit but also as a strategic approach for sustainable economic development.

Women empowerment can be attained through women entrepreneurship, which can also change gender-related issues deeply prevalent in Indian society (Agarwal, Agarwal, and Agarwal, 2018; Jennings and Brush, 2013). Indian Government has also launched several policies and programs to promote women entrepreneurship to empower them both financially and socially (Agarwal and Lenka, 2018). However, still some gaps occur, which raises a need to focus more on women entrepreneurship and empowerment. A study conducted by analyzing small cases on six different women entrepreneurs in Uttarakhand region depicts that NGOs play a major role in empowering women to initiate their entrepreneurial venture (Lenka and Agarwal, 2017).

2.3. Women empowerment and nongovernment organizations

Review depicts that empowerment in terms of economic and personal form is also an essential aspect of research (Moyle *et al.*, 2006). Economic empowerment has been defined as financial dependence or strength of the individual. On the other hand, personal empowerment is defined as the capacity of women to increase their own self sufficiency and inner strength and to have the right of selecting their own choices and making decisions (Moser, 1989). Although, there are several projects initiated by Indian Government for the economic and social empowerment of rural women such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (2015), Mahila-E-Haat (2016), Mahila Shakti Kendra (2017), Sukanya Samridhi Yojana (2018), Support to Training and Employment Program for Women (STEP) and many more, little has been achieved through these programs (Agarwal and Lenka, 2018; Balakrishnan, 2019).

Women empowerment via entrepreneurial efforts has always been neglected by the society due to its patriarchy (Singh *et al.*, 2013). Apart from that, various NGOs and self-help groups (SHGs) are also empowered for the growth and development of women in underprivileged areas of rural India.

Empowerment alone, however, cannot succeed if the women themselves are not motivated and determined for their own rights and benefits. According to intrinsic motivation theory, if women are motivated and empowered, they tend to generate creativity (Oldham and Cummings, 1996). Amabile's creativity theory has also focused on skills, intrinsic motivation, personality, knowledge, determination and cognitive style as factors fostering creativity (Amabile, 1985). Therefore, motivation along with

determination is important for infusing creativity among women. However, creativity cannot be attained in one day or by an individual alone; rather it is a team effort that is carried out in a process from idea generation to idea implementation (Gupta, 2018). Creativity and innovation not only boosts the economy but also helps in attaining sustainable competitive advantage (Lenka *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, it is important for any economy to empower its women so that they can participate in the workforce and contribute in equality to attain sustainable competitive advantage. Empowerment is important for development as it helps to determine the extent to which women can gain education, and seek health care and family planning assistance (Mason, 2003). Women are the most marginalized part of the population in every single country in the world (Sen & Grown, 1988). Marilee Karl defines Women's Empowerment as:

“Awareness building about women's situation, discrimination, and rights and opportunities as a step towards gender equality.

Collective awareness-building provides a sense of group identity and the power of working as a group. Capacity building and skills development, especially the ability to plan, make decisions, organize, manage and carry out activities, to deal with people and institutions in the world around them.

Participation and gender control and decision-making power in the home, community and society Action to bring about gender equality between men and women” (Karl, 1995).

2.4. Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in the principles of women's empowerment and gender equality. It draws upon feminist theories and empowerment frameworks that emphasize the importance of economic, social, and political inclusion of women. Central to this framework is the concept of empowerment as a multidimensional process that enables women to gain control over their lives, access resources, and participate fully in society.

Women's Empowerment Framework: This framework, developed by various scholars and organizations, outlines key dimensions of empowerment, including economic participation, educational attainment, health and well-being, decision-making power, and social inclusion. It provides a comprehensive lens to assess how WISE's programs contribute to enhancing these aspects of women's lives (Kabeer, 1999; Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender, 2002).

Capability Approach: Proposed by Amartya Sen and further developed by Martha Nussbaum, the capability approach focuses on individuals' abilities to achieve desired outcomes and functionings. It emphasizes the importance of providing women with the necessary resources, skills, and opportunities to realize their full potential and make meaningful choices (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000).

Sustainable Livelihoods Framework: This framework, often used in development studies, looks at how individuals use assets and resources to achieve sustainable livelihoods. It considers the interplay between social, economic, and environmental factors and highlights the importance of resilience and adaptive capacity (Chambers & Conway, 1992). This framework helps analyze how WISE's programs support women in building sustainable and resilient livelihoods.

By integrating these theoretical perspectives, the study aims to provide a holistic understanding of women's empowerment as facilitated by WISE's initiatives. It examines not only the immediate impacts of these programs but also their broader implications for achieving long-term gender equality and social change.

2.5. Historical Perspective

The concept of women empowerment has a long history, dating back to the early feminist movements in the 19th century. The first wave of feminism focused on women's political rights, such as the right to vote. The second wave of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s focused on women's social and economic rights, such as equal pay for equal work and access to education. The third wave of feminism in the 1990s focused on the diversity of women's experiences and the intersectionality of gender, race, and class. (Irshad Ahmad Reshi¹ Dr T. Sudha², 2022)

Feminism is often identified as western. There is a very complicated politics here about who names feminism, and whether other women's struggles for equal rights can be called feminists, even if they themselves don't use this name. but it is not true that either feminism and women right's movements were only or largely of western origin. In a number of Asian and Middle Eastern colonies, the women question arose in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries alongside or in connection with early anti-colonial nationalism. Jan J. Pettman, —Gender Issues”,

In Globalization of World Politics, ed. John Balis and Steve Smith, (New York: Oxford University Press, December 30, 2004), 672 In the post- second world war era there were levels of political that what might be called forms of liberalism that could be linked to extensive social changes and forms of feminist study and its analysis. In the first period of social liberalism or social democracy there was the rise of ‘second wave feminism’, this wave was distinguishing the earlier political forms of feminist demonstration, In the period from the 1960s and into the 1970s this movement was particularly important because it emphasizes a critique of the workings of liberal social democracy which not only in regards of education but also with respect to women and the family.

The second period can be considered as one of a reaction to a more liberal and social democratic era and is often called the period of economic liberalism. Here ideas of gender entered the glossary of social and policy examination. The third period of neo-liberalism is that of conversion of political and social relationships and the conduct in which feminists and others have to understand these changes, which provide a critique of ‘educational partnerships’. Under neo-liberalism there has been foremost change towards feminist and critical spontaneous methodologies and more personal indications. Through different

Theoretical and procedural frames, the feminist research verification, , especially in emerging ethnographic and qualitative approaches to women’s lives in building and negotiating identities in families and education, from schools, pre-school or early childhood education, through to lifelong learning reveals the significance of upholding a commitment to gender concerns. It has also exemplified that the challenges and dilemmas for women as mothers, professional educators and teachers, and in communities contributing to promote or challenge parent’s identities, as rising through revised forms of dialogue about educational joint ventures. In particular, whilst gender equality is not a major theme in either the policy discussions or discourses and nor is it a central focal point of the research, it still remains essential for developing equalities between and within families. Miriam E. David, —A Feminist and Critical Perspective on Family-Education Partnerships for Gender Equality and Quality Basic Education. (Staffordshire: Keele University, 2005).

There have been numerous studies conducted on women empowerment over the past few decades. These studies have looked at various aspects of women empowerment, including political, social, economic, and cultural dimensions. Here are some of the key findings from past studies:

2.5.1. Women's political empowerment: Research has shown that when women are given political power, they are more likely to prioritize policies that benefit other women, such as healthcare and education. Women in leadership roles also tend to bring a more collaborative and inclusive approach to decision-making. (Irshad Ahmad Reshi¹ Dr T. Sudha², 2022)

2.5.2. Women's economic empowerment: Studies have shown that increasing women's participation in the workforce and providing them with equal access to economic opportunities can lead to significant economic growth. Women's economic empowerment also has positive effects on their families and communities, including improved health and education outcomes. (Irshad Ahmad Reshi¹ Dr T. Sudha², 2022)

2.5.3. Women's social empowerment: Social empowerment refers to the ability of women to participate fully in society, including in cultural and religious practices. Research has shown that when women are able to exercise their rights and freedoms, they have greater control over their lives and are more likely to make decisions that benefit themselves and their families. (Irshad Ahmad Reshi¹ Dr T. Sudha², 2022)

2.5.4. Women's cultural empowerment: Cultural empowerment refers to the ability of women to participate in cultural and artistic activities, including music, dance, and visual arts. Studies have shown that cultural empowerment can have positive effects on women's mental health and well-being, as well as on their ability to challenge gender stereotypes and discrimination. Overall, the research on women empowerment suggests that when women are given equal opportunities and access to resources, they are able to achieve their full potential and make positive contributions to their families and communities. (Irshad Ahmad Reshi¹ Dr T. Sudha², 2022)

2.6. Feminist

Women's Empowerment and Its Discontent although defined in feminist literature in the 1970s, empowerment became popular in the development field in the 1980s. Many feminists bemoan this popularization as they see a concept meant to enable women individually and collectively to transform unequal power relations and unjust structures and institutions, being reduced to an instrumental concept that focuses on individual rights (e.g., Batliwala 2007, Elliott 2008, Harcourt 2010, Parpart, Rai, and Staudt 2002, Bisnath and Elson 1999). As women noted at a parallel event at the 54th CSW meetings, empowerment has become “em- ment” (Harcourt 2010), a de-politicized notion of empowerment. In

particular, feminists are wary of its use in neo-liberal policies and in mainstream development agencies as a way to mobilize women through self-help groups as better economic and social change agents, filling the vacuum left by the retreat of state services and the economic crisis.

Empowerment thus becomes about mobilizing grassroots women, encouraging their participation and giving them voice in predetermined development strategies without giving them the power to challenge existing narratives of development and to articulate new alternatives (Elliot 2008). Given this domestication of the concept, feminists seek to rescue it and bring back the power imbedded in it, so women can collectively seek to transform themselves, their families, communities, state, and international institutions.

Feminist movements for empowerment focus on advocating for the rights, agency, and equal opportunities for women. These movements aim to challenge and dismantle patriarchal structures that perpetuate gender-based discrimination, oppression, and inequality. Here are examples of feminist movements with a specific emphasis on empowerment:

Global Fund for Women (1972, Global):

Focus: The Global Fund for Women is not a traditional movement but an organization that supports women's groups and initiatives globally. It funds projects that promote women's empowerment, addressing issues such as economic independence, education, and healthcare.

Girl Up (2010, Global):

Focus: Girl Up is a movement by the United Nations Foundation that empowers girls to advocate for gender equality. It focuses on education, health, safety, leadership, and economic empowerment for girls around the world.

He for She (2014, Global):

Focus: Launched by UN Women, He for She encourages men to advocate for gender equality. It recognizes that achieving gender equality is not solely a women's issue and requires the active involvement of men as allies in the empowerment process.

Kakenya's Dream (2009, Kenya):

Focus: Founded by Kakenya Ntaiya, this movement aims to empower Maasai girls in Kenya through education. Kakenya's Dream focuses on providing educational opportunities, life skills, and leadership training to young girls.

SHEROES (2014, India):

Focus: SHEROES is a platform that supports and empowers women in India by providing resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities. It addresses various aspects of women's lives, including career development and entrepreneurship.

These movements actively work towards empowering women economically, socially, and politically, recognizing the importance of fostering environments where women can thrive, lead, and achieve their full potential.

It's important to recognize that progress is ongoing, and the status of women in Ethiopia is subject to change. Organizations and advocates within the country continue to work towards furthering gender equality and improving the overall well-being of women. For the latest and more detailed information, it is recommended to consult recent reports, studies, or government publications related to the status of women in Ethiopia.

2.7. Gender and Women Empowerment in Ethiopia

The problems of gender inequalities discussed above are very much prevalent in and relevant to Ethiopia. Ethiopia is a patriarchal society that keeps women in a subordinate position (Haregewoin and Emebet, 2003).

There is a belief that women are docile, submissive, patient and tolerant of monotonous work and violence, for which culture is used as a justification (Hirut, 2004). The socialization process, which determines gender roles, is partly responsible for the subjugation of women in the country. Ethiopian society is socialized in such a way that girls are held inferior to boys.

In the process of upbringing, boys are expected to learn and become self-reliant, major bread winners, and responsible in different activities, while girls are brought up to conform, be obedient and dependent, and specialize in indoor activities like cooking, washing clothes, fetching water, caring for children, etc..(Haregewoin and Emebet, 2003 ; Hirut,2004).

The differences in the ways in which individuals are treated through the socialization process, due mainly to their sex, status, leads to the development of real psychological and personality differences between males and females. For instance, a female informant in Arsi stated that a man is a big person

who has higher social position and knowledge, who can govern others and think in wider perspectives; while a woman is a person who can serve a man, who is the husband's object transferred through marriage, and to whom he can do anything he wishes to do (Hirut, 2004).

According to the 2013 Labour Force Survey of CSA, of the estimated 80, 444, 148 population of Ethiopia, 55, 629,497 individuals (69.2 percent) were aged 10 years and above, and therefore fall into the potentially economically active part of the population. From this group,

42, 403,876 persons or 76 percent were employed in 2013. The employment to population ratio in the study shows that the proportion of employed males from the economically active group is 82.7 percent. Nonetheless, the disparity by sex is still visible across the data from the 2005 to 2013, where male employment has always been significantly higher and the gap has essentially remained unchanged. Male employment declined slightly from 84.7 percent in 2005 to 82.7 percent in 2013 while female employment increased very slightly, from 69.0 percent in 2005 to 69.8 percent in 2013.

Women's unpaid labor that nevertheless contributes to the economy, and women's unrecognized economic activities, are areas being addressed over the longer term in Ethiopia. Hence, available data on 'economically active' and "inactive" status of the population should be scrutinized and interpreted in a way that recognizes the various unpaid activities and roles of women.

Urban employment declined over the years, though the decline is less pronounced especially among youth groups. For example, in the years from 2010/11 to 2011/12 urban unemployment declined from 18 percent to 17.5 percent, while urban youth unemployment fell only from 23.7 percent to 23.3 percent for the same period. National data for 2013 also shows that more female youth (9.1 percent) are unemployed as compared to male youth (4.6 percent). With regards to the number of unemployed youth at the rural and urban areas significant variations were seen at 3.1 percent and 21.6 percent respectively. Among the urban unemployed youth, the proportion of females is higher at 26.4 percent as compared to the males at 16.1 percent.

While the study further affirms that the unemployment rates are higher than male in both literate and illiterate categories.

In comparing the employment status of women across different marital status and age groups in 2011, it appears that the proportion of women employed rises among women aged 15 to 19 to a peak among

women aged 25 to 29 and then declines slightly for the older age groups. With regards to differences by marital status, the EDHS indicate that women who divorced, separated, or widowed are most likely to be employed. Overall women's unemployment is mostly attributed to limited opportunities, capacities and skills including negotiation and decision making skills, domestic workloads and resulting time poverty and cultural perceptions about the role, capacity and skills of women.

Civil Service and government jobs reflect these engendered employment patterns. Breaking down women's employment by category shows a gender segregated employment landscape. Apart from their lower representation in the formal sector, women often occupy lower level jobs, which are usually considered as 'women's work'. In line with this trend women are barely represented in decision-making positions.

The gender disparity is also evident in the level of education qualification. Statistical information from the Civil Service Ministry shows that as of 2010/11, of the total civil servant workforce holding master's degree, only 10.2 percent are female, whereas men make up 89.8 percent. Of the total workforce holding BA/BSc, 22.2 percent and 16.7 percent are women of those holding an LLB. The percentage of women medical doctors reaches 15 percent. Women who hold PhD qualifications made up 7.7 percent in 2010/11 and 6.7 percent in 2012/13 as opposed to 92.3 percent and 93.2 percent men holding PhDs in the same years. This shows that women's representation in civil service posts drops with increasingly higher educational qualifications.

In terms of salary scale, women who earn more than 4000 birr per month (b/mo) were only 11 percent in 2012/13 and 10 percent on average in the preceding two years, whereas women who earned 400 to 499 b/mo reached 53 percent in 2012/13 signifying that women appear mostly on the lower levels of the salary scale.

Overall, gender disparities in civil service employment appear in the distribution of jobs and occupational levels, in educational qualifications, and in salaries. There is also co-relation between the level of women's educational attainment and their level of employment occupation as well as its corresponding salary scale. As a result, upper and middle level jobs are predominantly occupied by men and women's role in decision-making is marginal.

The survey conducted by the Central Statistical Authority (CSA, 2004) showed that women account for less than half (43%) of the total employees in the country. Considering the percentage of female employees from the total number of employees 'by employment type' the highest was domestic

activities (78%) and followed by unpaid activities (59.3%). In other types of formal employment (e.g. government, NGOs, private organizations etc.), the percentage of female workers is less than 35%. On the other hand, the survey showed overrepresentation of female workers in the informal sector. About 58% of working women work in the informal sector whereas the percentage of working men in the informal sector was 37.7%.

The breakdown of the federal government employees by occupational groups also indicated gender disparity. From federal government employees found in the clerical and fiscal types of jobs 71.3% were female, while the percentage of females was slightly more than half (51%) in custodial and manual type of jobs. Women make up 25% and 18% of the administrative and professional and scientific job categories respectively, indicating that upper and middle level positions are overwhelmingly dominated by men (Federal Civil Service Commission, 2005). This concentration of women in the informal sector and low level positions has implication on their earnings. In this regard, the survey showed four out of ten women civil servants earn Birr 300 a month compared to two out of ten for men (Federal Civil Service Commission, 2005).

It is well recognized that, the Federal Republic of Ethiopia has made tremendous efforts towards gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Constitution of Ethiopia, adopted in 1995, assures women of equal rights with men in every sphere and emphasizes affirmative action to remedy the past inequalities suffered by women. It also reiterates the rights of women to own and administer property as well as access to reproductive health services. Additionally, the family law has been revised to align it with the constitutional rights of women; the country has put in place a Joint Land Certification Program which has a positive impact on various dimensions of women's livelihood and gender relations. The certified women are aware of their land rights and land related provisions, have a higher perceived level of tenure security, and are more willing to protect their land rights and more likely to participate in community activities, as leaders in their own right.

There are also a number of Regional and International provisions that the country has ratified in relation to women and girls human rights. Some of these instruments include: Protocol of the African Charter to the African Charter on Human and People Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003), Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Convention on the Rights of the Child, Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.

The constitution in its article 89(7) ensured women's right states "government shall ensure the participation of women in equality with men in all economic and social development endeavours". In addition, these commitment will of the government is explained by its policy documents and in the policy documents promoting gender equality is seen as a priority in order to enhance women's involvement and reduce poverty. Particularly, since then, inclusion of women has become a vital criterion in the assignment of higher positions like ministries and ambassadors by the government. In addition, beginning from primary to higher education institution, affirmative action was introduced to help women participate in various sectors, in this regard, the incumbent government has shown strong political change and will that has been exhibited empowering women to involve fully in all development areas having the role of empowering and supporting women's struggle in the process of empowerment. By implication, the empowerment of women at higher levels will only be realized whenever there is integrated effort of the poor women and development agencies including the government and other development practitioners.

To summarize, the above documented facts regarding the status of women in Ethiopia in terms of social, economic and cultural profiles in the society revealed the appealing situation women are in, and called for more serious and joint efforts by all concerned to bring about the much expected improvement and change towards gender equality.

Conclusion

After joining NGOs, women's lifestyles and standards of living drastically changed since they began to earn money and developed their independence and drive. They are able to make independent judgments in various situations and offer advice when it comes to family issues. The study discovered considerable differences in the efforts made by NGOs to apply interventional strategies in the field of health and to raise women's literacy levels. However, despite significant NGO work in the field of women's empowerment, there is still significant.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research design used for the study, the various procedures and process that employed to collect and analyze the data. That is the instruments were used for the study and method of analysis of the data.

3.1. Description of the study area Location:

Addis Ababa is the capital city of Ethiopia, located in the geographic epicenter of the country, and surrounded by the regional state of Oromia. It is the largest city in the country and plays a central political, economic and symbolic role in Ethiopia. It serves as the headquarters of major international organizations, such as the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

"Nifas Silk-Lafto, also is a district of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, situated in the southwestern suburb of the city. According to Wikipedia (2011), the district's population was 335,740 as of 2011. It shares borders with the districts of Kolfe Keranio, Lideta, Kirkos, Bole, and Akaky Kaliti (Wikipedia, 2011)."

3.2. Population of the study

Population:

The target population of the study for this research is 60 participants that has been Selected WISE staff members and the beneficiaries of Empowerment Programs. Total 50 beneficiaries and 10 staff members were chosen for interview as a sample by lottery method simple random sampling technique which is 50% of the total population. There are limited local NGOs which are serving for improving for quality of life for women in Addis Ababa. WISE is one of the functional, professional organization with long background in development and implemented numerous projects for women empowerment in Addis Ababa and that is why the selection of WISE for the research was a suitable entity for consideration.

Tabel 1: Population of the study

Category	Population
Women Age 18-55	50
Staff members of the organization	10
Total	60

Source: Own Survey 2024

3.3. Research Approach

In this research paper mixed approach was employed since it can provide several valuable benefits like: **Comprehensive Assessment:** A mixed-methods approach allows for a comprehensive assessment of WISE's programs and initiatives. Quantitative methods can be used to measure outcomes such as economic empowerment and participation rates, providing numerical evidence of impact (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Qualitative Approach: The research employed a qualitative approach to gain a deeper understanding of the role of civil organizations and NGOs in enhancing women's empowerment. Qualitative methods allow for in-depth exploration of complex phenomena, capturing the perspectives and experiences of diverse stakeholders involved in women's empowerment initiatives.

Case Study Design: The study adopted a case study design, focusing specifically on Addis Ababa as the research setting. A case study approach facilitates a comprehensive examination of the context, processes, and outcomes of women's empowerment efforts within a specific geographical and socio-cultural context.

Quantitative Approach: quantitative methods were applied to gather empirical data and draw meaningful conclusions. Structured survey questionnaires were distributed to a randomly selected sample of women beneficiaries to collect data on economic status and education . Economic indicators such as income levels, employment status, and savings patterns were quantified to assess financial empowerment. Educational attainment and skills training data were gathered to evaluate their impact

on employability and income generation. These quantitative methods provided robust, measurable evidence of WISE's impact on women's empowerment.

3.4. Research Designs

The NGOs socio- economically empowers the women. Basically, the research design for this study is descriptive and exploratory. Because Descriptive research offers a detailed and systematic understanding of the current state of women's empowerment, while exploratory research uncovers patterns, relationships, and new insights that enhance the overall depth and richness of the study's findings. This dual approach ensures that the research is both thorough and adaptable, capturing the multifaceted nature of women's empowerment as influenced by WISE's programs. The research has described the socioeconomic dimensions of the role of WISE in women empowerment. Since it has explored the processes by which the NGOs play a role providing employment opportunities to the women. So, the research is exploratory and it has collected qualitative data.

Exploratory research, as the name states, intends to explore the research questions. It is the investigation into a problem or situation which provides insights to the researcher with qualitative information. It is conducted in order to determine the nature of the problem.

3.5. Sampling techniques

Sampling is the statistical process of selecting a subset of a population of interest to make observation and statistical inferences about that population (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The sampling method process starts with defining the target population and subsequently, the sampling unit, the sampling frame, sampling techniques and sample size. It is small proportion of a population selected for analysis.

Women beneficiaries were selected based on their duration of participation in WISE's programs. This criterion was important because the research sought to understand the longitudinal impact of WISE's initiatives on women's empowerment. By focusing on women who had been with the organization for varying lengths of time, the study could better assess the role of WISE and capture a range of experiences from initial engagement to sustained involvement.

3.6. Source of Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data were used for the analysis of perception. To collect reliable and valid information, the researcher contacted the active staff members and the women. And also secondary data

has been collected from different materials based on reliability and adequacy.

3.7. Methods of Data collection

Primary and secondary data were collected from different sources by using diverse instruments such as questionnaire, schedule Interviews, observation and documents.

3.7.1. Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research instrument that consists of a set of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents through survey or statistical study. A research questionnaire is typically a mix of close-ended questions and open-ended questions.

Questionnaires were developed by the researcher based on the objective and research questions of the study. Two sets of questionnaires were designed in English and translated into local language, Amharic so that respondents can easily comprehend and respond to the questions. The questionnaires comprised both open ended and close ended questions.

The questionnaire was handled by data collectors under the supervision of the researcher and the data collectors were briefed about the objective of the research in order to gain well-matched data.

3.7.2. Schedule Interviews

Schedule interviews or open ended interview is a tool consisting of a set of questions, which are asked and filled in by the researcher. This type of data collection tool is important to collect data from illiterate target groups through face -to- face interview (Thomas, 2010). Moreover, it lets the interviewee to express her/his feeling freely and knowledge of people in a program in depth (Best & Kahn, 2003). Wherever possible close ended set of questions were prepared to meet data collection objectives of the study. Thus, the questions were initially prepared in English but then translated to Amharic for greater relationship between the researcher and participants.

3.7.3. Observation

In this research, the observation method was used to gather real, observable information about the activities of the organization and to understand the behaviors, emotions, and feelings of the informants. Specifically, the data collected through observation included:

Institution Overview of the Offices: This involved examining the physical setup and environment of the organization, noting the arrangement and conditions of the office spaces.

Staff Members' Interaction with Beneficiaries: Observations were made on how staff members interacted with the women beneficiaries, which provided insights into the quality and nature of these interactions.

Beneficiaries' Participation in Implementing the Program: The level and manner of participation of the beneficiaries in the programs were observed, highlighting their engagement and involvement in the organization's activities

3.7.4. Document review

Documents like reports, books, and the internet articles records were explored and the written reports and feedback were assessed in the process of the study. The data obtained through document review was used to substantiate the information gathered through the questionnaire and semi-structured interview.

3.8. Data processing and analysis

The data collected from primary and secondary sources were structured categorically, and chronologically, and reviewed continually in order to achieve the research objective. The study undertakes mixed research methods with major emphasis on qualitative and then quantitative study approach as supplementary.

The qualitative data is presented through using brief descriptive texts and self-explanatory tables and then these data were analyzed by using descriptive analysis. Moreover, the quantitative data were presented using statistical figures like percentages and frequencies. So, the results of the qualitative findings were presented in the discussion part of the report to enrich the findings.

3.9. Reliability and Validity

The study has focused on reliability and validity of data analysis for quantitative and trustworthiness of data analysis for qualitative.

3.9.1. Reliability

The researcher Ensure that the tools used for data collection, such as survey questionnaires and interview guides, are consistent and do not produce varying results over time.

Pre-Testing: Conducted pre-tests of survey instruments and interview guides to refine questions and improve clarity.

Consistency Checks: Implemented consistency checks during data collection and analysis to identify and correct discrepancies.

Peer Review: Engaged peers and advisors to review data collection and analysis processes, providing external validation of the methods and findings.

The researcher Establish standardized procedures to minimize variations in data collection.

The researcher approached few among the selected same interview participants in repeated times to obtain additional data and use the opportunity to request the participants to respond to the same questions that they have responded it before. The researcher verified that their responses through time was not varying, and this will add value to the reliability of the data.

The researcher Ensure that the same participants provide similar responses when measured on different occasions.

This was done to verify dependability, consistency and reliability and trust worthiness of the collected information over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents.

3.9.2. Validity

The inclusion of data collected from reliable primary and secondary sources, study participants benefiting from the organization's assistance, and staff members of the organization significantly contributes to the validity, credibility, dependability, accuracy, and the ability to answer the research questions to meet the objectives of the study.

3.10. Ethical Considerations

The research adheres to ethical principles, including informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participants' autonomy and privacy. Ethical approval may be obtained from relevant institutional review boards or ethical review commit

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Introduction

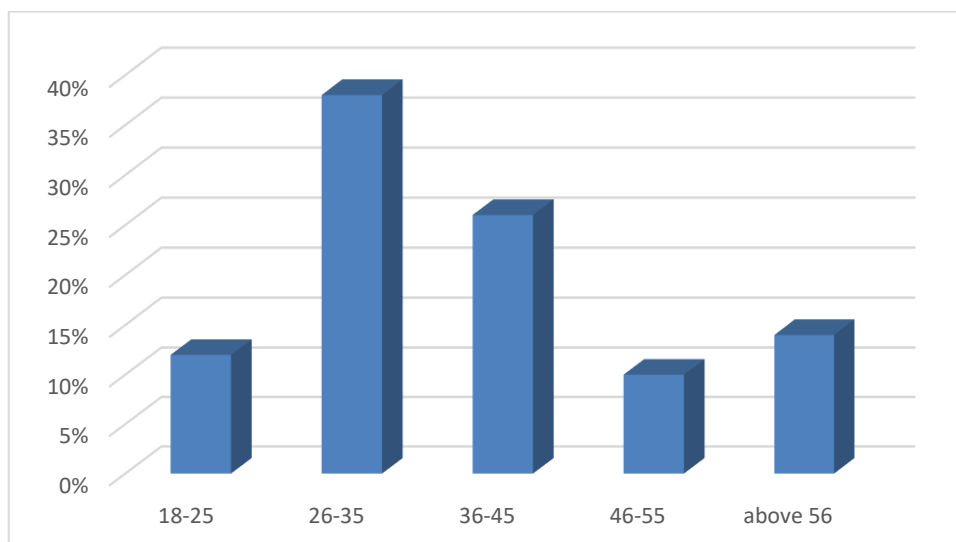
This chapter aims to seek WISE's objectives and programs through the lens of women empowerment principles, assess their success in promoting economic independence and educational attainment among women, and identify the challenges encountered in program implementation. Utilizing data collected from surveys, interviews, and interview with beneficiaries and staff, the analysis delves into how well WISE's initiatives align with recognized empowerment standards and their effectiveness in addressing women's needs.

It measures the impact on women's livelihoods, business skills, income levels, and educational access while highlighting financial, cultural, and logistical barriers faced by the organization. The chapter concludes with a summary of key findings and their implications, contributing valuable insights to the discourse on gender equality and women's empowerment in urban context

4.2. Demographic Background of the Participants

The following chart summarizes the demographic profile of respondents by Age, Educational background and Marital Status, .

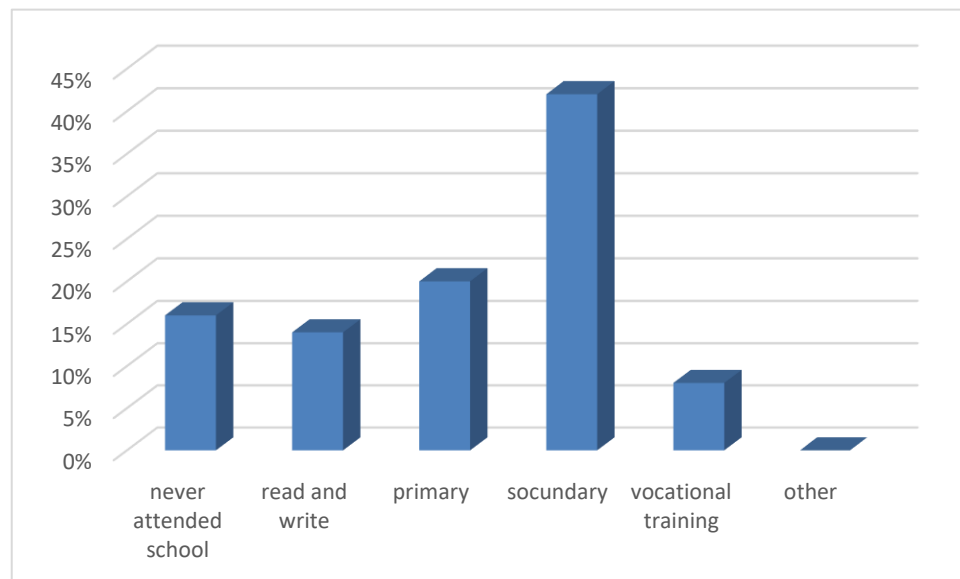
Figure 4.1: - Age of Participants



Source: Own Survey, 2024

Figure 4.1 above indicates that out of 50 study participants in terms of age categories from 18 to 25 are (12%), the largest proportion comprising which is 38% of the total respondents falls within the age range of 26-35 years, 36 to 45 are (26%), 46 to 55 represent the smallest percentage which is (10%) and above 56 are (14%) that received the service of the organization.

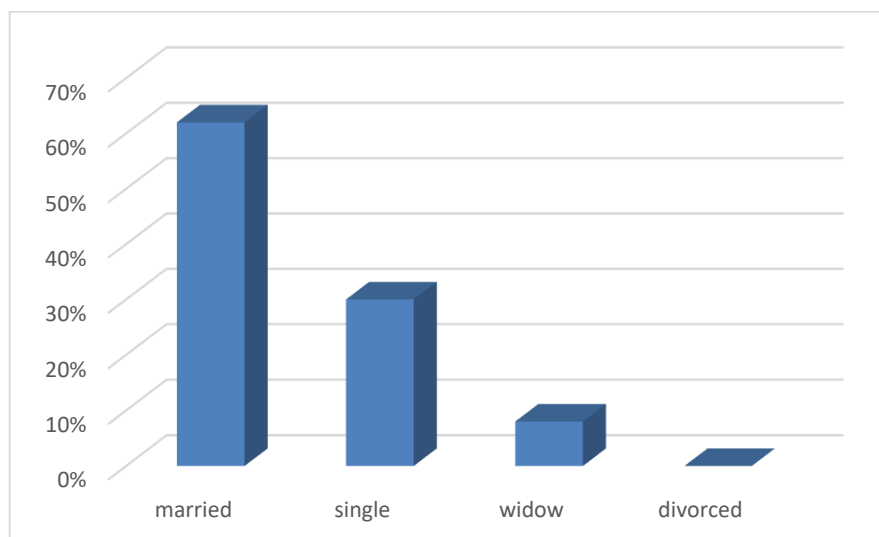
Figure 4.2: - Educational Background of Participants



Source: Own Questionnaire Survey, 2024

Figure 4.2 illustrates the educational attainment of the respondents, Majority of the participants, constituting 42% of the total, have reached Secondary level education. 14% of the participants can read and write with the assistance of adult education programs. In contrast, 16% of respondents are classified as illiterate, indicating a notable portion of the population lacking formal education. Among those with educational backgrounds, 20% have completed primary education. Additionally, And 8% of respondents possess certificates trough vocational training, suggesting a limited proportion with formal qualifications. This data underscores the reliance on adult education initiatives for basic literacy skills among a considerable segment of the population, emphasizing the importance of targeted educational interventions in the area.

Figure 4.3: - Marital status of Participants



Source: Own Questionnaire Survey, 2024

Figure 4.3 above shows that out of 50 study participants in terms of marital status. The largest proportion, comprising which is (62%) of the total respondents are married women, (30%) are single and representing the smallest percentage which is (8%) are widows that received the service of the organization.

Table 4.1 Involvement with Empowerment program

Involvement with Empowerment program	Frequenc y	Percentage (%)
less than 1 year	3	6
1-2 years	37	74
3-4 years	8	16
4-6 years	2	4
Above 7 years	0	0
Total	50	100

Source: Own Questionnaire Survey, 2024

The above table 4.1 shows that (74%) of the participants have been involved with empowerment program between 1 upto 2 years. According to the finding of the study (6%) of the participants spent at empowerment program for less than a year. The rest, (16%) of the participants have spent in the empowerment program between 3 to 4, The rest, (4%) have been involved with empowerment program between 4 upto 6 years.

Table 4.2: What was your source of information about Empowerment program?

Source of information about the Empowerment program	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Peer Education	25	50
Friends	11	22
Relatives	2	4
Through the organization	12	24
Total	50	100

Source: Own Questionnaire Survey, 2024

Table 4.2 shows that that means (22 %) says they get information about WISE Empowerment program from their friends who have heard about the program before them. (24%) through the organization. And majorities of respondents which is (50%) get information from peer to peer education sessions, At different social gatherings like ‘edir’ and ‘ekub’. It is evident that the peer education groups are one of the group types that can influence each other. The rest (4%) heard about the program from relatives. The respondents says the organization have made a very clear information for the womens to join the empowerment program through kebele, woredas and even gave information door to door.

Table 4.3 Which specific programs or initiatives of Empowerment program have you participated in?

Form of services	Yes	No	Total
Economic Empowerment	50	0	50
Percentage (%)	100	0	100
Educational Training	50	0	50
Percentage (%)	100	0	100
Skill Development Programs	50	0	50
Percentage (%)	100	0	100

Source: Own Questionnaire Survey 2024

Table 4.3 all participants says they participate from economic empowerment program, enducational training and skill development programs in the organization.

**Table 4.4 Based on your experience, are you statisfied with the support and guidance being delivered to
From the organizatzion ?**

Service Delivery	Yes	No	Total
WISE is efficient in time and access of service delivery	50	0	50
Percentage (%)	100	0	100
WISE offers better information service	50	0	50
Percentage (%)	50	0	100
Staff members of WISE work delightly provision of service delivery	50	0	50
Percentage (%)	100	0	100
WISE treats all the clients equally	50	0	50
Percentage (%)	100	0	100

Source: Questionnaire Survey 2024

Table 4.4 shows analysis on Based on your experience, are you statisfied with the support and guidance being delivered to from the organizatzion, respondents were asked to indicate their opinion. Of the sample respondents, all 50 (100%) indicated that WISE is efficient in time and access of service delivery and all respondants says the organization offers better information services, Staff members of the organization work delightly on provision of service delivery and the repondants all agreed that the organization treats all the clients equally. The respondents are satisfied with the support an guidance being delivered from the organization.

Table 4.5 What are the problems that reduce the effectiveness of service delivery of the agency?

Options	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Lack of coordination among the organization staff	2	4
Difficulty of managing too many clients	12	24
Unkown Reason	36	72
Total	50	100

Source: Questionnaire Survey 2024

The above table 4.5. results shows that (4%) participants answered that the reasons of ineffectiveness was lack of coordination among the organization staff members, (24%) of the participants answered difficulty of managing too many clients, (72%) of the participants answered as they did not know the reasons for ineffectiveness.

Table 4.6 Are you satisfied with the overall effectiveness of the organization service delivery process?

Options	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Yes	48	96
No	2	4
Total	50	100

Source: Questionnaire Survey 2024

The above table 4.6 shows that (96%) participants responded as they were satisfied with the effective service delivery of the agency, the rest (4%) of the participants were rated as they were not satisfied

with the effectiveness of the agency service delivery. Majority of the participants said they are very satisfied with the empowerment programs and they are beneficial after joining the empowerment programs.

To assess the effectiveness of the overall program, respondents were asked to indicate their perception towards the program. Accordingly (96%) have agreed that the program was effective in addressing the needs of women in the operational area. Saying so they have put the following reason:

- Women who are not able to read and write began to try reading, writing as well calculating simple mathematics.
- Women who are only performing household chores began to participate in outside activities and earn their own income even though the grant which is released by the program was small amount.
- Women have gained different skills in how to manage their living.

The Women Empowerment program is designed with appropriate training, teaching and learning materials which are translated into relevant languages and made available. Therefore, the effectiveness of the program is a result of the way the program is designed and implemented in a comprehensive manner.

4.3. Interview Analysis

The Interview took place in the organization's head quarters. The interview was conducted with Eight key informants that hold different roles. The positions community affairs social workers and staff members of the organization that included two men and Six women.

Result Obtained from Interview

The Interview took place in the organization's head quarters. The interview was conducted with eight staff members of the organization that included two men and six women that hold different roles. The positions community affairs social workers.

What are the criteria set by the organization to select beneficiaries?

“The organization has a procedure for selection of beneficiaries. No favors are extended to anyone. Staff members emphasized that” in order to get funding, support and guidance from the organization, applicants must meet certain requirements: like being 18 years of age and above Owning documentation from the Woreda that they don’t have enough income to support themselves and there family or those who are struggling to make a living from small business and ofcourse being a women could be one of the eligibility requirements.”

What are the services given for the beneficiaries of women in the operational area by Women Empowerment Programs?

“for its beneficiaries, the organization offers both monetary and in-kind services. Economic and social empowerment of women and girls, The Organization works with low-income self-employed women and girls in their efforts to achieve self-reliance and improve the quality of their lives more. WISE directly focuses on the economic and social empowerment of women micro enterprise operators, The business skills, health education, leadership and management, life skills, financial education, literacy and numeracy and technical skills trainings have been instrumental to change the quality of lives of the target women and their families.”

Do you think that the components implemented by Women Empowerment Programs approach made any difference in women’s life? How?

“Yes, WISE succeeded in enhancing economic independence giving financial aid through saving loan and creidt, educational attainment through continuous trianing for the existing and new members, and overall well-being among women to be independent and support their family.”

What are the internal and external challenges the organization faces while implementing the program to the users?

–Some of the internal and external challenges are financial constraints high inflation rate, relocation of business areas of the micro business owners sites due to the city infrastrucurer, low participation of individuals and groups, weak participation of private sectors, dependence on external funding, lack of coordination among the organization staff members and

capacity limitation

The challenges which is mentioned by the respondents and from the secondary data review are the following:

- Though the government has contributed a lot, it was not always cooperative as desired.
- The Implementing partner's less commitment to the Empowerment program's strategy and approaches, which hinders the program from achieving its objective.
- The market place which is given for the women beneficiaries being with no infrastructures like electricity, water and so on which hinders the progress of the women beneficiaries.

What are measures taken by the organization to solve service delivery problems for the users?

As to the staff members response –*the organization takes different measures to solve service delivery challenges. Some of the measures are the organization's effort to work and find dedicated new sponsors, to organize different events and to approach individual, groups and unions, public figures, train the beneficiaries on skills so as to work and run their lives in case if sponsors are terminated or lags to pay that is expected from them that goes to beneficiaries*".

Result Obtained from Interview

The staff members of the organization gave many of the same responses during the interview. The researcher generalized and combined answers that were similar from the interview replies in order to minimize answers being given again. However, I also conducted an analysis and compiled the responses of respondents who provided a variety of responses. Eight organization's staff members were interviewed, and the interviewees returned the questions in folders.

4.4. Observation

In this part, researcher collected information with prepared check lists for observation. According to the observation, WISE provides many services to the women and the community. The first thing any visitor sees when reaching and entering the organization is it's surrounded with different micro business owned by empowered women. The spirit is very positive and it gives chills and happiness to see an organization

trying to reach it's objective this far. And when entering the building it's full of women, parents and trainees. Drawings and quotes in every corner that encourages women. As to my observation in the organization compound it is a very energetic environment and it even gave me the thought to participate in one of the trainings in the future.

The office is also said to be very good and clean. In it's separate department there is a standing management and other staff members. When we look at the file layout, every service user who gets the service uses the file in a clear and systematic way, and it is easy to find soft copy and hard copy.

According to the observation, Staffs in WISE really are corporative starting from the Director and everyone else.

The insights gathered from both in-depth interviews with participants and the analysis of gathered questionnaires underscore a compelling narrative: the transformative power of providing women with equal access to education, skills, and training. Participants overwhelmingly expressed that such opportunities have the potential to initiate profound changes in their lives. Equal access to education emerged as a foundational catalyst, empowering women to broaden their horizons and envision new possibilities. This extends beyond traditional academic settings to encompass vocational training and skill development.

The participants consistently articulated a belief in the pivotal role of skills and training in enabling women to support themselves and their families economically. Specific skills, ranging from vocational expertise to digital literacy, were identified as essential tools that equip women to navigate the complexities of today's economic landscape. Moreover, empowerment through education and skills training is perceived not merely as an individual advancement but as a catalyst for broader societal change. The ripple effect of economically empowered women extends to families, communities, and beyond, fostering a positive cycle of progress and empowerment.

In envisioning the impact of equal access to education and economic support, participants spoke passionately about the anticipated changes in their lives. Financial independence emerged as a common theme, heralding a shift in the dynamics of decision-making and personal agency. The prospect of women actively participating in shaping their economic destinies boomed strongly, with expectations

spanning from diversified career opportunities to entrepreneurial ventures. These insights merge into a narrative of empowerment that transcends individual aspirations, embodying a collective vision for societal advancement through the elevation of women.

This collective vision extends beyond economic realms to encompass improvements in overall quality of life. Participants expressed optimism that access to education and economic support would usher in a new era of well-being, marked by enhanced access to healthcare, better educational opportunities for their children, and a heightened sense of security.

Furthermore, the participants articulated their aspirations to break through traditional gender roles and challenge societal norms. Equal access to education and economic support, they believe, will serve as a powerful tool for dismantling ingrained stereotypes and fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. Empowered women were seen not only as beneficiaries of change but as catalysts for broader social transformation, becoming role models who inspire others to challenge limitations and pursue their aspirations.

The narrative weaves together themes of individual empowerment, economic sustainability, societal transformation, and the breaking down of gender barriers. As we delve deeper into understanding the unique journeys and aspirations of these women, it becomes evident that empowerment is not just an individual triumph but a collective force for positive change, with current effects that resonate across families, communities, and society at large.

In conclusion, the insights gathered from participant interviews and questionnaires paint a vivid picture of the potential for positive change when women are afforded equal access to education, skills, and economic opportunities. As I learnt from an interviewed participant and gathered questionnaires women if given equal access to education, skills and training and on how to support themselves and also there family economically there will a great change in their life. The researcher identified that WISE provided capacity/skill building training to beneficiaries and then supplied credit for income "generating activities "which increased their productivity and income and resulted in poverty alleviation of rural women.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

This paper explores “*The Role Of Civil Society Organizations In Enhancing Women’s Empowerment: The Case Of Organization For Women In Self Employment*”. It begins by delineating the socio-economic and cultural context of Addis Ababa, highlighting its significance as the capital and a hub of economic, social, and cultural activities. The paper then delves into the gender disparities prevalent in Ethiopian society, emphasizing the patriarchal norms that relegate women to subordinate positions.

Nearly all NGOs share the same goals and missions; nevertheless, while making a significant contribution to the economic empowerment of women, health, education, and child development, NGOs still struggle to successfully serve the poor.

This study looked at how services are delivered and what obstacles an agency encounters in providing them to service users in an efficient manner. The provision of fundamental social services is mostly carried out by non-governmental groups. The results show that Mary Joy Developmental Association employees work hard for benefits its beneficiaries. For the benefit of it’s the service users, it collaborates with diverse parties, including individuals, groups, associations and organizations.

Through a comprehensive review of existing literature and statistical data, the paper explains various dimensions of women's empowerment in Addis Ababa, including access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and political participation. It underscores the pivotal role played by WISE in addressing these challenges and advancing women's rights and opportunities.

The study employs both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, including surveys, interviews, and data analysis, to examine the effectiveness of empowerment interventions and assess the socio-economic status of women in Addis Ababa. By focusing on factors such as age, education level, and membership span in empowerment programs, the paper provides a clear understanding of the

experiences and perspectives of women involved in these initiatives.

The findings underscore the importance of targeted interventions and policy measures to address gender inequalities and promote women's empowerment in Addis Ababa. The paper concludes with recommendations for policymakers, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to enhance the impact of empowerment programs and foster gender equality and social inclusion in the city. Overall, this paper contributes to the existing literature on women's empowerment in urban contexts, offering insights and implications for future research and policy action.

5.2. Conclusion

The research set out to investigate the role of the Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE) in enhancing women's empowerment. The study's specific objectives were to examine the organization's objectives and programs through the lens of women empowerment principles and frameworks, evaluate WISE's success in promoting economic independence and educational attainment among women, and identify the main challenges faced by WISE in implementing its empowerment programs.

The findings revealed that WISE has played a pivotal role in advancing women's empowerment through its well-structured programs and initiatives. These programs, aligned with core empowerment principles, have provided women with critical skills, knowledge, and resources necessary for economic independence and personal development. WISE's focus on both financial and non-financial services has enabled women to improve their livelihoods, gain confidence, and participate more actively in their communities.

The assessment of WISE's impact showed considerable success in enhancing economic independence and educational attainment among women. Many beneficiaries reported improved income levels, better business management skills, and increased access to educational opportunities. These outcomes underscore the effectiveness of WISE's interventions in transforming the lives of women and contributing to broader socio-economic development.

However, the study also identified several challenges that WISE encounters in its efforts to empower women. These include funding limitations, cultural and societal norms that restrict women's participation, and logistical barriers that hinder program implementation. Addressing these challenges requires enhanced support from stakeholders, including government bodies, international organizations, and the community, to ensure the sustainability and scalability of WISE's programs.

In conclusion, WISE has demonstrated significant progress in empowering women. By aligning its objectives and programs with empowerment frameworks, WISE has successfully enhanced women's economic independence and educational attainment. Nevertheless, ongoing challenges necessitate a concerted effort from all stakeholders to bolster the impact of these initiatives. Continued investment in women's empowerment, targeted interventions, and strong collaborative networks are essential for achieving a more inclusive and equitable society. This research provides valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners aiming to further women's empowerment in urban contexts, highlighting effective strategies and areas for improvement.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to further enhance women's empowerment in Addis Ababa:

Strengthen Collaboration: Foster closer collaboration and coordination among civil organizations, NGOs, government agencies, and other stakeholders working in the field of women's empowerment. By pooling resources, expertise, and networks, collective efforts can be more effectively leveraged to address systemic barriers and promote gender equality.

Targeted Interventions: Develop and implement targeted interventions that address the specific needs and challenges faced by different segments of the female population in Addis Ababa. This includes tailoring programs to address the needs of women across various age groups, educational backgrounds, and socio-economic circumstances.

Capacity Building: Invest in capacity building initiatives aimed at enhancing the skills, knowledge, and leadership capacities of women, particularly those from marginalized communities. This includes providing training in areas such as entrepreneurship, financial literacy, advocacy, and political participation to empower women to actively engage in decision-making processes.

Address Cultural Norms: Work towards challenging and changing harmful cultural norms and stereotypes that perpetuate gender inequality and restrict women's rights and opportunities. This may involve community-based awareness campaigns, educational initiatives, and dialogue platforms to promote more inclusive and equitable gender norms.

Data Collection and Monitoring: Improve data collection and monitoring systems to better track progress towards women's empowerment goals and outcomes in Addis Ababa. This includes collecting disaggregated data by gender and regularly monitoring indicators related to women's access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and political participation.

Encourage people to support the organization by joining clubs, organizations, or unions.

Policy Support: Advocate for the development and implementation of gender-sensitive policies and legislation at the local, regional, and national levels to support women's empowerment initiatives. This includes policies that promote equal access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making positions for women in Addis Ababa.

By implementing these recommendations in a coordinated and sustained manner, Addis Ababa can make significant strides towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, creating a more inclusive and equitable city for all its residents.

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**St. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATES STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**

Appendix I

Dear Participants!

This Data Collection Instrucment is designed and prepared by a student researcher at St. Mary University doing a research paper in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Masters Arts in Sociology. With this data collection instrucments, the student researcher intends to assess the Enhancing Women's Empowerment: The Case of women in self employment Ngo, nifas silk lafto sub city.

You are kindly requested to read carefully and answer the questionnaire questions and you are also requested to give a genine response to the researcher in face-to face interview. Your response will be treated confidentially and only will be used for academic purposes.

Thank You fro your corporation in advance.

Please Write the extent to which you agree with each of the following chioces

Section I: Demographic Information

1. Age

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- Above 55

2. Educational Background

- Never Attend School
- Read and write
- Primary (1-4)
- Junior (5-8)
- Secondary (9-10)
- Vocational Training
- Other

3. Marital Status

- Married
- Single
- Widow
- Divorced

Section II: Involvement with Empowerment program

1. How long have you been associated with Empowerment program?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years
- 4-6 years
- Above 7 years

2. What was your source of information about Empowerment program?

- Peer Education
- Friends
- Relatives
-

Section III: Program Participation and Impact

1. Which specific programs or initiatives of Empowerment program have you participated in?
(Check all if that apply)

Form of service	Check the appropriate one
-----------------	---------------------------

Economic Empowerment	
Educational Training	
Skill Development Programs	
Community Outreach Initiatives	

Section IV: Satisfaction and Feedback

1. Based on your experience, are the WISE support and guidance being delivered to your satisfaction?

Service Delivery	Yes	No
WISE is efficient in time and access of service delivery		
WISE offers better information service		
Staff members of WISE work delightly provision of service delivery		
WISE treats all the clients equally		

2. Are you satisfied with the overall effectiveness of the organization service delivery process?

Options	Check The appropriate one
Yes	
No	

3. What are the problems that reduce the effectiveness of service delivery of the agency?

Options	Check The appropriate one
Lack of coordination among the organization staff	
Difficulty of managing too many clients	
Unkown Reason	

Thank you for sharing your feedback and experiences with Empowerment Program. Your input is valuable for enhancing the impact of women's empowerment programs.

II: Questioner for project staffs

The Inrerview took place in the organization's head quarters. The interview was conducted with eight key informants that hold different roles. The positions community affairs social workers and staff members of the

organization that included three men and five women.

1. What are the criteria set by the organization to select beneficiaries?
2. What are the services given for the beneficiaries of women in the operational area by Women Empowerment Programs?
3. Do you think that the components implemented by Women Empowerment Programs approach made any difference in women's life? How?
4. What are the internal and external challenges the organization faces while implementing the program to the users?
5. What are measures taken by the organization to solve service delivery problems for the users?

III: Observation Guide

In this part, researcher is prepared a check lists for observation, According to the research consists of;

1. Over view of the institution offices
2. Staff Members interaction with beneficiaries
3. Beneficiaries participation in implementing the program to the users

Appendix II

Research Schedule (Time Frame)

No.	Description	March	April	May
1	Prepare Research Proposal	*		
2	Data Collection	*		
3	Analogizing and interpretation of data		*	
4	Editing and writing the final research paper		*	
5	Submission of final research paper			*
6	Preparation and defence			

Research Budget

No	Item	Unit	Quantity	Cost in Birr
1	Paper	Pack	1	250.00
2	Pen	Pcs	2	100.00
3	Flash	GB	2	500.00
4	Print and copy			300.00
5	Transport			500.00
6	Other Costs			500.00
7	Total			2,150.00

THANK YOU!