



Determinants of Young Women Economic Empowerment: The Case of Daramalo Woreda of Gamo Zone Southren Ethiopia

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Abstract

Young women's economic status in Daramalo Woreda is highly influenced by the patriarchal culture of African tradition. There were no sufficient studies made in the study area about women's empowerment. Thus, the objective of this study is to analyze the determinants of economic empowerment of young women in the study area. To achieve the objective of this study, a total of 354 samples of young women were selected from six Kebeles and interviewed through a well-organized structured questionnaire. Primary and secondary data sources were used for this study. A cross-sectional survey design was also employed to achieve the study objective. The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Qualitative data were collected through Focus group discussion (FGD) and key informants' interviews (KII) and analyzed descriptively to strengthen quantitative data. Descriptive statistics were used for analyzing the collected data. The overall five domains-based empowerment assessment results showed that 25% of the young women in the study area were empowered. Parameters such as production decision (26.29%) autonomy in production (23.39%), ownership of assets (38.38%), purchase, sale, and transfer of assets (18.97%), speaking in public (26.02%) control over the use of income (22.28%) and workload (30.08%) are many contributing indicators. The improvement of the contribution of each indicator to young women's disempowerment according to their importance shall reduce disempowerment and facilitate adequate empowerment in all dimensions. Hence, based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that policymakers are expected to create enabling environment for young women. Since the contribution of women in reducing poverty and hunger is more important, the concerned bodies of the woreda should promote empowering young women's status for deciding on all economic and income-generating activities. It is better to ensure young women access to education, loan provision services, training on decision-making, and good governance access. Moreover, non-farm income and economic empowerment are significant in the current study. Accordingly, the Daramalo Woreda should expand more consistent and regular non-farm/off-farm activities, training the young women of the area about job creation with the respective support and increasing income from that activity.

Keywords: Young Women, Economic Empowerment, Daramalo Woreda, Southern region

1. Introduction

In Sub-Saharan Africa, young women play a great role in the agricultural system, which is predominantly a small-scale farming system with more than 50% of the agricultural activities performed by them, producing about 60-70% of the food in this region (Gebrat, 2013). While women provide the majority of the labor in agricultural production, their access and control over productive resources are greatly constrained due to inequalities constructed by patriarchal norms (Doss, 1999).

For the economy of Ethiopia, since women in general, and the youth in particular, are the backbone of bringing socio-economic progress henceforth, effective utilization of productive young people's potential is mandatory (Abiy, 2019). Young women can prove to be a valuable resource and an asset for the country with the ability to handle multiple tasks simultaneously, which might not be easy for male employees standing (Afroz, 2010; Chalchissa & Emnet, 2013).

Empowerment is a concept relevant to women, and other disadvantaged or socially excluded groups in the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights. Economic empowerment is the capacity of women and men to participate in, contribute to and benefit from growth processes in ways that recognize the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth (Almaz, 2008). We define women's economic empowerment (WEE) as the transformative process that helps women and girls move from limited power, voice, and choice at home and in the economy to have the skills, resources, and opportunities needed to compete equitably in markets as well as the agency to control and benefit from economic gains (Ababayehu, 2019). However, it focuses on young women because it encompasses some unique elements. First, women and girls are a category of individuals that overlap with all other groups. Second, household and interfamilial relations are of crucial importance to the economic empowerment of young women in a way that does not exist for other disadvantaged groups (ibid). Finally, the economic empowerment of young women requires fundamental changes in institutions supporting patriarchal structures (Khattab & Sakr, 2009).

Understanding women and girl's marginalization from economic activity more recently, the government of Ethiopia has taken serious measures on key programs and strategies in "Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP):2005-2010" (FDRE, 2005a) and the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP-1): 2010/11-2014/15(FDRE, 2011) pay special attention to women and their legitimate questions for social, economic and political inclusion. In response to these, considerable efforts have been made to prop up women's political representation, and economic empowerment, generally maintaining their legal and human rights (Rebecca, 2012). Thus, to implement the federal-level policies, strategies, and programs that were designed to ensure the inclusion of women in the mainstream social, economic and political life of women and girls, Southern Ethiopia, through its Bureau of Women Youth and Children affairs has, since 2004, started the implementation of what it called Women Development and Change Package (wdcp) (bowyca, 2013).

Despite the growing evidence of the positive outcomes of women's economic empowerment, a study result in Southern Ethiopia reveals that women continue to experience unequal access to education and skills development and face barriers to securing decent employment and opportunities to thrive as entrepreneurs. The same study revealed that crop farming, livestock rearing, handcraft production, marketing, and wage labor are the activities in which males and females are equally involved (Kolaso, 2016).

However, women's work is not valued and considered productive to support and reinforce the traditional gender division of labor by portraying it as "normal" and "natural" (ODWaCE, 2012). Hence, in the *Daramalo Woreda*, women and girls have clear separate labor roles to play. Women are responsible for reproductive activities and child care and also do most of the work on farms or work for wages. Accordingly, one can argue that many young women may be exposed to multifaceted problems due to political, economic, institutional, and demographic factors. To this end, this research has attempted to answer the question: what are the determinants that became an obstacle to women's empowerment in the study area? Likewise, any intervention that focuses on benefiting women and girls should be based on an informed decision from research outputs in these cross-cutting issues.

The marginalization of young women from socioeconomic activity, especially in developing countries has been continuing to undermine socioeconomic development. However, the relegation of women a social category, first and foremost, has negatively affected their economic and political positions in society. This has been the case nearly in all African countries, including Ethiopia (Rebecca, 2012). Nevertheless, the sustainability of the economy of countries depends on the extent to which young women participate in public decision-making and the inclusion of their needs and interests in policy which ultimately helps to ensure good governance (Afroz, 2010).

Providing better services to young women is not only necessary to realize their rights, but it contributes to economic growth, and poverty reduction and is also essential in economic development. A study in the rural part of southern Ethiopia unveils that young women contribute 70% of the food production and 48% of the agricultural labor force (MOA, 2011). Women play an important role in performing several rural farm activities, but this role often goes unrecognized due to perception bias (IFAD, 2011). However, any political, economic and social, and cultural activities that do not incorporate and benefit women and girls cannot be fruitful since such activities are based on half of the manpower, half of the knowledge, and half of the effort available in the country (BoWCYA, 2013).

Despite being about 50% of the labor force, the work of women is not valued by society, and the decision to control income and the final product goes to men (Mengistie, 2013). In *the Daramalo Woreda* cultural setting young women may attend public meetings, but sitting at the back of the room; they remain silent and do not actively contribute to debates. In addition, even if they are permitted to speak and/or have an opportunity to say something in the meetings, they are not allowed to present their views properly. The existing norms in rural areas of Ethiopia dictate that women are responsible for taking care of children and working only in domestic activities and household chores than taking part in different income-generating activities like macro and small enterprise, petty trade, and on-farm activities (Almaz, 2008). Thus, the socio-economic deprivation of women is characterized by their limited access to resources, services, and employment. As a result, a large number of young women are economically dependent on their counterparts.

Although the issues of empowering women and girls in various economic activities are considerable, variables associated with the empowerment of young women have not been identified (Mahmud et al., 2011). The issue of women's empowerment is a debatable as well as a policy issue and as far as the knowledge of the researcher is concerned, young women's economic empowerment is not researched well in Ethiopia (Aregu et al., 2017). Some researchers have studied the issue of economic empowerment of women; for instance, Abebayehu (2019) in rural Ethiopia, Samuel (2015) in rural Kenya, Nazrule (2012) in rural Bangladesh, and Ayevbuomwan et al. (2016) in rural Nigeria by using a quantitative research approach and statistically investigated the level of significance of variables influencing the economic empowerment of women. Studies on young women's economic empowerment in rural Nigeria and rural Bangladesh had not considered the specific age of women that the current study emphasized because the majority of the population of Ethiopia belongs to young age. Abebayehu (2019) and Ayevbuomwan et al. (2016) investigated the influence of twelve variables i.e., (family size, education, farm income, off-farm income, relationship, property ownership, credit use, information access, participation in public and market distance, spousal relationship and age) and six variables (age, relationship of household head, employment, gender of household head, household size, and region) respectively. However, their study considered a limited number of variables determining women's empowerment, some of which are irrelevant to women's empowerment like the spousal relationship by Abebayehu (2019) and the relationship of the household head by Ayevbuomwan et al. (2016). These studies also employed multi-stage sampling for selecting representative samples. The above researchers used the unit of analysis at the household level, but for this study unit of analysis was used at the individual level.

The present study is different from the previous studies by emphasizing on empowerment of young women aged between 15-35 years because they are more productive and play a great role in the economic growth of the *woreda*. It incorporates fourteen different variables, sampling techniques, unit of analysis, study area, and time gaps identified from the previously conducted study in the area. Hence, this study aimed to examine the determinants of young women's economic empowerment, measuring empowerment level and identifying factors contributing to the disempowerment of young women in *Daramalo Woreda, Gamo Zone, Ethiopia*.

2. Conceptual framework of the study

In the following figure, the relationship between dependent and independent variables is presented as follows.

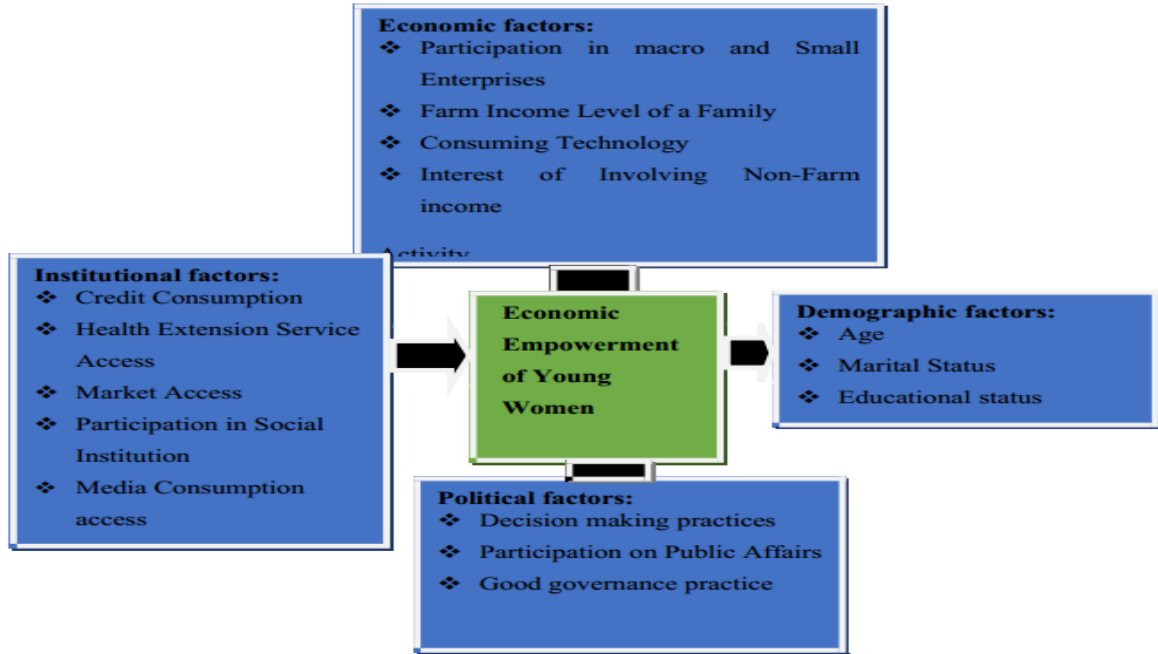


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework of the study

Source: Adopted and modified from Mengistie (2013).

In the study area, previous studies on the economic empowerment of women indicate that women are engaged in a wide variety of activities such as participating in crop production, animal husbandry, product marketing, food processing, poultry production, and several other household chores.

Females have also been involved in generating additional income for themselves and their families, particularly, when there are food shortages at the household level. However, women's work has often been not well documented in several departments of *Daramalo woreda* as marginal and they have been considered more as a consumer than producers. Women have secondary status within the family and in society (Mengiste, 2013). It is important to understand how conditions for

young women have changed. The conceptual framework in Figure 2.1 illustrates the relationship between the demographic, economic, institutional, and political characteristics of the independent variables and the economic empowerment of young women (dependent variable). Therefore, these studies tried to analyze these relationships, and identify the influence of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable. In this study, efforts have been made to assess factors influencing the economic empowerment of young women who vary according to demographic, economic, institutional, and political characteristics. Based on the literature review, demographic characteristics which affect young women toward economic empowerment such as age, education status of women, and marital status are assumed as important factors and were considered in this study. Variables such as participation in macro and small-scale enterprises, level of farm income, consuming technology, and the desire to involve in non-farm activity are economic factors that affect women's empowerment. Credit consumption, access to health extension services, market access, participation in the social institution, and media consumption were supposed to be institutional factors that affect the economic empowerment of young women; whereas; political factors are good governance practice, participation in public affairs, and decision-making practice.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Strategy

The strategy in the study was concerned with systematically investigating the determinants of the economic empowerment of young women. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. This study was conducted using a cross-sectional survey design with a mixed-methods approach. The quantitative aspect of the study mainly focused on key demographic profiles and a description of the current scenario. The qualitative dimension of the study focuses on the narration of contexts and attitudes as well as perceptual issues on the economic empowerment of young women.

3.2 Data Types, Sources, and Methods of Data Collection

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from primary and secondary sources. The collected data were based on the independent variables which were hypothesized to influence the economic empowerment of young women in various activities in the study area.

Primary Data

For data collection, six enumerators who were able to speak the local language were recruited, trained, and coached by the researcher before and during the data collection. The three female enumerators and three male coordinators were acquainted with the knowledge of the culture of society and the local language proficiency, and the ways of approaching the respondent selected and trained. They have also been oriented on the objectives and contents of the interview schedule and questionnaires and were also acquainted with the basic techniques of data gathering and interviewing and how to approach young women in the study area. The questionnaire was initially designed and developed in the English language. Then, it was translated into *Gammotho Doona* (local language) and inquired using this version for practical fieldwork for clarity and to facilitate the data collecting process and then translated back to English during writing and analysis.

The survey was conducted to gather primary data from six *Kebeles* in *Daramalo Woreda*. To get the required primary data, different methods such as structured questionnaires, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews were employed. The data were collected through face-to-face interviews and questionnaire administration with 354 young women respondents. Most of the data required to answer the research questions were collected from primary sources. As can be seen below, qualitative data were collected from FGD and KII to reinforce the result of the quantitative data and to obtain much more detailed information on the important issues that could not be quantified. The main issues addressed through FGD and KII were those issues that are supposed to be difficult to be quantified using a structured questionnaire in the quantitative method. Quantitative data were collected from the study population by using a structured questionnaire. The items of the survey questionnaire were mainly made up of close-ended questions tapping young women's assessments, perceptions, and attitudes related to women's education, access to maternal health services, and participation in decision-making. In addition, the survey questionnaire includes women's responses related to their economic empowerment. This consisted of women's responses regarding their access to and use of technologies and adoption of innovations and access to microfinance services.

To increase the reliability of the survey data and to reduce technical and linguistic problems at each level, the researcher spent much time with enumerators who were 6 in number and selected from six *Kebeles* and whose education status was above the Diploma level. Furthermore, before gathering the actual data, it was tested on 20 randomly selected young women who were not included in the sample subjects to evaluate the reliability and validity of the data and to check whether the potential respondents could understand each questionnaire item properly as well as estimating the time required to fill out the questionnaire. In the light of pretesting, appropriate modifications were made to the questionnaire and interview questions before the actual work and essential amendments were made on such things as ordering and wording of questions and coverage of the interview questions. Moreover, the pilot test enabled the researcher to know whether enumerators and young women had clearly understood the interview. Then, using the amended structure of the questionnaire, relevant primary data was collected.

The Key Informant Interviews (KIIs): Key Informant Interviews were held with officials who were purposefully selected from different sectors such as Women, Children and Youth Affairs, Education department, Micro-finance, Agricultural department, Health department, Justice Department, Water, Mining and Energy Department and civil service offices of the Study area.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD): The FGD was held to find out key information about the area. The qualitative data have been collected using FGDs. It was held with six groups and purposefully selected persons. To facilitate free discussions, the members of FGDs consisted of religious leaders, local elders, young women representatives, young male representatives, and influential elites based on their social status.

Secondary Data:

To supplement the overall study, information was collected from different sources. The secondary data were also used to increase additional information necessary to substantiate the study. It was collected from reports, journals, articles, constitutions, books, bulletins, statistical reports, government documents, published and unpublished theses, and websites.

3.3 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size Determination

Daramalo Woreda was deliberately selected due to easy access to get sufficient information and the existence of serious economic, political, and social problems related to the economic empowerment of women as it was stated in the 2019 annual report of *Gamo Zone Women Children and Youth Affairs Department*.

According to the recent report of *the Daramalo Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office (DWFEDO, 2019)*, there are 24 *Kebeles* in the *Woreda*. Based on the file of *the Daramalo Woreda Administration*, the 24 *Kebeles* were grouped into three clusters concerning the *Kebele's* nearness to social facilities like high schools, markets, health centers, etc., and distance from the *Woreda* center. Then, from each cluster, two *Kebeles* were selected using a simple random sampling technique since the number of *Kebeles* in the three clusters was almost equal (8, 9, and 7), and the socio-economic setting of the *Kebeles* within a cluster was homogenous.

Thus, a total of six *Kebeles*, namely: *Dara, Doma, Eli Kodo, Manana Abaya Hoyaa, and Guge Shale* were selected using simple random sampling techniques.

Once the sample *Kebeles* of the *Woreda* were selected, the researcher selected the respondents (young women) aged between 15-35 years from each *Kebele* using a simple random sampling technique.

Before taking samples from each *kebele*, the sample size has to be determined. According to the report of *the Daramalo Worada Women, children, and youth affairs office (2019)*, the number of young women from 24 *kebeles* whose ages were from 15-35 years was 11,698; whereas, the number of young women in six *kebeles*--three thousand, one hundred and eight (3,108) (DWWCYO, 2019). Then, the researcher used the scientific formula of Yamane (1967) by considering five percent (5%) of error and determining the sample size as follows:

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

Where n =sample size N =total number of targeted populations α =level of precision (sampling error) at 5% significant level, the margin of error. The level of confidence is 95%; this was chosen

because the convenient method reduces the possibility of non-responses drastically. Then $n=3108 \sqrt{1+(0.05)^2} \cdot 3108 = 354$; therefore, 354 young women whose age category includes between 15-35 years were used as the representative sample of the study.

Once the sample size of the selected *kebeles* is determined, the individual respondents of each *kebele* identified by the sample size formula of Israel (1992) were used. That is $n_h = (N_h \sqrt{1+(0.05)^2}) \cdot n$ where N_h is =the sample size of each *kebele*, n_h =total population of each *kebele*, N_s =total population of the sum of *kebele* of the study, and n = total sample size population of the study.

Hence, a total of 354 sample size of *woreda* distributed into six *kebeles* by the above formula as 68,62,48,54,61 and 60 young women respondents from *Dara*, *Dome*, *Elicodo*, *Mananabaya Hoyaa*, and *Guggeshale* *kebeles* respectively.

Table 3.1. *The sample size determined from each Kebele by applying Israel formula*

No	Sampling Kebeles	Randomly Selected sample size from each kebele
1	Dara	68
2	Dome''a	62
3	Eli kodo	49
4	Manana Abaya	54
5	Hoya	61
6	Guge shale	60
	Total	354

Source: author own design (2022)

3.4 Methods of Data Analysis

The empirical analysis of the present study was used descriptive statistics. After the collection of both primary and secondary data, the edited and coded data were entered into the software to get ratios and percentages. Categorized data was entered into tables and processed to provide frequency tables and percentages by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Applying five domains of empowerment (5DE), women empowerment index was computed, and analysis was made about the level of young women's empowerment and disempowerment score

measured in the study area. The mean value of each of the ten indicators considered. Their level of influence on empowerment was also descriptively analyzed.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Women Empowerment Index

The women empowerment index (WEI) in the study area was calculated using the agricultural index of women empowerment because the livelihood of women in the study area was directly related to agriculture. The purpose of constructing the women empowerment index is to identify the percentage of empowered and disempowered women henceforth, the empowerment score of women recognized in the study area on the one hand, and to investigate the indicators contributing to disempowerment on the other hand.

The WEI is the first-ever measure to directly capture women's empowerment and inclusion levels in the agricultural sector (Maysoon, 2015). Table: 4.25 presents the computed score of young women's empowerment index (MO) by domain and indicator. The empowerment index MO is computed empowerment headcount ratio multiplied by the average adequacy score, mathematically. Then, once the women empowerment index is known then it is easy to compute the young women's disempowerment index; which is $(1-MO)$; $1-0.17 = 0.83$. Therefore, the Women disempowerment index of *Daramalo Woreda* is 0.83, which presents the breakdown of the disempowerment score by domains and indicators. The result of the young women disempowerment index of *Daramalo Woreda* is higher than those cited in the literature for a number of other areas like Meskan Woreda of Southern Ethiopia (Zhera, 2014), and Damote Gale Woreda of Wolayta Zone in Southern Ethiopia by Abebayehu (2019) but lower than that of Lemlemet al., (2016) in Toke Kutaye District of Oromia, Ethiopia. The 5DE result displays that, overall, 80.0% of the women in the sample were disempowered. This also indicated that 20 % of the young women were empowered in the sample population. Therefore, 5DE for *Daramalo Woreda* shows that the empowered headcount ratio is 22 % $(1-H)$ among young women. The inadequacy achievement of the disempowered women was 25 %. This implies that the

disempowered woman had inadequacy in 25 % of the indicators or they had achieved adequacy in 75% of the 5DE indicators.

Table 4.1: The WEI of *Daramalo Woreda*

Respondents	
Indexes	Young Women
disempowered Headcount (H)	78%
empowered Head Count (1-H)	22%
Average inadequacy score (A)	25%
Average adequacy score (1-A)	75%
5DE Index Mo = (1-H*1-A)	0.17
5DE Index (1-Mo)	0.83
No of observations used	352
Total observations	352
% Data Used	100

Source: The Author's calculations

Note: WEI = Women's Empowerment in Index; 5DE = five domains of empowerment.

The breakdown of 5DE (see Table 4.2) shows that the indicators that contribute most to young women's disempowerment show that about 26.29 percent of young women decided in production, and 76.42 percent lack sole decision-making power over production. The results indicate that young women get fewer empowerment effects which may bring, for instance, the renewed stimulus to small-scale agriculture, which may not reach women directly due to their lack of command over productive resources and control over output, as well as, lack of time. Similarly, 81.72 percent of women lack control over the use of income.

The findings also reveal that 26.86 and 61.62 percent of young women lacked access to credit and resource ownership and the ability to make decisions about it. These results show the constraints which prevent them from gaining the full benefits from the land they cultivate. Overall, statistical results of 5DWI reveal that the young women of *Daramalo woreda* are highly dependent on others, particularly on husbands, parents, male relatives, or sharecropping partners for their labor, skills, and inputs, since they are, by convention, unable to plow, sow, harvest and store on their

own without support from their relatives. They usually make decisions to adopt new technologies or practices after consulting their male relatives.

Table 4.2 Results of the 10 indicators of women disempowerment

Domain	Indicator	Young Women (%)
Production	Impute in Production Decision	26.29
	Autonomy in production	23.29
Resources	Ownership of Assets	38.38
	Purchase Sale and Transfer of Assets	18.97
	Access to Credit	63.14
Income	Control over Use of Income	22.28
	Group Membership	30.35
Leadership	Speak in Public	26.02
	Workload	30.08
Time	Leisure	42.55

Source: The Author's calculations

The finding shows that 69.65 percent of the young women are not group members and only 26.02 percent of young women responded as they have got the opportunity to public speech and the ability to make a speech in public. On the other way, observed group membership and speech in public were linked to constraints on women's ability or willingness to increase their leadership position, or market-increased production, including gender biases in social service systems.

About 30.08 percent of the young women indicated that they have a domestic and productive workload that is time-consuming (above 11 hours per day) and 42.55 percent of the women do not have enough leisure time. This result depicts that there was a disparity between workloads and share in input production decisions, and there was a very real risk that the process of productivity may further marginalize women. Based on the statistics result, the indicators such as input in production decisions, autonomy in production, ownership of assets, purchase, and transfer of assets, control over the use of income, and workload are contributing indicators of young women's disempowerment in the study area.

5. Conclusions

Concerning WEI score indicated that young women were empowered in 25% of the 5DE indicators. Among the 5DE contribution of each indicator to the disempowerment index in the

study area, the binary score result of the respondents shows that indicators such as impute in production decision, autonomy in production, ownership of assets, purchase, and transfer of assets, control over the use of income and workload are many contributing indicators of young women disempowerment in the study area. Improving each indicator of disempowerment in the study area shall increase young women's empowerment status. Consequently, investing in young women's economic empowerment is crucial for gender equality, poverty reduction, human development, and inclusive economic growth, yet significant gendered inequalities persist globally. Overcoming these inequalities requires bold, wide-ranging, and transformative approaches.

6. Recommendations

- ❖ By recognizing the roles and contributions of women and girls to social and economic development, planners and decision-makers should help to enhance the status of young women and increase food security and economic change at the zonal and regional levels.
- ❖ In the view of the Ethiopian constitution, it is evident that the necessary legal and institutional frameworks that are put in place by the governments to protect and promote social, economic, and political empowerment which is concretized through what comes to be known as “Women Development and Change Package. Implementing the full range of the package and ensuring women's empowerment requires the involvement of leaders, politicians, planners, decision-makers, development partners, and donor agencies to young women in the study area.
- ❖ Consequently, addressing the constraints to implementing the national policy on women, the *Woreda* should use strategies to enable supporting the grassroots women's organizations that will build women's ability to organize themselves effectively and voice their concerns and preferences about their economic, social, and civil rights. That is why the researcher recommends action points to *Woreda* decision makers should expand their policy and structures that were intended to promote and support young women's empowerment in all sectors.
- ❖ Since the contribution of women in reducing poverty and hunger is more important, the *Woreda* concerned bodies essentially promote empowering young women's status for deciding on all economic and income-generating activities. As the result based on identified gaps of the

study, it is recommended that Daramalo Woreda's concerned authority has to work on the following areas to increase the economic empowerment of young women.

- ❖ It is better if the *Daramalo Woreda* Women, Children and Youth Affairs work on training young women about economic empowerment and the importance that it has to them in particular and the society as a whole. So that educating and training in the way they can positively understand about economic empowerment of women may be the best alternative to improve the empowerment of the younger generation since the majority of economic activity was in their hands.
- ❖ It is better and constructive if Women, Children, and Youth Affairs work on the improvement of organizational efficiency in aspects of service delivery, family `planning, and awareness creation. According to the finding of the study, early marriage is a negative influence on the economic empowerment of young women. This implies that women are not satisfied with their affairs performance. To bring organizational strength into effect, it should work on providing good public service, bringing a good reputation in awareness creation, and carefully training on family planning rules in the study area.
- ❖ About the education status of women, the study shows there is a positive association between economic empowerment and the education level of respondents, this may be because education improves the attitudes and self-confidence of women. Hence, to enhance the economic empowerment of young women, society should give priority to daughters in particular and educate women as a whole in general. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs should implement education programs for women more effectively.
- ❖ In the aspect of farm income of a family of young women, it is better if the concerned body again gives training on how young women improve their income level and their livelihood level. They need to widen the provision of basic inputs like fertilizer, selective seeds, and implements to increase their income.
- ❖ Microfinance institutions of the region, *the Daramalo* sub-branch should also work on credit utilization to facilitate access for young women by removing institutional and regulatory red

tape. Ensuring access to loans from financial institutions enables unemployed women to create their business activity due to credits extended from financial institutions. The *Woreda* finance officers' collaboration with political leaders and decision-makers should facilitate financial services such as micro-financial institution access and utilization to an unreached majority to enhance their ability to generate income to ensure the well-being of their families. The sector must create awareness for the community at large to avoid social seclusion of women for being a member.

- ❖ The right health messages must be disseminated to the community by health extension workers: This should be closely supervised by concerned bodies.
- ❖ Additionally, participating in macro and small enterprises has a positive and significant influence on the economic empowerment of young women. This finding supports that participation in macro and small enterprises is crucial to women in creating additional income which creates a wider opportunity for economic empowerment. To capacitate women in this area the experience of successful entrepreneurial women needs to be well documented and the lessons drawn should be shared; and “best practices” need to be disseminated through different media in improving the performance of women entrepreneurs.
- ❖ Moreover, non-farm income, and economic empowerment are positive and significant in the current study. Accordingly, the *Daramalo Woreda* can expand more consistent and regular non-farm/off-farm activities, training the young women of the area about job creation with the respective support and increasing income from that activity.
- ❖ Besides, the *woreda* in essence make the access to information better as much as possible by keeping in mind the cost related to getting information by the women. Because the result of this study demonstrated that access to information is positively related to economic empowerment. There need to have advice and awareness creation on the essence of information access to young women.
- ❖ Participation in public affairs as one of the factors affecting women's economic empowerment has a positive association with empowerment. It is obvious that participating in all social and public affairs for everyone is the way to have good relationships in society, be well informed

about job opportunities, obtain guidance about what is good and bad in daily life aspect and share the way to economically better family achieved their goal of wealth creation to follow their footsteps. Consequently, there needs to have mandatory requests for young women to take part in any social meeting separately as well as jointly with men.

- ❖ Technology consumption also positive influence on young women's economic empowerment. In this sector, a lot must be done in terms of increasing access to technological innovations for young women in *woreda* for it saves their time and energy, appeals to their health, decreases their work burden, and minimizes evils like deforestation and pollution. Besides, diversifying technological innovations for young women apart from the few types of technology like modern contraceptives, fuel-saving stoves, and line-sowing technology is crucial.
- ❖ WEI score indicated that in the study area only 25% of women were empowered in the 5DE indicator. Therefore, greater effort is needed to empower women in different aspects of economic activity.
- ❖ The improvement of the contribution of each indicator to women's disempowerment according to their importance shall reduce disempowerment and facilitate adequate empowerment in all dimensions.

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