

# Assessment Of Women's Participation In Cooperative Society In Addis Ababa City Administration: The Case Of Lideta Sub-City

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## Abstract

The aim of the study was to examine women's participation in cooperative society in Addis Ababa City Administration focusing at Lideta Sub-city. The study applied the descriptive nature of research employing both qualitative and quantitative data results simultaneously during the presentation, analysis, and interpretation through involving the total informants of 124 selected through non-probability and probability sampling techniques such as purposive and simple random sampling techniques respectively. Therefore, the data gathering tools are open-ended survey questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and Focus Group Discussion used as major tools for gathering appropriate, reliable, and relevant data for this study. Therefore, the researcher collected data from primary and secondary sources and analyzed using descriptive statistical methods of analysis. The data are presented using tables, and figures, frequency and percentages, and so on. Whereas, for qualitative data, it was analyzed in contextual meaning; and then presented in narration form, finally integrating and triangulating both data results and findings. Hence, the finding of the study shows that low participation of women and under-representation in a cooperative management position, such as in decision making, very few women in committees and male are the dominant still at study undertaken. Therefore, this leads to women are not beneficiaries in the socio-economic activities due to factors such as workloads, access to credit, lack of training and awareness cultural factors, so on. It is commended that, to bring the active participation of women in all spheres of activity in general and cooperatives society, in particular, there should be proper practices of gender equality and mainstreaming has to be implemented down rooted to the Woredas and Sub-city levels as to improve the lives of women members in cooperative society and broadly to change the quality of the society at large.

**Keywords:** Women, Primary Consumers, Lideta Sub-city, Participation, Cooperative, and Socio-economic.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Participation means the active involvement of each and every member of the societies in certain development programs or associations. This development program can be community development, women's cooperative association, rural and urban development, and so on. Women's participation refers to the active involvement of women in all spheres of affairs such as economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and political activity and their role in decision-making and empowerment (Tasew, 2001). Thus, women in the world play a significant role in development activity in both rural and urban areas of the world. For instance, according to Boserup (2005), women, in particular, do 95% of domestic works such as children care, cooking foods, available consumptions materials, etc. despite their work is often unrecognized and generally undervalued in

most countries of this world whether developed or developing states (Boserup, 2005).

Broadly speaking, women in Africa are known to produce up to 70% of the food. Yet, when it comes to domestic services, it shares that will go to women is meager and they receive only 7% of extension services, less than 10% of the credit offered to small-scale business traders, and farming owns only 1% of the property. They are often found in subsistent working conditions that help them from hand to mouth and excluded from more lucrative consumptions opportunities to gain a large amount of cash (ILO, 2009). In addition to this, according to the CSA (1999) report shows that women account for only 23.9% in technical and professional fields most of who work on tiresome, low paid and unpaid jobs, and women have much poorer access to school and training facilities, thus frequently lack the necessary skills for active participation in cooperative decision-making (CSA, 1999).

Coming to Ethiopian women, are involved in all aspects of their society's life. Women of the country are both producers and procreators and they are also a participant in the social, political, and cultural activities of their communities, for example, 70-80% of agricultural labor in Ethiopia is done by women, and 30-40% of the families headed by women. However, the varied and important roles they played have not been recognized still present (Ibid). Most Ethiopian women are concentrated in the informal sector of employment as housemaids, bar attendants, Janitors or cleaners, and prostitutes. The discriminatory socio-cultural, economic, and social rules and regulations prevailing in Ethiopia have hindered women from enjoying the fruits of their labor. Without equal opportunities, they have lagged behind men in all fields of self-advancement (Meseret, 2008).

To this extent, cooperatives offer women as a member and employed opportunities for participation and influence over economic activities, thus cooperatives will benefit by enhancing women's productive capabilities through active involvement which will make them economically and politically strong (Birhanu, 2006). Besides, women gain self-reliance through their participation in cooperative as well as access to various opportunities which they would not be able to obtain on their own, hence attaining equality of opportunity between men and women. Therefore, gender integration in cooperative development is also an essential, effective, and equitable participation of members as a necessary condition for sustainable cooperative development especially in urban livelihood should get due attention at present (Bezabih, 2008).

According to the recently revised cooperative societies proclamation, No.985/2016 stated that there are various types of cooperation associations such as credit and saving, consumers, house building, condominium, etc. As Lideta Sub-City Cooperative Office Report (2019) showed, there is a primary consumer cooperative whose total members are 31,357 associated under this category which will be concerned in this study area. of these males are 2670, whereas females are 5784 will be selected randomly from Woreda 07, 02, and 10 based on the total members as largest, medium, and smallest members (5865, 2289 and 300) respectively under the jurisdiction of Lideta Sub-city Administration. Hence, the total members of females in these Woreda are 4106, 1568, and 110 in sum 5784 at present. However, comparatively the members of females are larger than that of males (Lideta Sub-city Cooperative Office Annual Report, 2019).

Therefore, this study attempted to critically examine women's participation in cooperative society in Addis Ababa City in general and Lideta Sub-city in particular. In line with this the study answered the following research questions: 1) what are the demographic and institution of cooperatives that women have participated in at Lideta Sub-city? 2) What are the socio-economic characteristics of women respondents participating in cooperative association in this study area? 3) What are the major factors that affect active women's participation in multipurpose primary cooperative society in Lideta Sub-city? 4) What are the socio-economic benefits for women associated with cooperatives in this study area? 5) What is the signal measure that suggests the significance of women's participation in cooperative association at Lideta Sub-city particularly and Addis Ababa City Administration in general?

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Framework and design**

Positivist researchers essentially employ a quantitative approach and attempt to identify causal explanations and fundamental laws to explain human behavior. Post positivist researchers on the other hand strongly believe that reality is not a rigid thing that exists in a vacuum. The research questions and purposes in this particular research led us to a qualitative approach in addition to a quantitative approach due to the different reasons. To overcome the problems associated with using either the qualitative or quantitative research approach, a mixed research approach is employed. This is because, in such kind of study, the researchers applied a mixed research approach, because employing a mixed approach is used to neutralize the biases of applying any of a single approach (Creswell, 2003). To cover the different aspects descriptive research designs were employed. Therefore, in order to answer the proposed research objectives, the study was designed as a descriptive type of research study with a cross-sectional time frame involving both the quantitative and qualitative types of data collection. This was presented and analyzed through statistical and contextual meaning to draw the result of the study in an integrated manner and through triangulation in procedural ways.

### **2.2. Sampling Design and Data collection Instrument**

To address the problems raised both primary and secondary sources of data were needed. The primary data sources are collected to ensure the

reliability and validity of data collection. Therefore, the major sources of primary data are Lideta Sub-city Office Head of Cooperative; Office Head of Cooperative Office, Boards of Cooperative Leaders; Women of Members and Leaders of Primary Consumers Cooperative; Workers/Experts through conducting data gathering instruments such as semi-structured interviews, FGD and survey questionnaires distributed to focal informants as to the collect the relevant data respectively. The researcher used relevant secondary data from different sources such as books, refers to documentation, official reports and reviewing previous studies, searching on Websites such as journals, articles, cooperative offices. The samples size of 124 women was selected from a population of the study of 5780 at this study area. Therefore, the study involved a total of 124 key participants to collect the qualitative and quantitative data.

### 2.3. Data and Analysis

Data analysis for this study will be conducted in three stages. Firstly, the data collected using different methods were organized and displayed to create order and sensible structure. Secondly, the analysis proceeded with the generation of key themes that were emerged from the questionnaire, interview, and Focal group discussion responses. Thirdly, the empirical information collected, coded, and displayed was carefully connected to the theoretical propositions and the larger body of knowledge addressing the research problem. By connecting the meanings from qualitative and quantitative information, logical analysis was made. The analysis technique that will be employed in this study will be descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics results will be presented using mean, standard deviation.

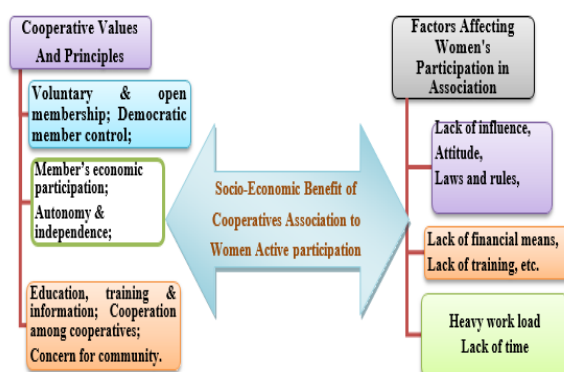
### 2.4. Conceptual framework of Study

According to Upton, (2001), a conceptual framework can be defined as a set of broad ideas and principles taken from relevant fields of inquiry and used to structure a successive study. Therefore, a conceptual framework is a research tool intended to assist a researcher to develop awareness and understanding of the situation under examination and communicating with a study (Upton, 2001). Therefore, this conceptual framework is developed as per the above empirical research conducted at a different study by different researchers. Accordingly, women's participation in cooperative association should be programmed and normally designed to boost the socio-economic benefit of

each and every women member intentioned with active participation through buried deep-down in every women's members given that all women's in cooperative are assumed to have something to bring to their socio-economic change as long as their tenure in the cooperative's participation continual.

The below figure indicates that, factors affecting women's participation such as attitude, laws and rules, heavy workload, lack of time; lack of influence, lack of financial means, and lack of training. Whereas, cooperative values and principles to be associated in cooperatives such as voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; member's economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training, and information; cooperation among cooperatives; concern for community are assumed to be and identified as independent variables and dependent variable respectively.

**Figure:1** Conceptual Framework of the Study:



**Source:** Developed by the Researcher, 2020

## 3. Analysis and Discussions

### 3.1. Membership and the Right to Participate in Cooperatives

This is to examine the membership of women as per Proclamation No. 147/98 Article 1(2) of the Negarit Gazette of Ethiopia a cooperative society is a society established by individuals on voluntary bases to collectively solve their economic, social problems. From the same source Sub-article, 3 state member means any physical person or society established under this proclamation which is registered after fulfilling his or her membership obligation. In all sampled cooperative societies membership obligation is being given to women's members.

**Table 3.1:** Reasons for membership in cooperatives society

S/N	Characteristics'	Frequency	Percentage
1	Women own interest and choice	40	39.6
2	Influence of the neighbors	25	24.8
3	Encouragement from the cooperative society	21	20.5
4	The Woredas Cooperative Office	15	14.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2020

As the information of the above table demonstrated, concerning reasons for membership in cooperative society almost all respondents gave different answers to become a member in the cooperative society. Out of the total respondents, 40 (39.6%) respondents said that they knew the cooperative due to their own interest and choice. However, 25 (24.8%) of them were due to the influence of the neighbors 21 (20.5%) of them were due to the encouragement of the cooperatives and the rest 15 (14.8%) of them were due to the Sub-city cooperative promotion officers to the ground levels. From this analysis, one could deduce that the role of cooperative and also the Woreda cooperative promotion office in initiating people in order to understand the cooperative societies, as well as the benefit of cooperative, was very low as compared to women's own effort towards cooperatives at this study area.

### 3.2. Participation of Women in General Assembly Meetings

S/N.	Attending GA Meetings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Never Participating	60	59.5
2	Always Participating	20	19.8
3	Sometimes Participating	17	16.6
4	Rarely Participating	4	3.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Table 3.2:** Participation of Women in General Assembly Meetings

From the table above 3.2, the 60 women respondents which account for 59.5% replied that they were never participating in the general assembly meetings. 20 women respondents which account for 19.8% attend the general assembly meetings always. 17 women respondents which account 16.8 % were attending the meeting sometimes. The rest 4 or 3.9% of respondents rarely participated in the general assembly. Thus, the participation of women in the meeting was generally not good. This implies that women and cooperative relationship was not satisfactory. During the GA meetings, several issues were raised such as approval of annual plans, listening of audit reports, the election of different committees, and

distribution of net profit/surplus. Therefore, as an interview made with one of the boards of the General Manager informed as, the general assembly is the supreme organ of the cooperative society where all members were meeting once or twice in a year depending on as the case may be. The power and duties of the general assembly are passing decisions after evaluating the general activities of the society, approving audit reports, amending the by-laws of the society, and dismissing board officials. Moreover, the general assembly elect's management committee, control committee, and other committees as well.

### 3.3. Socio-economic characteristics of women's respondents in Cooperative at this LSC

This is to identify that, the range of income earned by women members in cooperative society was respondents' that are determined by the sale of commodity/basic items or others services and other revenue generated means at samples Woredas in this Sub-city.

**Table 3.3:** Income Obtained/Earned by Women's Members

S/N	Range of income earned by women responded	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	< or = 500	16	15.9
2	501-600	7	6.7
3	601-800	25	24.8
4	801-1000	43	42.6
5	> or = 1001	10	10.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The above table demonstrated as the maximum sources of cash income earned by women cooperative members were ranged in between 801-1000 responded as 43(42.65%) of the total participants, but the medium income earned by women members in cooperative society responded as 601-800 were 25 (24.8%). The minimum number of women's cash income earned was 501-600 accounted 7 (6.7%). whereas the respondents earn cash income > or = 1001 were only 10 (10.00%). However, as stated by FAO (2010), the ultimate aim of the cooperation is to develop men-men imbued with the spirit of self-help and mutual help in order that individually they may rise to full personal life and collectively to full social-economic benefits. So, their income is estimated based on the sale volume of consumer cooperatives except for basic items such as sugar and oils. However, women respondents were reluctant to reliably estimate their income due to this and other similar factors such as fraud, and so on happening

at present. One can be inferred as study respondents were unable to maximize their income and inputs that available from their own cooperative society.

### 3.4. Cooperative Education and Training at this Study area

This is to identify the awareness of women members about the cooperative society in LSC responded through yes or no questions and illustrated through percentages and frequency as demonstrated below table 3.4.

**Table 3.4: Awareness of women about the cooperative society**

1	Do you know about cooperative values and principles?	
	Yes	No
	Number 18	83
	Percent 17.8	82.2
2	Do you know the by-laws, rules, and regulations for dismissal and punishment?	
	Yes	No
	Frequency 31	70
	Percentages 30.7	69.3
3	Do you know the rights and duties of members?	
	Yes	No
	Frequency 24	77
	Percentages 23.8	76.2

#### Field Survey, 2020

From the table, one could observe that most of the respondents did not know the cooperative values and principles, by-laws, rules and regulations, and rights and duties. These results account only 18 (17.8%), 31 (30.7%) and 24 (23.8%) respectively. Accordingly, as the table depicts below only 18 (17.6%) women respondents knew the principle and values of cooperative, whereas the majority of women respondents were 83 (82.4%) of them did not know the basic principle and values of cooperative. With respect to the rights and obligations for dismissal and punishment in the cooperative society, 31 (30.7%) women respondents were knowing their rights and obligations, whereas, 70 (69.3%) women respondents did not know their rights and obligations. Moreover, concerning the rights and duties of the cooperative society out of the total 101 respondents 24 (23.8%) know the rights and duties of the cooperatives, while 77 (76.2%) women respondents were doing not know the rights and duties of the cooperatives. This implies that cooperatives should work much on creating a sense of awareness for women about the principles, values, rights, and the general benefit of the cooperative. As FGD, women respondents of them opted to have knowledge on cooperative principles, but very low to distinguish their right and obligation as membership in cooperative.

### 3.5. Benefits of Cooperative Societies to Women

This is to examine the social benefits of cooperative to Women of the three Woredas sampled cooperative societies were replied through benefited, not benefited and unknown/undecided through demonstrated by frequency and percentages as below table 3.5.

**Table 3.5: Women respondents in social benefit of cooperative**

S/N.	Categories of Benefits	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Benefited Women	44	43.6
2	Not Benefited women	42	41.6
3	Unknown/undecided	15	14.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The above table demonstrated that the majority of study participants informed as 44 (43.6%) women are benefited socially, whereas women not benefited replied as 42 (41.6%), but there was certain participant not to decided/unknown with these issues were 15 (14.7%). From interview information, women members peruse the goal of improving their economic and social situation through joint actions by using the jointly owned resources to produce or obtain goods and services for the members. Besides, as FGD held with informant their benefit is, in some cases with a Woreda people mobilization of labor it is local development program. In the work of community development socially the role of cooperatives is also important. Concern for the community is one of the principles of cooperation (ICA 1995). The principle clearly stated that cooperatives should work for the sustainable development of the residents of the area. Therefore, it can be inferred as in these sampled cooperative societies this practice was quite common; hence the cooperatives used social to live together.

### 3.6. Factors Affecting Women's Participation in Cooperatives

This is to identify the major factors affecting women's active participation in this study area. In a cooperative form of business organization, women were hindered by multifaceted problems these intern adversely affects their level of participation in cooperative affairs. Among the major factors that affect women's participation in cooperatives include. This is further demonstrated

through frequency and percentages as presented in table 3.6.

### 3.6: Factors that Hinders Women's Participation in Cooperatives

S/N	Factors	Frequency	Percentage
1	The workload in the household	23	22.75
2	Social problems	20	19.8
3	Lack of education	20	19.8
4	Lack of information	16	15.9
5	Cultures	11	10.90
6	The attitude of people towards women	7	6.95
7	Lack of capital	4	3.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100.00</b>

#### Source: Field Survey, 2020

From the above table, the majority of participants were workload in the household 23 (22.75%), and social problems and lack of education were replied equally 20 (19.8%), next lack of information was 16 (15.9%). Almost a few participants replied as cultures, attitudes of people towards women, and lack of capital were 11 (10.90%), and 7 (6.95%) 4 (3.9%) respectively. However, FGD among the selected cooperative members and personal observation in the study areas clearly shows that social participation in different institutions such as Iddir, Equib, and religious occasions in Muslims and Yetsewa Mehibr or Senbete is the major problem affecting women participation in cooperatives. This is because most of the interviews were conducted on these occasions. For the underlining problems affecting women's participation in cooperatives as most respondents replied the remedy should be in the hands of the cooperatives, the community, and the government. However, the FGD conducted in sampled Woredas indicated that in addition to these other bodies should also include.

As ICA (2002), some socio-economic and cultural factors were identified as the constraints for women's participation in cooperatives. From the descriptive result of the depicted table above one could observe that workload in the household, poor social participation, lack of education, lack of awareness about cooperatives, lack of information, culture, the attitude of people towards women, and lack of capital are ranked in the order from 1st- 8th major factors affecting women's participation in cooperatives. Some of these are attitudinal and behavioral changes of the society that all stakeholders should take part. It can be summarized as, women may, however, be prevented from participating in education and training activities for other reasons such as not being allowed to travel. Lack of time due to domestic workload or carrying additional tasks in the house than men. Hence, these are the major factors hindering women's not

actively participating cooperative association at present that need due attention by the concerning bodies.

### 4. Conclusion and Recommendation

The findings of the descriptive result show that workload in the household was the major factor that affect women's participation in cooperatives, while lack of capital was the least. However, FGD and the researcher's personal observation during the survey reveals that social participation in different institutions was the major problem affecting women's participation in cooperatives society in this study area. Moreover, the economic and social benefit of cooperatives to women. From the results, one can observe that there has been a somewhat improvement in qualities of life such as in food intake, housing, and others. In similar ways, the final finding of the study also shows that the source of credit joining the women in cooperative society has been increasing compared to participating in cooperative before. Based on the findings of the study elaborated above, the following conclusions were drawn from this study. The study has identified some socio-economic and cultural factors were identified as constraints for women's participation in cooperatives. From the descriptive result of the depicted table above one could observe that workload in the household, social participation, lack of education, lack of awareness about cooperatives, lack of information, culture, the attitude of people towards women, and lack of capital are major factors affecting women's participation in cooperatives at this study area. The study revealed that the institutional factors that influence the level of active women participation in cooperatives were identified as Eddir, Equib, Mahiber, or Senbete and other occasionally celebrated social ceremonies. Successive involvement and participation in these institutions would affect women members' participation in cooperative societies in this study area.

It suggested that changing the attitude of women towards their cooperatives is a crucial factor in improving their participation in cooperatives. Most women need the cooperatives in the immediate economic advantages i.e., getting basic consumable items and credit services. Therefore, cooperative societies and the Woreda or Lideta Sub-city Cooperative Offices should consolidate their strength in order to create awareness about the benefit of cooperatives and their involvement and participation. To this end, this study has limitations in addressing women's participation in the whole Woreda/Sub-city of the multipurpose cooperative societies, therefore it is advisable to do a large scale and in-depth study to identify the level of women's

participation in cooperatives and the major factors that affect women's participation in cooperatives and to increase the conclusiveness of the findings whether at public or any other private institutions the issues of cooperative society further.

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