

## **FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AT FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL ELECTIONS IN PUNTLAND STATE OF SOMALIA**

**MOHAMED AHMED MOHAMED (BURTINLE)**

Puntland State University, Puntland-Somalia

[mburtinle@psu.edu.so](mailto:mburtinle@psu.edu.so) and [mburtinle10@gmail.com](mailto:mburtinle10@gmail.com)

**Mohamed Said Samantar**

Puntland State University Garowe, Puntland, Somalia

[mohamedsaid@psu.edu.so](mailto:mohamedsaid@psu.edu.so)

### **Abstract**

The main objective of the study is to investigate the factors influencing women's participation in politics at federal, state and local council elections in the Puntland State of Somalia. The study was guided by the following objectives; the first was examining the influence of economic factors on women's participation in politics in the Puntland State of Somalia. Secondly, to establish how socio-cultural factors, influence women's participation in the political process in the Puntland State of Somalia, and the last objective was to assess the influence of clan-based political system for women's participation in politics in the Puntland State of Somalia. This study was conducted through analytical survey design by using both quantitative and qualitative research methods with two-parts: A questionnaire and key informant interviews (KII) for collecting data from selected respondents. The study utilized snowball and purposive sampling to select a target population size of (50). The study utilized frequencies and percentages; tables were used in the presentation of data. In addition to that, data collection was analyzed using themes and explanations while comparing the findings with the literature review part of the study. The researcher found that, women did not get major consideration in political participation in Somalia whether federal, state level as well as in local councils. 62% of the respondents stated that the availability of economic resources is a major determinant in the participation of women in politics. While 87 % of the respondents stated that the federal level is the most challenged one to compare two other levels of state and local councils, because the financial requirement on federal level is more than the two other levels. Even though women have common challenges towards financial burden women candidates at federal are not supported by their clans and other political leaders unlike their male counterparts who receive financial backing to run their campaigning. The study also found the existence of persistent patriarchy with 95% of respondents believing that traditional leaders are influencing in women's political life generally and particularly in avoiding women's participation at all levels three of elections or nominations positions simply due to the commonly held perception that woman cannot represent the clan. The study also found a strong correlation between education and women's participation in local councils. The researcher recommends that the society or community should be encouraged to change their negative attitudes on Women's political participation. Thus, we should engage more women in political positions. Men need to realize women's needs for political power and change the way they look at women and the government should embark on activities which support women's political Initiatives.

## 1. Introduction

Globally, the political participation of women in political leadership is increasingly low. Now the global average of women parliamentarians is 19.5 percent. It falls below the 30% target that was to be achieved by 2005. This target was set in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the percentage of women parliamentarian has increased. A report by the Inter-Parliamentarian Union (2012) indicates that the global average of female parliamentary representation stood at 19.8 percent in 2011 up from 19 percent in 2010. This 0.8 percentage point increase has followed similar patterns over the past decade and underscores the minimal progress in attempts to reach gender parity in parliamentary representation across the globe this century (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2012).

It is also important to note that there are more women holding executive positions than before. New research carried out by the IPU and UN Women and presented at the Women in Politics 2012 map, revealed progress at the executive level with the number of countries with women as head of government, head of state or both having more than doubled since 2005 to 18 in total at the moment. The percentage of women ministers had also modestly increased from 14.2% in 2005 to 16.7% in 2012. However, this has not translated into increased parliamentary representation. An example of this situation is the Philippines. While they have had two female presidents in the last 25 years, only 22 percent of the lower house is made up of women and the upper house is home to only 13 percent (Cole 2011). Liberia as the first country in Africa to be led by a woman president has 9.6 percent women in the lower house and 13.3 percent in the upper house. Malawi, the other African country with a female president has 22% women parliamentarian (IPU 2012).

In the United States of America and the United Kingdom, differences in men's and women's political engagement are persistent (Burns 2007). Even though these two countries have long democratic histories as well as high scores on indicators of women's status, they elect relatively few women (Verba 1997). According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union Report (2012) the United States of America ranks 78th in the world in the female representation in parliament with only 16.8% of women in the Lower House and 17% in the Upper House. On the other hand, the United Kingdom is ranked 55, the percentage of women in the lower house is 22%, while that in the Upper House is 21.9%.

In Africa, in recent year, women's political participation has increased, however there still exists a gender disparity between men and women's level of political participation (Sirleaf 2010). It is noted that the share of Parliamentary seats held by women increased from 7percent in 1990 to 17 percent in 2007 and 20.4% in 2011, which is more than the global average (IPU 2012). The increase in political participation is as a result of constitutional quotas written into law and requiring that a certain percentage of political positions to be occupied by women (Potters 2009).

In the Somali context, there is inequality between men and women in terms of power-sharing and access to resources and decision-making. Somali women hold a tiny percentage of

government and are not afforded the same opportunities as men to engage in politics and deliberate on key issues. Additionally, despite their traditional and valued role as peace builders, and their peace activism, women have been consistently excluded from peace talks, other than as observers (Musse, F.; Gardner, J., 2013). Data from a study of Somali women's participation in politics and public life found that the negative attitudes and behaviors of clan leaders towards women is a key barrier to women seeking political leadership (Samah, 2016). However, there have been positive changes. The rise of the Sixth Clan Somali women's political movement, the first ever organized movement funded and led by Somali women have inspired Somali women to seek their rights and participation in decision making at local, state and federal levels. Despite these achievements women in politics continue to face a lot of stigma, and numerous barriers. 2016 was a year of political construction in Somalia, with the Somali women's political participation receiving much needed attention. On 28th January 2016, the Federal Government announced an electoral model with 30% seats reserved for women in both Houses of Parliament. Women also received a 50% deduction in the registration fee to stand for political office. An advocacy campaign was conducted to increase women's representation in the federal Parliament. The results were significant: In 2016, 24% of elected MPs were women in marked contrast to 2012, when only 14% of MPs were women. This is a significant increase, but still below the proposed target of 30% (Samah, 2016).

A recent UNDP report on women's leadership in public administration indicate that in Somalia there are 13 female senators out of 54 (24%), in the lower house, there are 66 females out of 275 (24%); in Puntland, there are 2 women parliamentarians out of 66 (2%), but currently Puntland is only 1 woman in parliamentarians out of 66, in Galmudug, there are 8 women parliamentarians out of 89 (9%), in Southwest state there are 32 women parliamentarians out of 149 (21%), in Jubaland there are 2 women parliamentarians out of 74 (2%) and in Hirshabelle state there are 5 women parliamentarians out of 98 (5%). In Somaliland, there is 1 woman out of 82 MPs in the House of Representatives, and no women in the upper house. At the level of district councils, there is less information available.

However, this study will conduct to explore the factors influencing women's participation in politics at federal, state and local council elections in the Puntland State of Somalia. The study will adopt robust research approaches to engage key stakeholders at the grassroots, district, state and federal levels, thereby unpacking impediments to women's participation in those three levels. The study will be specifically target traditional elders, member of parliamentarians (MPs) women's groups, former candidates of those levels, local councillors, civil society and officials from relevant state authorities with the view to seek their prospective and understanding of challenges to women's inclusion in federal, state and local elections and possible solutions to improve women's participation in district, state and federal elections.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Women's participation in the political process, in Somalia and Puntland as particularly, both as contestants for civic and parliamentary seats and as voters, has been influenced by several socioeconomic, cultural and political factors. These factors, which stem from the households in the community and the national level have affected the level of participation of women in politics in terms of increasing the number of women elected to parliament and local authorities, and consequently their representation in high-level decision-making positions. For instance, Parliamentary elections were held in Somalia in October and November 2016, resulting in 66 women being elected to the House of the People out of 275 and 13 women being elected out of 54 seats in the Upper House. Despite both Houses falling short of the 30% quota, the proportion of women elected in demonstrating a 47% increase from 2012-2016. (Report; Somali women's political participation and leadership evidence and support unities East Africa Research Fund (EARF) June 2017)

In Puntland presidential elections was held on 8 January 2014, there are only two female parliamentarians in the Puntland's 66-member-house, five women ministers whereby two of them are full ministers and other three are deputy ministers out of the 46-member-cabinet and 66 women councillors (14%) out of 478 total councillors in Puntland (MOWDAFA, 2016). But the election of 2019 the number of women in parliamentarians is only one female, while the cabinet is only 1 minister and 2deputy ministers out of 48 cabinets. The number MPs of women in Federal level improved from the previous 2012 was 37 (14%) out of 275 to 66 (24%) hours of people in 2016 while in Puntland is worsening, from 1998 to 2019 elections the number of women in parliamentarians decreased from 5 to 1 MPs.

However, most of the women related studies conducted in Somalia overwhelmingly stressed the role of tradition and male-dominated culture in obstructing women's participation in these three levels and overall political processes. However, this study will investigate a different prospective, considering a combination of factors (Economic/financial, cultural factors and political system) that affect women's participation and inclusion in the political arena in Federal, State and local level of Puntland.

## **Research Objectives**

### **General Objective**

The main objective of the study is to investigate the factors influencing women's participation in politics at federal, state and local council elections in the Puntland State of Somalia.

### **Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To examine the influence of economic/financial factors on women's participation in politics in the Puntland State of Somalia.

2. To establish how socio-cultural factors, influence women's participation in the political process in the Puntland State of Somalia
3. To assess the influence of clan-based political system for women's participation in politics in the Puntland State of Somalia.

### **Research questions**

- 1 To what extent do economic factors influence women's participation in politics in the Puntland State of Somalia?
- 2 How do socio-cultural factors influence women's participation in the political process in the Puntland State of Somalia?
- 3 How clan-based political system influences women's participation in local councils in Puntland?

### **Justification of the Study**

Over the years, the United Nations has recognized the importance of women's participation in politics as documented in UN resolutions (UN 1945, 1952). This study will be carried out to examine women's participation as candidates in the federal, state and local council elections in Puntland. This will because women had for long been left out in the politics of the country where their participation in the federal, state and local council level had been low compared to the male counterparts.

It will hope that the study would benefit policymakers in designing policies geared towards enhancing women's involvement in federal, state and local elections, women's organizations through advocating and sensitizing women about their rights and the Electoral Commission in increasing the quality and quantity of women's participation in politics and decision-making through designing appropriate policies. This study will expect to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on women's political participation and finally the study will be of substance to future researchers and scholars in utilizing it as a point of reference on women's political participation in Somali and the global scenario.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Conceptual framework is the diagrammatic representation to show the relationship between dependent variable and independent variable (Cooper and Schinder, 2013). The following conceptual framework was developed to show the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable under the study.

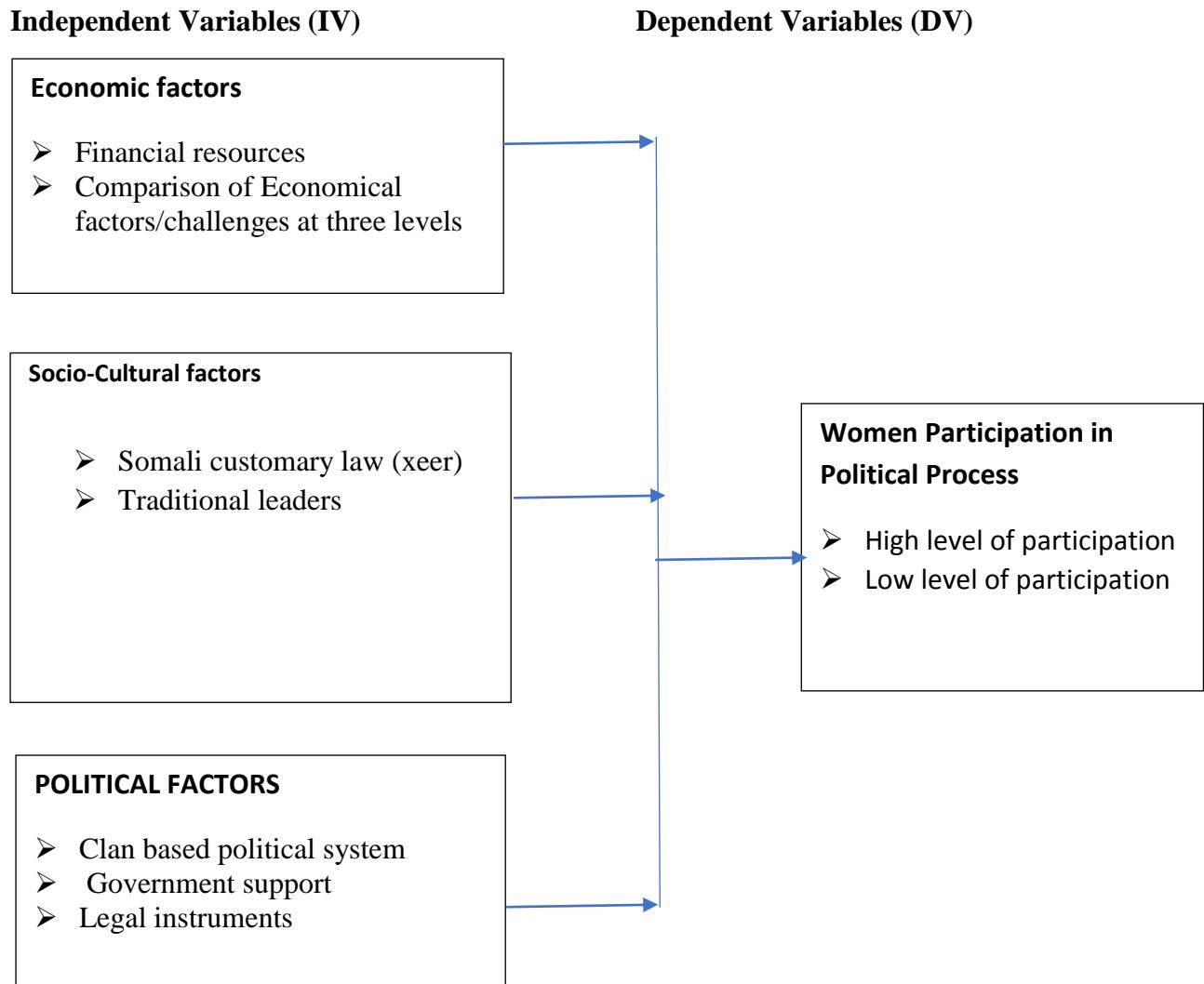


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### HISTORY OF SOMALI WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SOMALIA

Historically, women's roles in society have been defined by the sometimes-opposing value systems of Somali clan structure, customary law (or xeer), and Islamic Sharia. None of these systems promote women's engagement in politics. In contrast to many conservative Islamic countries, however, Somali women always enjoyed a substantial degree of societal freedom and independence.

This was certainly the case before the rise of Salafi militancy in the wake of state collapse (See Lewis, 1962). Women played a role in the struggle for independence – in the 1970s the The government unveiled a statue of Hawa Osman Taako, a Somali woman killed by the Italians

During an anti-colonial demonstration in 1948 (Aidid, 2010). Acknowledging Somali women's role in the independence and the 'October Revolution' of 1969 that brought him to power, on International Women's Day, 8 March 1972, President Mohamed Siad Barre publicly declared that women "should attain full emancipation in all aspects of life," and that the "Revolution guarantees such rights and decrees laws to this effect." While banning opposition parties and social organizations, Barre actively encouraged the establishment of a government sanctioned women's organization. Even though understanding and studying the historical participation of women in Somalia is important; studying the current status of women in political participation in Somalia is equally imperative.

In more recent year's representative politics has seen a tightening of the formulae used to determine clan representation, and a consequent closing of opportunities for women. This trend has been somewhat mitigated by the increasing wealth, autonomy and education of some women, factors which contributed to a record field of 140 female candidates in the 2012 local council elections in Somaliland (Kibble and Walls, 2013: 16)

Indeed, there has been a steady, but modest, growth in the participation of women in formal politics in Somalia. For example, in Puntland, women have limited representation at the regional and federal level but have secured 17% representation within local councils and have formed the Puntland Women Councillors Network (Koshin, 2016: 11). In the federal parliament of Somalia, the number of women represented has increased significantly, which has been largely attributed to the successful lobbying efforts around the quota, as described above.

However, in Somaliland progress has been notably much slower due to legal obstacles, the entrenched role of elders and more conservative ideologies. It is in this context that successive proposals for the introduction of a quota in Somaliland have stalled. Serious proposals have been debated prior to each of the elections in Somaliland, from the first 2002 local council vote, through the 2003 (presidential), 2005 (parliamentary), 2010 (2nd president) and 2012 (2nd local council) votes, without success.

In 2012, the presidential committee nevertheless recommended that a 15% level be introduced for women in local councils, 10% in the House of Representatives, and 7% in the Guurti 3 (once elections were held). The Bill on Reserved Seats for Women & Excluded Minority Groups was introduced in the lower house in July 2012, but a substantial majority of MPs simply refused to include it on the legislative agenda, effectively sidelining the initiative once again. New evidence has been found that several MPs were frank in acknowledging their fear that the introduction of a quota would reduce the number of available seats for men, making it harder for incumbents to retain their own seats (Walls et al, 2017: 46).

In May 2016 the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and National Leadership Forum (the NLF - a body of regional and national political leaders) agreed on a hybrid electoral college model predicated on a 4.5 clan-based power sharing formula5 despite plans for a one-person-

one-vote national poll. Elders from 135 clans and sub-clans selected 14,025 members from across the country to vote for 275 MPs in the Lower House (51 members per seat). The Upper House was designed to represent the six federal states, although the Somaliland government made clear that it did not accept the seats or those elected to fill them to be provide legitimate representation of Somaliland. In addition, the introduction of a 30% quota of seats legally reserved for women in both houses of the federal parliament was formally approved, driven in part through the efforts of a contingent of female advisers and young diaspora represented within the NLF.

Parliamentary elections were held in Somalia in October and November 2016, resulting in 66 women being elected to the House of the People out of 275 and 13 women being elected out of 54 seats in the Upper House. Despite both Houses falling short of the 30% quota, the proportion of women elected in demonstrating a 47% increase from 2012-16.

In the appointed cabinet, 6 women were selected out of 27 positions, and women have now taken charge of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Ports and Marine Transport, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (the first time this has been allocated to a Woman), the Ministry of Women and Human Rights, the Ministry of Health and Social Care, and the Ministry of Humanitarian and Disaster Management (a newly created post). After several delays and postponements, the Somali presidential election was held in February 2017 resulting in the election of former Prime Minister Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed for a - year term. Whilst observers have noted an expansion in participation, coverage, oversight and scrutiny (in the press and on social media) of the 2016–17 elections (Soliman, 2016), commentators have highlighted that the NLF failed to address “a number of other egregious cases of abuse of the electoral process, including seats reserved for women candidates only that were ultimately taken by male candidates”.

Further, notwithstanding increases in women’s representation largely at the parliamentary level, the extent to which this has translated into meaningful influence and power is contested. For example, not only is there a notable absence of women in positions of influence, such as Director Generals within ministries, there have been the appointments of candidates with less political experience with key figures losing out on the seats.

In Puntland there are 66 women councillors (14%) and in Somaliland 10 women were elected out of 375 local council seats (2.7%) in the 2012 local district elections. In Somaliland’s district council there is a total of 234 females on staff, compared to 2087 males; most of these positions are also at staff level, with no female majors or deputy majors. In ministerial federal government positions, there is 1-woman minister, 2 deputy ministers out of 25 ministries. In Puntland, in 2019 there is 1-woman minister and 2 deputy ministers. In Somaliland, in 2015, 4 women were nominated for ministries out of 50-member cabinet (8%). In all zones, there is a lack of inter-ministerial gender focal points and coordination mechanisms, which are important to ensure consistent policies on gender and gender mainstreaming throughout the Government.

Although in Puntland 2007 Presidential Decree required all public institutions to adhere to 30% representation of women. This quota was also reflected in the Garowe II Agreement – but has not been realized. (Joint Program in Local Governance, United Nations Development Program (2012). Strengthening Gender Equality in Public Administration in Somalia (unpublished), pp. 11–12.) Only one woman was among the 66 newly selected legislators to the Puntland Parliament on December 31, 2019

### **The Somali Constitution versus the Puntland Constitution**

The Provisional Somali Constitution was adopted in Mogadishu on 1st August 2012 and under Article 3 on the founding Principles subsection 5, it is stated that: “Women must be included, in an effective way, in all national institutions, in particular all elected and appointed positions across the three branches of government and in national independent commissions.” In the same document Articles 15:2 and 11:1-2 both address the issue of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and the non-discrimination of any citizen in terms of gender, towards exercising their political or economic rights. Additionally, article 22 gives every citizen the right to political participation.

In Article 35 of the Puntland Constitution, it says the following about women's rights:

1. The government's duty is to protect and promote the rights of women in accordance with Islam.
2. Women have equal rights to men, except by distinctions made by Allah. Additionally, in Article 41 gives rights to every citizen in terms of political participation

The Puntland Decentralization Policy says the following: “I will ensure full inclusiveness of all sections of society the Government of Puntland and work to increase the role of women and marginalized sections of society in the decision-making process.” This will be done through affirmative action processes and by ensuring that the planning process provides mandatory resource allocations according to the needs of women and marginalized groups. The MoI will pilot such initiatives to be rolled out over the years. The two constitutions do not disagree on many points. They need to be harmonized to exclude divergences.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research will employ qualitative and quantitative approach. The researcher will use key questionnaire and informative interviews and desk reviews. The qualitative research approach and quantitative approaches are one in which the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives that is the multiple meanings of individual experiences, meanings socially and historically constructed with an intent of developing a theory or pattern (Amin, 2005). The target population of this study will be 50 respondents coming from women candidates at federal, state and local elections, current MPs both men and Women in the federal, state and local councils, woman politician, clan leaders, leaders of

women's organizations, and research Institutions. Snowball and purposive sampling will be used. The researcher will use semi-structured questions to guide interviews.

Both primary and secondary data will collect. Secondary data will be collected through deskwork, both published and unpublished sources. The interviews conducted in the morning hours from 9:00-12:00 based on a convenient time and venue for the interviewer. Data will collect with in March- April 2019. After data collection, data will transcribe, codes and patterns will identify. Data organization will guide by the research questions. Categories will create based on the research questions

#### **4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

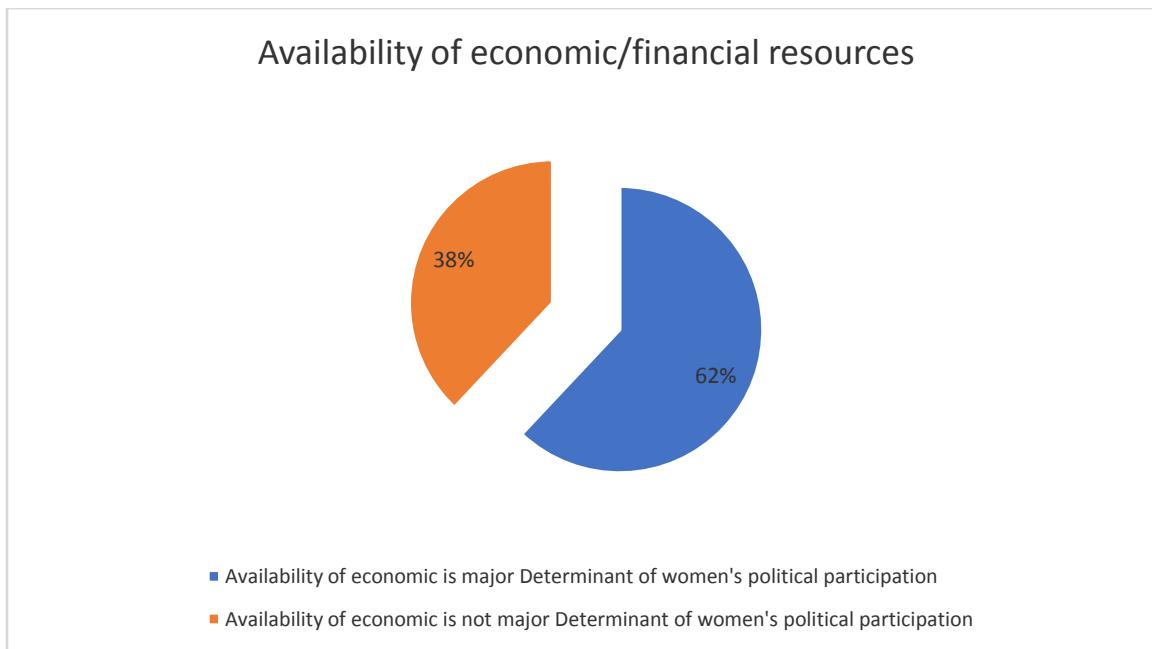
##### **ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL FACTORS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS**

###### **Availability of economic/financial resources was a major determinant of the participation of women in politics**

The respondents were asked whether the availability of economically/financial resources was a major determinant of women in political participation. The study found out that 38% of the respondents said that the availability of Economics resources is not a major determinant of women's political participation, while 62% of the respondents stated that the availability of economic resources is a major determinant in the participation of women in politics at the federal level to compare other levels. The respondents stated that one must have a lot of economic resources to compete for political participation. In the literature reviewed (Shnevoda 2007) state that the economic status of women in the society has a direct influence on their participation in political institutions and elected bodies. This supports the assertion by Inglehart and Norris (2003) show that women are economically disadvantaged, as a result, it is much more difficult for them to break into elected office because they do not have access to necessary resources in the realm of public decision making. The respondents assert that one cannot vie for a political office if one does not have the resources. This concurs with the findings of Bari (2005) that politics is increasingly becoming commercialized. More and more money is needed to participate in politics. Among the women political leaders who were interviewed stated that they used an average of 400 000 for campaigns for political seat while the one who had vied for a parliamentary seat stated that she used a total of Kshs.600 000 In literature review Mutullah (2003) reports that two of the women elected in Kenya's 9th parliament indicated that they had spent kshs 800 000 and 1.3 million respectively. One-woman activist was quoted thus: "the major financial challenges faced women during their participating in politics is women do not get any support from political stakeholders (businesspeople) because they don't trust women"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> interview, March 2019



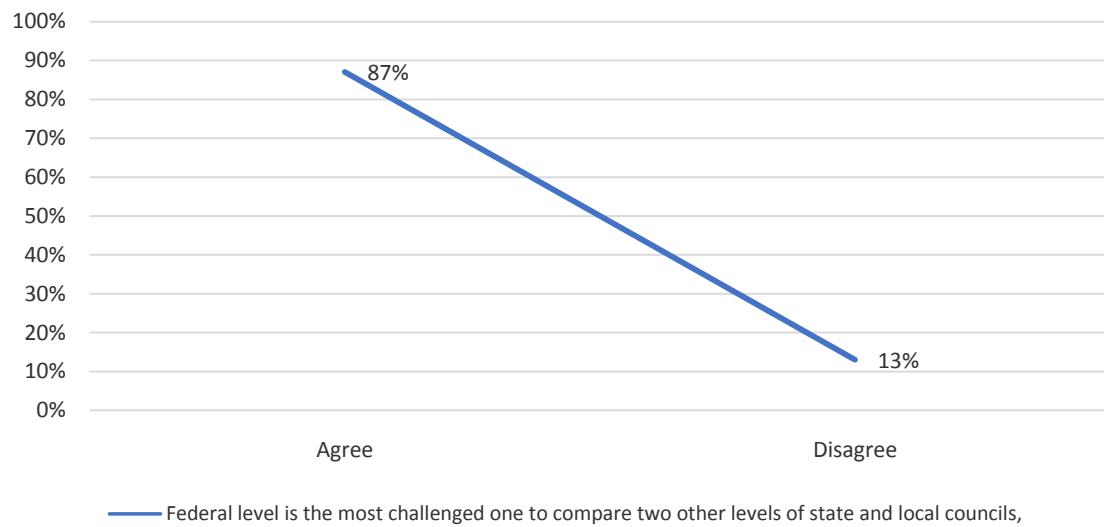
**In which level at federal, state and local councils did women experience more Economical factors/challenges which could have hindered their participation both as candidates and as voters? Give reasons**

87 % of the respondents stated that the federal level is the most challenged one to compare two other levels of state and local councils, because the financial requirement on federal level is more than two other levels, even though women have common challenges toward financial burden for all levels, but women candidates at federal are not getting support from their clans and other political leaders unlike their men counterparts who receive financial backing to run their campaigning. Only 13% of respondents opposed the view that women candidates for federal seats do not receive support from their clans. One respondent said that “If a man stands for political position he can easily get support from business groups, political leaders and his clan; he can look around his resources through lobby, whereas women cannot because they are not bright and do not have money and other resources as men do”<sup>2</sup>. This supports the assertion by Inglehart and Norris (2003) show that women are economically disadvantaged, as a result, it is much more difficult for them to break into elected office because they do not have access to necessary resources in the realm of public decision making.

The study by Ahmed et al (2018) is strong support to my findings of economics challenges, the study shows that the analysis, 90% of respondents agreed that women candidates are not supported by their clans unlike their men counterparts who receive financial backing to run their election campaigns in addition from study Findings from the focus group discussion also indicated a growing practice where male aspirants are heavily invested by their clans' businessmen in an attempt to pursue individual interests and promote clan agenda.

<sup>2</sup> interview, March 2019

Federal level is the most challenged one to compare two other levels of state and local councils,



## CULTURAL FACTORS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

**Under the Somali customary law (xeer) and its practices are challenges that facing women in political participation at federal, State level and local councils?**

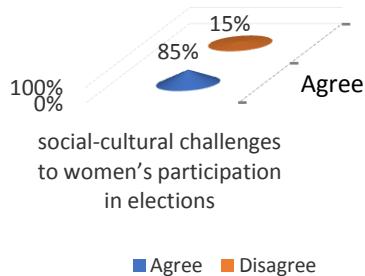
In this section, prescriptions, analysis and interpretations of major findings on social-cultural challenges to women's participation in elections were covered. The researcher established some cultural challenges that affected women's participation in elections, especially as candidates and voters. Respondents were asked whether under the Somali customary law (xeer) and its practices are challenges facing women in political participation at federal, State level and local councils.

The study revealed that 85% of the respondents agreed while 15% disagreed. Empirical studies by Fu et al., (2004) notes that culture affects the advancement of women into positions of leadership. As stated by Yasin and Mohamud, (2015) the clan system in Somalia pronounces women with limited interactions due to syncretism on religion, politics and traditions that limits gender participation as well as dependence on the male counterparts for transactions and extra restrictions imposed on them. One interviewee was quoted thus: “according to the beliefs of Somali customary women are naturally very weak and cannot manage big positions, this could drive the country into chaos, when Allah created man, he allocated specific responsibilities and it is clear in our religion. So, the responsibility of leadership goes only to men no woman can hold a family.”

The findings of Ahmed et al (2018)) from Galkayo District support my findings and his e study found that an overwhelming majority of respondents (86%) blame culture for being the

number one barrier to women's inclusion in local councils. In addition, the study found that negative stereotypes and cultural fallacies exist pervasively in the Somali society with 4% of respondents thinking that "woman are inferior to man" narrative is still existent while 6% of respondents felt that women are usually attached to household duties hence not suitable to involve in public affairs. In a nutshell, this study reaffirms that culture negatively affects women participation in local councils.

**Under the Somali customary law (xeer) and its practices are challenges that facing women in political participation at federal, State level and local councils?**



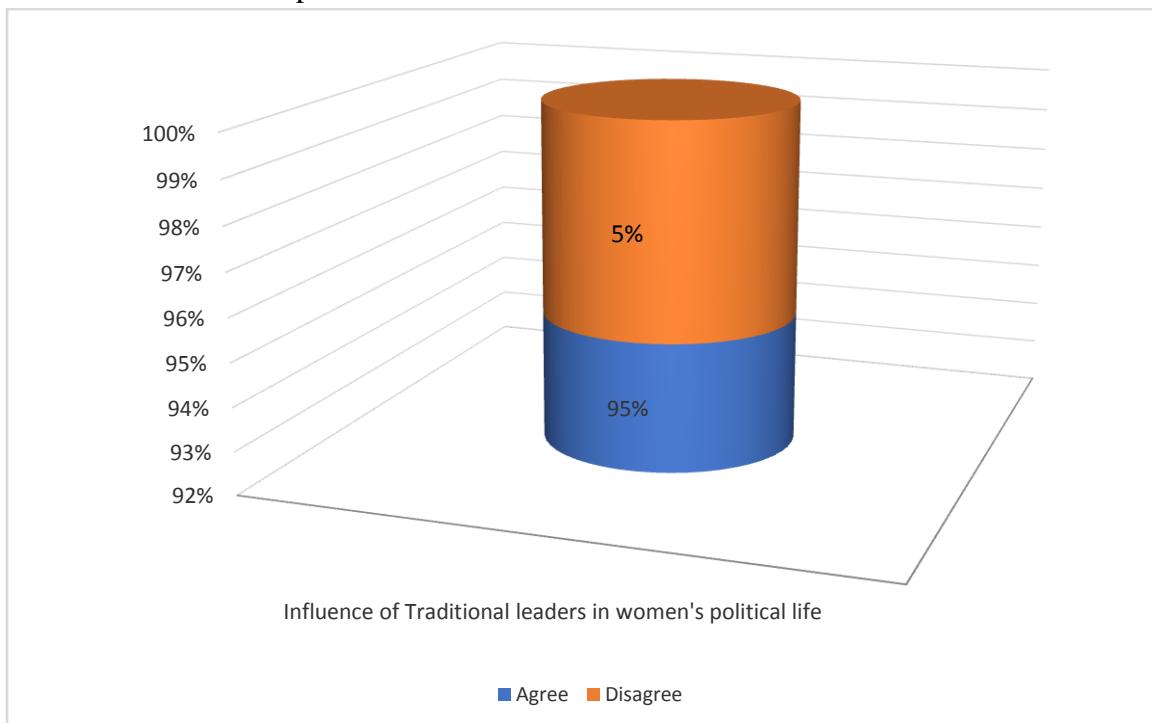
**Whether traditional leaders are influencing in women's political life generally and particularly in avoiding women's participation in federal, state and local council elections or nominations**

Respondents were asked whether traditional leaders are influencing in women's political life generally and particularly in avoiding women's participation in federal, state and local council elections or nominations. This study revealed that 95 % of the respondents stated that women are not fit to be leaders because it is believed woman cannot represent her clan, narrative is pervasive hence clan elders deliberately avoid the appointment of women to political and leadership positions at local, state and federal levels. In interviewees, was quoted this; "women's gender roles under cultural beliefs cited reasons that many women could not manage leadership positions alongside home chores which many were already burdened with, in addition to this argument, one KI was quoted as saying, "Women were supposed to be at home looking after children and doing household tasks while everything outside the home including politics was meant for the men."<sup>3</sup> In the literature reviewed, Bartol et al., (2003), show that traditional and persistent barriers have been shown to hinder the active pursuit of women to obtain positions of political leadership. Mohamed (2011) research shows that women in Somalia have taken up male dominated roles since post war whereby the women were breadwinners at the same time took up traditional roles thus leaving little time for other engagements. One interviewee quoted this: " according to cultural

<sup>3</sup> interview, March 2019

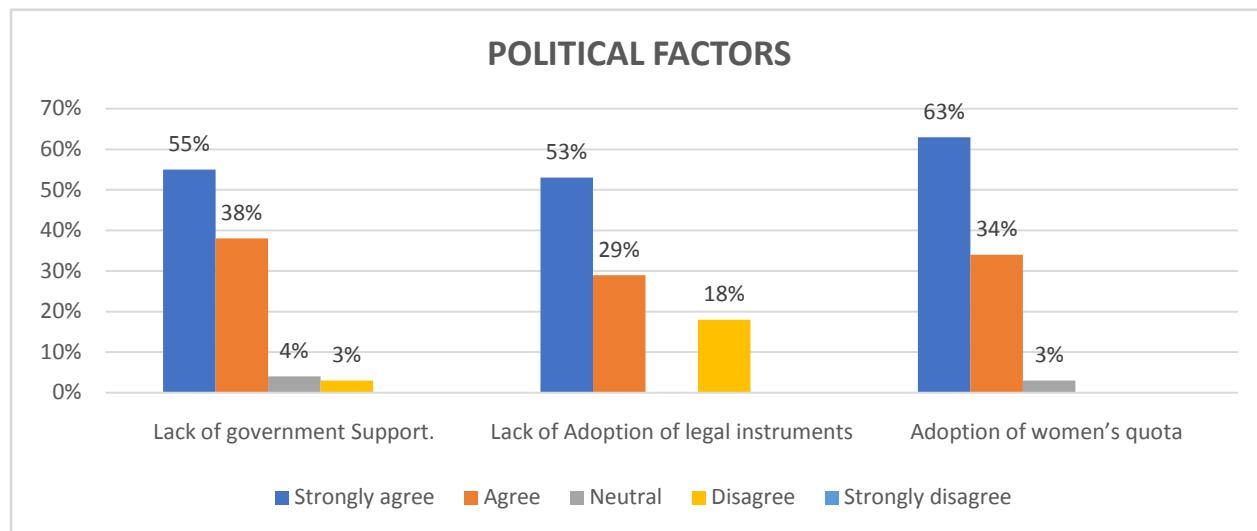
challenges faced women for joining and competing politics at federal, state level and local councils, state level and local council are the most challenged ones because, at federal level there is an external force(international community) that oversite for the realisation of women's quota, yes at federal is need more economic/financial but the influence of clan leader and men politicians are less at federal level due to the influence and presence of international community, that is why the number of women at state level of parliament is going down, establish of Puntland the number of women in parliament was 5 MP after 20 year it is only female"<sup>4</sup>. Also, the study is in line with Carolyn Kandusi findings that according to Masai culture, elders are the ones with the final say in all decision-making process in communities, thereby downgrading the participation of women in decision-making and other aspects of political processes (Carolyn, 2015). The study also meshes with the findings of Kabira's findings, which articulate that women's movement, primarily in tribal communities in Kenya, fell short in challenging the traditional leadership of male elders which systematically oppresses them (Kabira & Nzioki, 1995).

The study of Ahmed et al (2018) in Galkayo District supports my findings, and his study found that all respondents unanimously (100%) agreed that culture influences women participation in local councils. The study also found the existence of persistent patriarchy with 90% of respondents believing that clan elders deliberately avoid nomination of women to local council candidacy and other leadership positions simply due to the prevailing notion that "woman cannot represent the clan".



<sup>4</sup> interview, March, 2019

## POLITICAL FACTORS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP



### Whether the clan based political system are the barriers that confront the adoption of women's quota in elected bodies/parliament/councils

As shown in the above analysis (chart), 63% and 34% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that the clan based political system is the barriers that confront the adoption of women's quota in elected bodies/parliament/councils only 3% of respondents were Neutral with the statement. In one interviewee pointed out, "according to the formula of 4.5 systems, clan elders who were nominated and selecting their male clan members suggested and make justification to us as women and often told us "our clan is only given insufficient positions in the government positions, therefore, as clan leaders are not going to give those few positions to women when our men are still under-represented"<sup>5</sup>. One interviewee's point out "if women join political and economic battles it is not good for their religion and culture because politics needs a lot of campaigns as well as more time, so women neglected their duties in home"<sup>6</sup>.

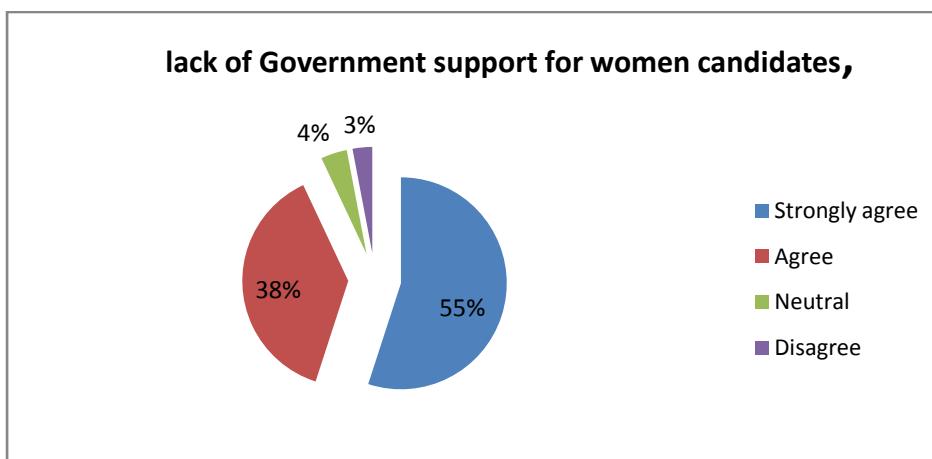
The findings of Ahmed et al (2018) support my findings, and his study found that the currently pursued clan-based political system influences women participation in local councils as agreed by 100% of respondents. In addition, an overwhelming majority of respondents (93%) agreed that the current clan-based political system categorically favours men whilst undermining women's participation in local councils. This notion was concurred by the focus group discussion participants who attribute this favouritism to the fact that the clan-based political system is based on persistent patriarchal norms and clan power sharing arrangements which deprive women from their basic political rights.

<sup>5</sup> interview, April, 2019

<sup>6</sup> interview, April, 2019

**Whether there is a lack of Government support, for example, limited financial support for women candidates, limited access to political networks, and the most stringent standards and qualifications applied to women;**

Based on the result for above question, 55% and 38% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, there is a lack of Government support, for example, limited financial support for women candidates, limited access to political networks, and the more stringent standards and qualifications applied to women while only 4% of respondents Neutral, neither agree or disagreed and 3% were disagree with the notion. One interviewee points out; Lack of government support is one of the major challenges faced women, we blamed because of their failure to fulfil what they had promised women, especially women as candidates, financial support which was promised was not provided during our campaign<sup>7</sup>. Another interviewee agreed with the assertion and quoted as saying: “for every new elected administration is highly lacking in helpful women. They have supplied hot air for the women, they have engaged them, yet they have not translated what they say or implementation. For example, newly administration during their candidate and campaign promised to give a enough seats and posts for women if they get election or office, but when succeeds the election, you look at their lineups, most women have been thrown out and only 1-woman minister and 2 deputy ministers are in the cabinet out of 48 cabinets and All women are getting is lip service”<sup>8</sup>



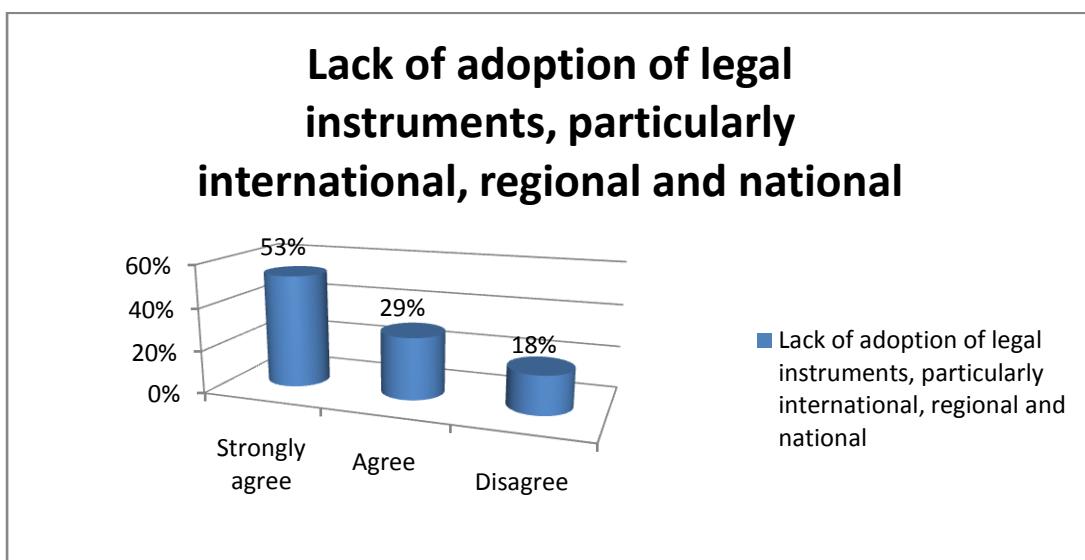
**Lack of adoption of legal instruments, particularly international, regional and national**

In addition, 53% and 29% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that the Lack of adoption of legal instruments, particularly international, regional and national while only 18% of respondents disagreed with the concept. This argument was in consonance with Mohammed (2011) study on the gender representation in the public sector in Mogadishu, found that women's participation in Somalia is virtually low due to the women's issues have not been integrated in national development plans and programs and so is their participation. Moreover, research findings from the study shows that the political system of clan sharing,

<sup>7</sup> interview, April, 2019

<sup>8</sup> interview, April, 2019

which is in accordance with Somalia's customary law has given men supremacy over women. In addition, the country has been in anarchy for a while and people believed that women should not be considered for positions at that time. However, research by Study Conducted by AU/UN IST on behalf of AMISOM (2016) showed that the political policies are changing for women are currently allowed to take up political positions. Furthermore, women have a 30% political representative quota which means more women may be elected in political positions; however, the same is yet to be replicated in the grassroots. The findings of Ahmed et al (2018) support my findings, and his study found that the Puntland government has fell short in implementing the 30% quota for women in local council which was adopted in 2007. According to the Ministry of Women statistics (2016), there is only 14% women representation in local councils contrary to the terms of the quota which allocated 30% of local council seats for women.



### Comparison of challenges faced women's participation in politics at Federal, State and local council elections

In this study, opinions of respondents were sought on various statements relating in which level women get more challenges for their joined and participating politics

In different interviewees, was quoted this; according to the Somali traditional culture and clan system politics, women get more challenges at State level and local council elections due to the influence of clan leader as well as without international support, in Somalia has also women were left alone to place pressure on their clan elders, and their demands fell on deaf ears. But at the federal level, there is international support that going to rallies for implementing of women's quota of 30%, so clan leaders and senior politicians get pressure from international community that is why the number of Parliament (MPs) in 2016 of women improved and has increased to compare 2012, from 2012 was 37 out of 275 to 66 hours of people in 2016, while in Puntland is worsening, from 1998 to 2019 elections the number of women in parliament decreased and declined from 1998 was 5 out of 66 to 1 hours of people

in 2019<sup>9</sup>. This supports the assertion by Walls et al. (2017) highlighted that politicization of clan identity is one of the major barriers to women's political participation and leadership. Finding of the research revealed that women who had entered the political space were only able to overcome clannism by leveraging support from male leaders within and outside of the political system to support their candidacies, as well as strengthening their status within their communal engagements.

Other interviewees were quoted this; according to the financial needs, the women get more challenges at the federal level, because at the federal level needs more campaigns and competition among different candidates, it does not need only the nomination of clan leaders, but also it needs competition through the voting arena, so as normal election needs more money, and women economically are disadvantageous. This supports the assertion by Inglehart and Norris (2003) show that women are economically disadvantaged, as a result, it is much more difficult for them to break into elected office because they do not have access to necessary resources in the realm of public decision making.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

The study concluded that economic factors play a pivotal role in women's participation in Politics. The availability of resources such as money, vehicles is a major determinant of women's participation in politics, without these resources' women cannot launch and sustain campaigns for political participation. The study also concluded that women do not have the necessary resources needed for campaigns for political participation., The study concludes that economics of women influence their participation in politics. Economically, women tend to be highly marginalized hence unable to invest in achieving their political aspirations which at times entail mobilization of entire constituencies, political campaigning and payment of candidacy fees.

The study concluded that the most influential factor influencing women in political leadership is culture. The study also concluded that culture is one of the major factors that influence women's participation in politics. The study concluded that women do not prefer political careers; their top priority is in other careers followed by family care. Culture prevents women from vying for political office. The study also concludes that women aspirants to MPs are not willing to rig elections compared to their male counterparts who persistently strive to collude with clan elders to win parliament positions. Similarly, the study concludes that the clan-based political system, currently pursued in Puntland, strongly affects women's participation in politics. Being an extension of the culture, the clan-based political system categorically favors men, whilst undermining women's participation in local councils. The study finally concludes that the introduction of one-person-one-vote election is the best recipe to improve women's political participation and representation in local councils

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<sup>9</sup> interview, April 2019

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings from the study, the researcher recommends that in order to improve women's participation in politics, the following recommendations were made;

The society or community should be encouraged to change their negative attitudes on Women's political participation by making them understand the leaders are both born and made. Thus, we should engage more women in positions of political position as they are already the major participants in community groups and projects. This will go a long way in increasing their confidence and getting the public to have confidence in women's leadership also the practice of patriarchy system should be reviewed to accommodation modernization

Governments must be committed towards helping women to have a friendly environment in which they can demonstrate their political will.

Women must join and actively participate in the existing community organizations in order to show their capabilities to the community and at the same time must form special organizations which raise their awareness, and work as lobbying forces that promotes their equal rights in political fields.

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