

Women Proficiency for Global Crises Management in Ethiopia

Mergitu Debela Bedada

PhD candidate, Governance & Regional Integration, Pan African University, Yaoundé, Cameroon

Abstract

The COVID-19 virus is a new pathogen that is highly contagious, can spread quickly, and considered capable of causing enormous health, economic and societal impacts in any setting. According to WHO report, about (78%-85%) human-to-human transmission of the COVID-19 virus in the household transmission have occurred in families. The main purpose of this article is to assess the potential of women in crises management. These findings suggest that, women leadership has a potential advantage in crises management mainly because, women are on average more likely than men to adopt a relational approach to leadership. So that Ethiopia, will benefit more, hence the country's more than half of the population and 50% of top-level leaders are women as a golden opportunity for Ethiopia to easily overcome this pandemic crisis by engaging a full potential of women at all levels. I recommend for Ethiopian government to use this acknowledged golden opportunity of having more women leaders especially at top-level and having women more than half of the population by mobilizing this women force up to family level to overcome this pandemic disease better than any countries in the world.

Keywords: Female leaders, COVID-19, Crises management

Introduction

The COVID-19 virus is a new pathogen that is highly contagious, can spread quickly, considered capable of causing enormous health, economic and societal impacts in any setting (WHO, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic, which has already infected people in the world, resulting in more deaths, has the potential to reach a large proportion of the global population (ILO, 2020). It is attacking societies at their core, claiming lives and people's livelihoods. The virus initially traveled out from China to places that had the most interaction with China. These are the richer parts of East Asia South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore along with Europe and the United States. All these places had lots of flights, business dealings and tourism with China (Morgenstein, 2020). Household transmission in China, human-to-human transmission of the COVID-19 virus (78%-85%) have occurred in families (WHO, <https://www.who.int>, 2020)

Similarly, African countries move swiftly to head off coronavirus spread. (TIMES, 2020). In Africa, the virus has spread to dozens of countries within weeks and It is not surprising that COVID-19 and the corresponding China "shock" could have a disproportionate effect on Africa's smallest, and poorest, economies (Benefo, 2020).

Ethiopia is Africa's second-most populous nation with 105 million citizens and, the country has been registering dramatic change under PM Abiy Ahmed who also pushed through reforms at home in what was regarded as a repressive state by his public renunciation of past abuses drew a line between his administration and those of his predecessors, as the appointment of former dissidents and large numbers of women to senior roles (Theguardian, 2019). In Ethiopian Women make up to about 51 percent of the Ethiopian population and 50% member Cabinet, having equal representation of men and women, (Getachew, 2018).

Ethiopia reported the first coronavirus case on 13 March, and the victim later identified was a Japanese citizen (wikipedia, 2020). The government has started to implement other basic measures to increase awareness and prevent the spread of the virus, provides regular updates, ban of flights and related measures.

Ethiopia also partnered with the Jack Ma Foundation to help distribute coronavirus testing kits by taking charge of managing a coronavirus prevention effort on the African continent, masks, face shields, and

protective suits to the 54 countries on the continent, with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed managing the logistics and distribution of these supplies.

It is laudable that, access to timely and right information is essential in a time of crisis, especially as Ethiopia simply does not have the infrastructure to cope with a coronavirus outbreak. Access to safe water and sanitation is low in Ethiopia. Cholera and measles outbreaks remain persistent public health threats, and high patient-to-physician ratios mean doctors are unable to tend to everybody. The new virus risks adding significant pressure to already strained health systems (Watch, 2020). And furthermore it has been adding more and more burden to families especially mothers for looking after family. Since down lock , keeping hygiene, preparing balanced diets to build immunity are some of the prevention mechanisms , they result a physical and psychological stress up on government, families especially women .

According to Diffusion of Innovation Theory, articulates the need to get your employees and stakeholders involved which provides greater transparency and acknowledges that values their concern and support. It transforms the heavy burden of a crisis situation into a team effort to fix the problem and re-invigorate the circumstances when they are looking bad (Duff, 2020).

So that this crisis demands coordinated, decisive, inclusive and innovative strategy and action from the government by looking out of box and giving due value for the resources already at hand. The main purpose of this paper is to assess the potential of women in crises management.

Empirical studies argue that, Women are more strategic in managing crises in a way that they have relational skills in eliciting trust during a crisis, tend to utilize more passive leadership traits, such as tact and understanding, to manage turmoil and proclivity to use participatory decision-making in that women are more likely to employ a holistic approach that facilitates crisis preparedness. (sciencedaily, 2019),and (conversation) (Sheaffer, 2004).

Women leadership has a potential advantage in crises management which is mainly because, women are on average more likely than men to adopt a relational approach to leadership. Relational skills can help build and restore trust and, thereby, enhance the effectiveness of crisis responses. women are socialized to behave relationally and to embrace relational leadership. Yet, relational leadership practices often are invisible, seldom recognized, and quite difficult to measure (Y.Belkin, 2019). So that, Female leaders are in better positions to understand the hurdles with in a social institutions, community and better able to use their natural tactics against this pandemic.

In addition women have historically played an important 'hidden' role in family firms, in which gender roles are dually reproduced by bringing into play not only the gendered division of labor, but also the influence of normative around the traditional nuclear family and the roles associated with women there

In essence, these empirical studies and theory made me to think how may country Ethiopia, will play the leading role, hence the strategies it will make to stay part of the global system. The Ethiopian government has shown fantastic changes that have taken place in Ethiopia over the recent years, with women assuming leadership positions at the highest levels of government. This is a real golden opportunity for Ethiopia to easily overcome this pandemic crisis by using and engaging a full potential of its women leaders at all levels and the hidden family leaders at each house hold. Women knows very well which type of food is essential for their family, how to keep their family's hygiene and how to advice their children than any one. So that managing this pandemic crises shouldn't be new and difficult for them.

It is no secret that COVID-19 will result a lots of revolution in our daily operations as individual and the world . But also it will be a golden opportunity for the Ethiopian women and especially women leaders by saving the life of their generation using their greatest effort more than before together with their society. Finally I recommend for Ethiopian government to use this acknowledged golden opportunity of having more women leaders especially at top-level and having more than half of the population by mobilizing women up to family level to overcome this pandemic disease more better than any country in the world.

Bibliography

- [1.] Benefo, H. R. (2020, March 19). <https://thediplomat.com>. Retrieved from <https://thediplomat.com/2020/03/chinas-coronavirus-slowdown-which-african-economies-will-be-hit-hardest/>
- [2.] conversation, t. (n.d.). <https://theconversation.com>. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/women-better-than-men-at-crisis-management-10304>
- [3.] Duff, V. (2020). <https://smallbusiness.chron.com>. Retrieved from <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/crisis-management-theory-73713.html>
- [4.] Getachew, A. (2018, 10 17). Africa Union lauds gender parity in ethiopia's acaninet. Ethiopia , Addis Abeba.
- [5.] ILO. (2020, March 18). COVID-19 and the world of work: Impact and policy responses. *International Labour Organization (ILO) Note*. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_738753.pdf
- [6.] Morgenstein, B. (2020, March 31). <https://www.npr.org>. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/03/31/823975440/as-pandemic-spreads-the-developing-world-looks-like-the-next-target>
- [7.] sciencedaily. (2019, June 26). <https://www.sciencedaily.com>. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/06/190626160325.htm>
- [8.] Sheaffer, R. M.-N. (2004). Are women “cooler” than men during crises? Exploring gender differences in perceiving organisational crisis preparedness proneness. *ISSN:0964-9425*.
- [9.] Theguardian. (2019). <https://www.theguardian.com>. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/11/abiy-ahmed-ethiopian-prime-minister-wins-2019-nobel-peace-prize>
- [10.] TIMES, T. F. (2020). <https://www.ft.com>. Retrieved from <https://www.ft.com/content/4dc832dc-684f-11ea-800d-da70cff6e4d3>
- [11.] Watch, H. R. (2020, March 20). <https://www.hrw.org>. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/20/millions-ethiopians-cant-get-covid-19-news>
- [12.] WHO. (2020, February 12-24). <https://ww.who.int>. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/who-china-joint-mission-on-covid-19-final-report.pdf>
- [13.] WHO. (2020, February 16-24). *Report of the WHO-China Joint Mission on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) 16-24 February*. WHO. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/who-china-joint-mission-on-covid-19-final-report.pdf>
- [14.] wikipedia. (2020). <https://en.wikipedia.org>. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_coronavirus_pandemic_in_Ethiopia
- [15.] Y.Belkin, L. M. (2019). Women, on the other hand, tend to utilise more passive leadership traits, such as tact and understanding, to manage turmoil. *A Female Leadership Trust Advantage in Times of Crisis: Under What Conditions? Corinne Postl* .