

The Lived Experience of the Abused Elderly People in Bishoftu Town: A Phenomenological
Study.

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Acronyms

CSA:-Central Statistics Authority

INPEA: - International Network for Prevention of Elder Abuse

MOLSA: - Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs Ethiopia

UK: - United Kingdom

UN: - United Nations

USA: - United States of America

WHO: - World Health Organization

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Table 1:- Participants' data on sex, age, religion, marital status, number of children & health status.

Table 2:- Participants' education, income source, residence, and care center history.

Abstract

This research was undertaken with the objective of describing the lived experience of the abused elderly people in Bishoftu town, Ethiopia. The research was designed based on the philosophy that reality is constructed and emanates from the individual's inner world. Hence, a qualitative & phenomenological design was adopted. Six participants (3 females and 3 males) took part in this research by adopting a standardized screening tool and a non-probability sampling procedure. Accordingly, the meaning attached to aging had been affected by the environment and psychological abuse was identified as the most agonizing type of abuse. Family members being major abusers, home was the setting where most elder mistreatments took place. Regarding gender, males and females have had a different experience of abuse. As age increases, people become cautious about 'death' and 'spirituality'. Prayer, politeness, and patience had been identified as coping mechanisms to deal with abusive situations. The conclusion was that elder abuse is a multifaceted issue which should be addressed by considering the biological, psychological, economic, spiritual, and socio-cultural dimensions that underlie it and the differences and commonalities among the elderly. In general, the research has an implication for social work practitioners, future researchers and policy makers who are interested to work around the issue of ageing in general and the issue of elder abuse in particular.

Key Words: Elderly, ageism, population aging, lived experience, elder abuse, victim, perpetrator, risk factors, setting.

Chapter One

Introduction

Background of the Study

Different age cut-offs are used in different parts of the world to define an older person. In some societies, it is a function of becoming a grandparent, or the degree of disability or dependence and not the chronological age that makes a person old. The United Nations standard to describe older people is 60 years (Perel, 2008, p.6). Ethiopia also adheres to this standard & the age cut-off used in this research is therefore 60 years.

The phenomenon of elder abuse was first introduced with the term ‘Granny Battering’ in UK in 1975. Previously, it was mainly grouped with other forms of abuse rather than recognized as having its own specific characteristics (Bavel, Janssens, Schakenraad, Thurlings, 2010, p.01).

There is no single & universally accepted definition for the term elder abuse. The most commonly accepted and widely used definition of the term is the one that was first developed by ‘Action on Elder Abuse’ in 1995 and later adopted by WHO & INPEA (WHO, 2008). WHO & INPEA defines elder abuse as “a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person” (Bravel et al., p.1).

Until the advent of initiatives to address child abuse and domestic violence in the last quarter of the 20th century, abuse of the elderly remained a private matter, well hidden from public view. Carson had described the issue of elder abuse as a growing, yet hidden problem (Carson, 2009 p.26). Today, it is increasingly being seen as an important problem and one that is likely to grow as many countries experience rapidly ageing populations (WHO, 2002).

In Africa, both the absolute and relative numbers of the elderly population is increasing. While this is an accomplishment worthy of celebration, our joy is tempered by the awareness that many older adults in Africa are facing a future of neglect and abuse without a social safety net. In most traditional African societies older persons were highly respected and honored. However, as a result of a changing social and economic environment, older adults are not always given the respect and reverence that tradition dictates in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, as evidenced by elder abuse, neglect and inadequate housing conditions (Chucks, 2007, p.230).

Ethiopia is not an exception in this regard; in face of an increasing number of elderly people, the traditional support systems & values that existed within the extended family to support the elderly are being eroded due to modernization. In Ethiopia, the population of the elderly is increasing by more than doubling itself; in 2050 the elderly population will comprise 11% of the total population & the elderly are among the group facing greater risks (Help Age International, 2007).

This research has investigated the phenomenon of elder abuse in Bishoftu town by applying a qualitative research method & by being submitted to a phenomenological research paradigm. The research has tried to describe the meaning and perception towards getting older by the elderly & being abused, the experience of elder abuse by each sex category, the settings and risk factors in which elder abuse takes place, the nature & types of abuses and perpetrators, and the reaction and coping mechanisms used by the elderly to deal with the issue of abuse.

Statement of the Problem

As people live longer, the population of elderly people is growing significantly. This brings with it many physical, psychological, social, political and economic challenges. One of the issues that would emerge as the aging population increases is elder abuse or mistreatment.

According to World Health Organization, abuse & mistreatment of older people has existed throughout the ages but its formal recognition as a social problem requiring dedicated action has only occurred over the last 20 to 30 years. The mistreatment of older people is now viewed beyond isolated family violence & is identified as a human & civil rights issue in its own right (Naughton et al., 2010).

Today, many older people who had once contributed a lot in building their nations are suffering from elder abuse by perpetrators who are closer to them. Even though, the issue of elder abuse has a tormenting & far reaching consequence both on the victims and the society at large, it is not yet given the attention that it deserves like child and female abuse. Scholars have also confirmed that elder abuse is a hidden, complex & consequential phenomenon. For instance, Rani & colleagues argued that elder abuse is a closeted and complex phenomenon and is a violation of human rights and a significant cause of injury, illness, lost productivity, isolation and despair (Rani et al., 2009, p.182).

Many elders are being abused in most parts of the world; though the degree & type may vary across various societies & situations. Hence, elder abuse is one of the pressing social and health issues that needs recognition and intervention. According to the available estimates, between 1 and 2 million Americans aged 65 or older have been injured, exploited, or otherwise mistreated by someone on whom they depended for care or protection (National Research Council Panel [USA], 2003). One study pictured the actual status of elderly people in the

Lebanese society as being lonely, neglected, disrespected, and marginalized (Tayara, 2001, p.06). Various studies indicate that between 4% and 8% of older adults in Canada are likely to experience abuse (The Government of Alberta, 2010, p.3).

One of the major driving forces behind elder abuse is the global boom of the aging population & the corresponding ignorance people have on the issue. The number of older people is increasing at an alarming rate everywhere globally; which implies a tendency of abuse among the aging population. For instance, the United Nations Population Division noted that older people will outnumber children for the first time in history by 2045. The world is ageing at a rate that is unprecedented, without parallel in human history, so the numbers of people facing age discrimination and poverty in old age are likely to increase (UN, 2011, p.2). In some rural Ethiopian communities, the older population now account for 30-50% - a shocking rise from the national average of 5%. (Age helps, n.d.).

Even though prevalence of elder abuse is increasing, it is not getting the attention that it deserves. For instance, while the Millennium Development Goals have specific targets on children and youth, they are silent on issues of age (UN, 2002). Strengthening this premise, Perel, (2008, p.6), argued that elder abuse is a neglected social and health problem that most societies would deny rather than confront.

In addition, data regarding the issue is very scanty. According to Rani et al., (2009, p.182), there is lack of data as most victims are frightened and unwilling to speak out. Similarly, a study conducted in Sweden indicated that people do not have adequate knowledge of where to turn for help or to report elder abuse (Berg & Erlingsson, 2002). Therefore, elder abuse is a major problem that often goes unreported and undetected. The Government of Alberta had also confirmed that there is limited data about elder abuse in Canada, and throughout the world and a

key reason for this is that many cases of elder abuse go unreported (The Government of Alberta, 2010, p.6).

According to Chucks (2007, pp. 230-231), the issue of elder abuse as a separate field of scientific investigation has not yet been flourished in developing countries. He argued that elder abuse in Africa is rampant because older persons are poor, voiceless, lack basic healthcare, shelter and dignity. Chucks argued that although there is a paucity of data on elder abuse in much of Africa, it is common knowledge that older persons suffer from emotional and verbal violence including derogatory remarks (Chucks, 2007, pp.230-231).

Despite the assumption that the elderly are the most respected and valued groups of the population in Ethiopian society, the fact on the ground is quite different. Today, seniors are among the most vulnerable segments of the population according to MOLSA's list of the underserved (Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, 1996). In contrast to the assumed reverence given to the elderly, there is also a deep rooted cultural foundation that considers the elderly as weak & worthless. Sayings which reflect ageism, like *'kareju Aybeju!'* (*No use if they get old!*), *'Anbesa Siyareg yezinb Mechawecha Yihonal'* (*when a lion gets older, it becomes a game for a fly!*), and *'shimaglena doro wede guaro!'* (*Pullets and the elderly to the backyard!*); could indicate the cultural misrepresentation of the elderly in Ethiopia. Confirming this, the National Plan of Action on Older Persons of Ethiopia has indicated that the elderly in Ethiopia are vulnerable to violence, abuse & neglect (Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs, 2006, p.79).

Scholars argued that data on elder abuse is scarce in much of Africa (Chucks, 2007, p.231). The scarcity of data on the issue of elder abuse, especially, in the developing world is attributed to the invisibility and lack of publicity of the problem like other issues such as child

and woman abuse. Illuminating this, Pritchard (2003, p.14) argued that in many aspects of life, older people are not given the same attention as children or younger adults.

Regarding the paucity of data on elder abuse, Ethiopia is not different from the rest of the developing world. For instance, Assefa and Frehiwot (2003, p.19), recommended an extensive research regarding the elderly after confirming that data about older persons in any dimension is extremely scarce in Ethiopia. The scantiness of data regarding the situation of older persons in Ethiopia becomes more pronounced when it comes to the issue of elder abuse.

Given the fact that the population of the elderly is booming, that the informal support system is declining, that the vulnerability of the elderly for mistreatment is increasing, that the issue of elder abuse is invisible and complex, that there is a paucity of data regarding elder abuse in developing countries; it is crucial to conduct an investigation of any type regarding elder abuse in a Sub-Saharan African country like Ethiopia. These rationales had been found to provide a logical ground for conducting this research.

Centrally, this research is worth undertaking in describing the lived experience of the abused elderly which in turn helps in filling the literature gap regarding the issue of elder abuse. In addition to this, it might provoke a discussion in the area of elder abuse as a distinct issue and might be of great use for researchers and practitioners alike who are working with the elderly.

Research Question

The central objective of this research was to describe the lived experience of the abused elderly in Bishoftu town. In fulfilling this objective, the thesis has tried to answer the basic research question that had been set forth at the outset. The fundamental research question of the research is: What is the lived experience of the abused elderly in Bishoftu town?

Objective of the Study

General Objective

The general objective of this research was to describe the lived experience of the abused elderly in Bishoftu town from the point of view of the elders themselves. Taking the general objective of the study in to account, I have developed the following specific objectives.

Specific Objectives

1. To describe the feeling and perception attached to aging and abuse by the elderly.
2. To figure out the nature & types of abuses perpetrated on the elderly.
3. To describe about the perpetrators, risk factors, settings & consequences of elder abuse.
4. To examine how males and females experience elder abuse.
5. To find out how the elderly reacts towards abuse and cope with the mistreatments.

Significance of the Study

The undertaking of such a research in a country like Ethiopia and in a setting like school of social work where there is a paucity of data regarding the issue of elder abuse is crucial in building the knowledge base of social workers & in guiding future intervention programs designed to help the elderly. The research also provides a hand full of evidence on the nature and forms of elder abuse, contexts and settings in which the abuse takes place, the risk factors that lead to elder abuse, the perpetrators of elder abuse, the gender context of elder abuse, the reaction towards abuse and coping mechanisms used by the elderly to cope with elder abuse. These all combined together will dictate, what kind of intervention program is most appropriate for each type of abuse, for each sex category, in which context, which risk factor should be dealt primarily, which coping mechanism used by the elderly should be integrated in to the intervention program and so forth.

By standing against a gender blind outlook towards elder abuse, the research gives a room for a gender sensitive approach. Consequently, I have investigated how each sex category experiences elder abuse. This will have a great significance in designing an intervention program which respects diversity & which is tailored to the needs of each sex category.

The research can also be used by researchers and policy makers in conducting researches and in advocating policies regarding the issue of elder abuse. In general, this thesis provided a clear picture on elder abuse as lived, experienced & described by the elderly and this in turn has a greater contribution to mapping out a direction in dealing with the issue at various levels.

Limitation of the Study

The following limitations might be inherent in the research design. A limitation in this study might lie in the fact that qualitative reports are more likely to run a risk of misrepresentation of certain aspects of reality because of the potentially large variances between participants' and researchers' points of view, between lived and narrated lives, and between reality and representations of reality. To tackle this problem, the researcher has tried to be as much neutral as possible in presenting the findings as described by the elderly. Hence, every reasonably possible measure had been taken to avoid personal bias in analyzing and discussing the facts as presented by the respondents living aside personal thoughts and feelings. Bracketing was used as one means of dealing with this limitation and the findings were also taken back to the participants after analysis if it had complied or refuted to what they have said. The manuscript was also given to peers so that they can evaluate the degree of personal bias.

In addition, the cultural barrier and fear of extra harm or retaliation; which restricted the elderly not talk about the negative family issues to outsiders was another limitation encountered in this research which might have had affected the quality of the data. In order to deal with this

limitation, I have applied observation in addition to the in-depth interview. In this regard, i was very cautious in reading the facial expressions and body languages of participants so as to help me disclose hidden feelings. According to Government of Alberta, shame or guilt may prevent some abused seniors from revealing their abuser while others may be fearful of the repercussions that could occur as a result of reporting the abuse, especially if the abuser is a family member (The Government of Alberta, 2010, p.6).

According to Key (1997, p.4), in conducting an interview, the researcher should choose an environment and conditions in which the participants feel comfortable, secure, and at ease enough to speak openly about their point of view. In my case, conducting the conversation with the participants freely and openly had been challenged by the physical existence of other family members in the interview venue. I have tried to secure privacy of participants so that they can talk freely. In doing so, i have politely explained to other family members that it was important to have the conversation with the participants alone.

The other limitation in this study was time constraint; the time allocated to come up with a completed & full-fledged thesis was not reasonable; especially for a qualitative research such as this one. To deal with this, the researcher had reconsidered reducing some of the scopes planned to be investigated at the onset.

Operational Definition of Terms

Old/elderly/senior: This paper defines elderly as those persons who are 60 years of age and over.

Abuse: This includes physical, sexual, psychological, financial, neglect, discriminatory.

Elder abuse: Any form of mistreatment which has happened to a person over the age of 60 years.

Centers: Establishments which have residential and day care facilities.

Domestic violence: Physical, emotional, sexual violence experienced by either a woman or a man at home.

Victim: Someone who has experienced abuse, mistreatment or harm, whether it be physical, sexual, emotional, financial, neglect, discriminatory.

Perpetrators: Persons who do the harm on the elderly victims.

Setting & context of abuse: The places and situations or frame works in which/through which elder abuse takes place.

Ageism: discrimination based on age.

Age and gender based discrimination: specifically refers to deprivation of older women or men from full inclusion and participation in social, economic, cultural and political affairs because they are women or men and because they are old

Chapter-Two

Review of Related Literature

Basic Concepts and Terminologies

What is “old?”

Different age cut-offs are used in different parts of the world to define an older person. In North America and Europe, generally the cutoff age is 65 years. However, retirement ages vary in these regions too. In some societies, it is a function of becoming a grandparent, or the degree of disability or dependence and not the chronological age that makes a person old. The United Nations standard to describe older people is 60 years (Perel, 2008, p.15). Ethiopia has also endorsed the United Nation’s age cut-off to identify the elderly.

What is Abuse?

According to UK’s Department of Health (2000, p.9) as cited in Pritchard (2001), abuse is defined as a ‘violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons’.

Definitions of elder abuse

According to Levin (2008), there is controversy around the term “elder abuse”. Other terms often used include “elder mistreatment” and “inadequate care of the elderly”. Consequently, there is no consensus as to how to define elder abuse. Lack of agreed definitions reflects the different theories on which elder abuse definitions and interventions have been based over the past 25 years. The United Kingdom’s Department of Health document, *No secrets* defines abuse as “a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons”. *No secrets* does not relate specifically to elder abuse but concerns all vulnerable adults.

The United Kingdom's Action on Elder Abuse developed a definition subsequently adopted by International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and used by the World Health Organization, "*Elder abuse is a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person*". It is important to note that elder abuse in this definition excludes random acts of violence or criminal behavior against older people. The harm of elder abuse overlaps with, but is not necessarily synonymous with, criminal acts. A trusting relationship between the abused and the abuser – such as partners, children, in-laws, grandchildren, nurses, social workers and home helps – is at the heart of the issue. Such a relationship may be formal or informal, undertaken voluntarily or imposed by a legal or social custom. Elder abuse is seen as a betrayal of trust (p.13).

Although there is no consensus on a definition, most literature so far attributes to elder abuse five types or categories: physical, psychological/ emotional, financial, sexual, and neglect. Some literature also includes as a category *Violation of rights*, denying an older person rights conferred on her/him by law or legal process. Each type of abuse may occur singly or in combination, and in a range of settings, such as people's own homes, where the vast majority of older people live, day centers, hospitals and nursing homes (Perel, 2008, p.14).

The definitions and categories described have been developed by health or social care professionals in the United Kingdom and United States. But, definitions require a cultural context. For example, in some traditional societies, older widows can be subject to cruel practices such as abandonment, sequestration of property, sexual violence, forced marriages, accusations of witchcraft and ejection from their homes. These acts of violence, customs embedded in the social structure, need to be considered in the broad context of elder abuse and a

human rights approach. In addition to the cultural consideration, older people's perceptions are also crucial in defining abuse, its identification and interventions. In the study by WHO/International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, older persons classify abuse under three broad categories: Neglect, including isolation, abandonment and social exclusion; Violation of human, legal and medical rights; and finally deprivation of choices, decision, status, finances and respect (p.14).

The lack of consensus around definitions and terminology is problematic for the study of older adult abuse. For instance within Canada, several definitions are used. Health Canada, for example, has adopted the above WHO/INPEA (2002) definition. The Province of Ontario (2008) employs a broader interpretation of elder abuse defining it as "any act or omission that harms a senior or jeopardizes his or her health or welfare". The Toronto Police Service (Toronto Police Service, 2000), states that elder abuse is " harm (financial, psychological, physical, including sexual, neglect, or any combination thereof) caused to a person over the age of 65 years by a person in a position of trust or authority " (p. 2). This definition of elder abuse does not include stranger crimes, such as the scams or cons perpetrated against older adults. The Service further recognizes that older adult abuse may not always be criminal in nature, yet its impact can be both profound and debilitating to a senior. (Gloria and Chamberlaine, 2010, p.66).

As defined by Bonie and Wallace, "elder mistreatment" refers to (a) intentional actions that cause harm or create a serious risk of harm (whether or not harm is intended) to a vulnerable elder by a caregiver or other person who stands in a trust relationship to the elder or (b) failure by a caregiver to satisfy the elder's basic needs or to protect the elder from harm. The term "mistreatment" excludes cases of so-called self-neglect-failure of an older person to satisfy his or

her own basic needs and to protect him or herself from harm-and also cases involving victimization of elders by strangers (Bonnie & Wallace, 2003, p.01).

Therefore, we can understand that there is no single and universally accepted definition due a paucity of research in the area of elder abuse and the complexity of the issue.

The History of Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is not a new phenomenon; it has been around for centuries, though we have often failed to refer to it in such terms. Shakespeare was writing about two male victims of elder abuse when he wrote *King Lear*. The abuse of older people is certainly not something new for the twenty-first century yet it is not given the high profile which its incidence deserves. One of the reasons for this is that in some societies older people are not given much respect; they may be seen as an economic burden on society because they are no longer economically productive. In societies which emphasize youthful vigor, old age will tend to have a very negative image; consequently, younger people may come to fear growing old (Pritchard, 2001, pp.7).

Becoming frail, disabled or incapacitated are typical stereotypes of older people despite the reality that being old can bring new experiences and many new rewards. Another consequence of ageism is that if people do not want to think about the inevitability of old age, they may avoid interacting with old people and also avoid watching, listening or reading about the 'nasty things' which can happen to an older person. Thus, elder abuse is frequently swept under the carpet, both by professionals and by the public at large. Not surprisingly, therefore, elder abuse does not get the same media attention as child abuse. The bottom line is that older people are not as acceptably emotive as children. Nevertheless, progress is being made in this important subject and it may be useful to the reader initially to discuss some of the key

developments in recent years before turning attention to the plight of male victims (Pritchard, 2001, pp.7-8).

Family violence and sexual abuse, including abuse of older people, has been described in the literature for centuries. Although elder abuse was identified as “granny battering” in a British medical journals in 1975, elder abuse was barely acknowledged in the United States until 1978. Beginning in the 1980s, US congress focused increasing attention on elder abuse by holding a series of hearings and issuing several reports. It was not until February 2003, however, that a comprehensive federal response was initiated with the introduction of the Elder Justice Act by Senators Breaux and Hatch. It was reintroduced by Senators Hatch and Lincoln in 2005. Research on elder abuse has been scarce and underfunded. A few small studies were published in the 1980s and 1990s. Data from all 50 state Adult Protective Services programs, the District of Columbia, and Guam were collected in 2000 and again in 2004 (Brandl et al. , 2007). In 2001, The National Academy of Sciences panel published “Elder Mistreatment: Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation in an Aging America” (Bonnie & Wallace, 2003). In 2001, the National Research Council Panel to Review Risk and Prevalence of Elder Abuse and Neglect reviewed & compiled a list of existing research in the field and called for more research in the field (Brandl et al., 2007, p.05).

Strengthening the above argument, Ajomale (2007, p.4) noted that the global attention on the phenomenon of family violence began not too long ago. Towards the end of the twentieth century interpersonal violence such as child or women abuse came up as a social issue and was referred to as ‘baby battering’ or ‘wife beating’. The menace of elder abuse emerged later. The abuse of older people first came out as an issue around 1975 when some British scientific journals described it as ‘granny battering’, emphasizing on the physical assault of older persons.

For a long while it was just a family affair, hidden from the public. Shortly after, the United States perceived it as socio-political and legislative process began on it. Other parts of the United Kingdom did not give elder abuse the attention it deserved until two decade later.

The History of Elder Abuse in Developing Countries

Since the seventies when it became an issue, a lot has been done especially in Europe and North America to focus upon rights, equality & pursuit of quality life for the elderly. Though elder abuse was identified in the developed countries it is a universal phenomenon. This sadly is not the case in Africa & Asia. The attention on abuse of the older persons in Africa started not long ago and not much has been done especially in the *Sub-Saharan region* where the group of the elderly is rapidly growing and new roles are expected of them(Ajomale 2007,p.4).

According to Ajomale (2007), issues of elder abuse like other that concern the older persons have not always caught the attention of the Nigerian society. Industrialization and urbanization are now gradually eroding what is left of the long-standing patterns of inter-dependence between the generations of a family, resulting in material and emotional hardship for the older persons. As family social supports are diminishing due to rapid social and economic changes and new roles for older persons who had anticipated support from their children in old age now find themselves providing care to grandchildren without assistance from the family and the society, the prevalence of elder abuse continue to rise in the bus region. This rise has stirred the interest of academics, researches and non-governmental organizations in elder abuse, which was hitherto unrecognized (p.4).

As it was mentioned earlier, the literature on elder abuse is very scarce especially in under developed countries. As one of the underdeveloped countries, Ethiopia suffers from the paucity of data on elder abuse. Hence, as one of the sub Saharan African countries, Ethiopia can

share the experiences of other sub Saharan countries. The paucity of data in Ethiopia regarding elder abuse is one justification for researches to be conducted in this area.

The Situation of the Elderly in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is located in the horn of Africa with a land area of about 1.1 million square kilometer and a population size of about 69 million persons in 2003, it is one of the largest and populous countries in Africa. It stood third in terms of population size and 9th in terms of geographic area in the whole of Africa. The country is divided into 9 federal states and two city administrations. Each regional state or city administration are sub-divided into zonal and Woreda (district) level administrations. The country is divided into 69 zones and 560 woredas. Rapid population growth is one of the factors that contributed for the country to remain as one of the poorest countries in the world (Assefa and Frehiwot, 2003, p.3).

The population of the elderly is increasing from time to time; by more than doubling itself, in 2050 the elderly population will comprise 11% of the total population (Help Age International, 2007).

The elderly are among the group facing greater risks. Many of them are unable to adequately exploit their land because their physical capacity is diminished over time. In addition, the tradition of providing children with endowment at their wedding tends to deplete the land and other storable assets from the elderly. Old people are also increasingly taking responsibility for children infected by HIV/AIDS, and grandchildren. The cost of caring for the sick, and related unexpected medical and household expenses, can impose considerable pressure on them to sell assets and even to become full time beggars (Assefa and Frehiwot, 2003, p.4).

Overview of current Social policy with Respect to Older persons

Developmental Social welfare policy

In spite to the fact that Ethiopia is confronted with a wide range of economic and social problems, (poverty being considered as the underlying cause to all existing social problems) social welfare and social services are found at infancy. There was no social as well as social welfare policy until very recently. The National Social Policy was formulated and endorsed by the government only in 1994. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia being aware of the negative implication brought about by the non-existence of social welfare policy in Ethiopia, and based on the umbrella National social policy of 1994 adopted the Developmental Social Welfare Policy (DSWP) in November 1996. The three main features of the policy include Developmental, Preventive, and Rehabilitative and has the goal to create social condition conducive to a healthy life and sustainable development. Although the policy aimed at promoting basic social welfare services to all Ethiopians, it particularly targets various segments of the population & the elderly, especially those in need of care & care support are among the targets. To safeguard the welfare of older persons through community participation is one of the strategic area the policy focused at (Help age international, 2007, pp.15-16).

Poverty among the elderly

Data about older persons is extremely scarce in Ethiopia. Therefore there are no figures that document the proportion or actual number of older persons classified as living in poverty. From the available data, older persons constitute 3 million (4.5%) of the total population. it is indicated that most of the older population group is living in rural areas (Help age international, 2007, pp.15).

Nearly half a million people are entitled for pension benefit and meager income they receive is not sufficient to fulfill their basic necessities. Hence, they subsist below a level of income that can sustain only bare minimum standard of living. The rest of older persons depend only on subsistence income particularly of farming and small scale enterprises, and those without any income constitute the majority. Thus a great proportion of older persons in the country are living in poverty. problems of older persons in Ethiopia included: poor shelter, homelessness, poor health, number of dependents, lack of opportunities for women, negative attitudes, relief rather than development solution, lack of government social security system, lack of care, older women in particular are the poorer when compared to their male counterparts. Poverty is considered to be the overarching problem that contributed for all of the problems (p.14).

National plan of Action on Ageing

The Ministry of labor and social Affairs has envisaged formulating a National plan of Action on Aging over the coming years. This will be materialized based on the situation of the Ethiopian older persons, the translated document of the Madrid plan in to Amharic (the official language) and successive consultation meeting among the relevant stakeholders (Help age international, 2007, pp.14). This has been materialized and Ethiopia has a national plan of action on aging.

Current thinking on ageing issues in Ethiopia

The community's View,

In Ethiopia the elderly are the head of the family and the community and are treated with respect. They play enormous social and cultural role that contribute to the well being of the society as a whole. Because of this, the traditional support mechanism and reciprocal relationship is still exercised with a few exceptions in cities and towns. In a nut shell, ageing is considered as

a blessing in Ethiopian society. Hence there are a number of support mechanisms, the biggest and most important one being the family followed by religious organizations and traditional social organization. This however does not imply that older persons do not face problems. The recurrent emergency situations connected with war and draught has enormously threatened the traditional role of the family. This situation coupled with the general poverty in the country is aggravating the livelihood of older persons and the situation to take a new dimension. Emerging factors signifying the deterioration of intergenerational relationship is observed in some parts of the country. Some older persons perceive the young as agents of depleting the traditional values and norms. On the contrary the young view older persons as reactionaries of change. This has a negative impact for mutual understanding and support. Hence unless immediate and maximum effort is exerted to control the emerging challenges, elderly people will face irreversible problems (Help age international, 2007, p. 16).

Government's view on older persons

The constitution of Ethiopia is the basis to ensure the welfare of the general public. The Ethiopian government is committed to institute affirmative action in terms of the disadvantaged and vulnerable people. This is explicitly stated in the developmental social welfare policy. As it is indicated in the policy, the underlying cause of old age poverty is lack of family support and absence of a comprehensive social security system. Moreover negative attitude, lack of community participation and lack of active involvement of relevant sectors exacerbated their plights. To tackle these severe social and economic problems of older persons the government recognizes the need to mobilize available resources, involve public at large as well as give support to regional governments, nongovernmental organizations and institutions, which are

engaged in the provision of social welfare services for the aged (Help age international, 2007, pp.16-17).

Initiatives by major sectors

The existing structural and social policies are the best instruments to mitigate the social and economic problems of the whole population. In these policies and strategies, older persons are not singled out to be considered as beneficiaries. They are entertained together with the general population. The big challenge however is that older persons are not given much attention when services are provided: they are invisible. The only initiatives targeting older persons in the process of poverty reduction are the pension scheme. Hence older persons are still the most disadvantaged portion of the population (Help age international, 2007, pp.15-16).

As indicated above, data on the situation of the elderly is extremely scarce in Ethiopia leave alone on a specific dimension of the elderly problem such as abuse. This could be a clear ground that the undertaking of such a research. According to the above facts, the number of the elderly increasing from time to time; this together with the dissolution of the informal social support system and the lack of formal social support system, could lead to the likelihood of elder abuse; which needs a separated investigation on its own right.

The Nature and Types of Elder Abuse

Various literatures have identified various forms of abuse. For the purpose of this study I have tried to take types of abuse from different sources and mixed them up together to come up with an exhaustive category which incorporated views from the developed and developing countries. In doing so, I have reflected the views of Kennard in 2006 and the views of Brandl, Dyer, Heisler, Marla, Stiegel, & Thomas

in 2007, and also the views of Ajomale in 2007 from Nigerian experience. Accordingly, elder abuse includes physical abuse, emotional/psychological abuse, sexual abuse, financial/exploitative abuse, neglect, self-neglect, abandonment, cultural/societal and structural/institutional.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is defined as inflicting, or threatening to inflict, physical pain or injury to a vulnerable elder. Physical abuse can also include depriving them of basic needs such as food, medicines, or giving too much medication. This type of abuse includes punching, pushing, shaking, pinching, burning, force feeding, and any sort of physical punishment or restraint (Kennard, 2006)

Emotional or psychological Abuse

Emotional, psychological abuse is defined as inflicting mental pain, anguish, or distress on an elder person through verbal or nonverbal acts. Emotional abuse can be difficult to detect unless witnessed. People being abused in this way can show changes in behavior, fear when in the presence of the abuser, agitation or withdrawal (Kennard, 2006).

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is non-consensual sexual contact of any kind. Sexual abuse can be difficult to detect except for those involved in their nursing care. Signs include the physical signs (Kennard, 2006).

Financial or Exploitative abuse

Financial or exploitative abuse is defined as the illegal taking, misuse, or concealment of funds, property, or assets of a vulnerable elder. Exploitation includes the unexplained disappearance of funds, possessions, changes to wills or financial documents (Kennard, 2006).

Neglect as abuse

Neglect is defined as failing or refusing to provide food, shelter, healthcare or protection for a vulnerable elder. The physical signs of neglect are often easy to see. Dirty surroundings, poor personal hygiene, soiled bedding, smell, untreated cuts or sores, poor dental hygiene (Kennard, 2006).

Self-Neglect

Self-neglect is defined as an adult's inability, due to physical or mental impairment or diminished capacity, to perform essential self-care tasks (Brandl, Dyer, Heisler, Marla, Stiegel, & Thomas, 2007, p. 25).

Abandonment

To desert a vulnerable elder is abuse when that person has assumed the responsibility for care or custody of them (Kennard, 2006).

Societal/Cultural Abuse

This has to do with the attitude of members of the society towards issues of culture. Issues of culture as related to the elderly are sometimes used in abusing the elderly. Accusations of witchcraft based on fragility of an elderly women, her use of walking stick and her bent figure due to old age results to ostracism and stigmatization. Ajomale has also noted the challenges and mistreatments the elderly person might face due to lack of skill on the so called modern language (mostly English) when communicating with grandchildren and due to an old style of dressing by taking the case of Yoruba from Western Nigeria (Ajomale, 2007, Pp. 11-12).

Structural/Institutional Abuse

This is abuse by the systems; the dehumanizing treatment of older people who suffer in institutions and marginalization by the government. For those who worked in the organized

private sector and the public sector and are entitled to pensions, the improper ways they are treated leaves much to be desired. Pensions are not enough to allow for reasonable quality of life. Irregular payment and long delay in payment of gratuities after retirement are examples of abuse. For those who did not work in these sectors and are not entitled to pensions no social security system is available to cushion the effect of lack of income in old age. They also suffer difficulty in accessing government services due to mistreatment and harassment by government officials. Age discriminatory policies and practices and the lack of adequate policies to cater for the needs and welfare of the elderly constitute elder abuse. Another very significant form of abuse of the older person is the insecurity and violence that older people are subjected to in conflict situations and emergencies and lack of provision for the older persons in relief programs. . Man-made and natural disasters do happen and the elderly are usually not considered in rescue plans and rehabilitation processes. The situation of the elderly in Darfur in the Sudan is dehumanizing (Ajomale, 2007, PP.12-13).

Risk Factors for Elder Abuse

According to Bonnie and Wallace, an understanding of associated risk factors & consequences of elder abuse is necessary for the development of screening methods, to provide a rational basis for prevention programs and to the development of public policy initiatives (Bonnie and Wallace, 2003, pp.88-89).

When trying to recognize elder abuse, it is important to note that there are several risk factors. While not all cases of abuse occur under these risk factors, knowing them can be helpful in both preventing and identifying cases of abuse. Some risk factors include:

An adult child being dependent upon the older adult: Adult children living with an older adult can be a red flag, especially if the adult child is dependent upon the older adult for financial

assistance and housing. In the event that an adult child is living with an older adult, the reason is often a personal issue, such as the adult child's having substance abuse issues or a mental illness (National Association of State Units on Aging [USA], 2005, p.7)

A history of domestic violence in the home: In many situations, elder abuse occurs as spousal abuse. As the couple ages, the problems of domestic violence which were present at an earlier age often do not stop (p.7).

Living with others in isolation: When someone or several people live with the older adult in an isolated environment, there are more opportunities for abuse to occur and fewer opportunities for the abuse to be recognized or reported. In some cases, the older adult is intentionally isolated as a means of both abuse and prevention of reporting. (p.7)

Caregiver Stress: There are some theories that the stress of being a caregiver can cause some caregivers to start neglecting or abusing the older adult. Research has found that abuse stemming from caregiver stress is rare. However, a correlation does exist between caregiver mental and physical health and care of the older adult. (p.7).

The older adult having problems with mental illness or substance abuse: Some have theorized that certain problems within the older adult can trigger problems with abuse or neglect. Illnesses such as dementia are thought to correlate with elder abuse and neglect and prevent the reporting of abuse (p.7).

The Consequence of Elder Abuse

While elder abuse is not a new phenomenon, the speed of population ageing worldwide will lead to its increase in absolute terms unless action is taken to prevent it. Elder abuse has devastating consequences for older persons such as poor quality of life, psychological distress, multiple health problems and increased mortality. Widespread ageist attitudes permeate all aspects of life,

acting as a societal background to abuse and discrimination against older persons. Gender aspects of elder abuse are obscured by sexist attitudes at all levels of society. Sexism and ageism together place older women as the most vulnerable to elder abuse (Lavery, 2003). As cited in Gloria and Charmain (2010), Silvia Ashley has also argued that, elders who experienced mistreatment, had a 300% higher risk of death when compared to those who had not been mistreated.

Perpetrators of Elder Abuse

Hard as it is to believe, the great majority of abusers are family members, most often an adult child or spouse. Abuse can also occur at a long term care facility, such as a nursing home or assisted living residence. Employees and temporary staff who have direct contact with residents are the most frequent perpetrators. Other offenders may include other family and old friends, newly developed “friends” who intentionally prey on older adults, and service providers in positions of trust (National Association of State Units on Aging [USA], 2005, p.8).

There is no “one profile” of a perpetrator, the person who commits the abuse. However, they often share some of the following characteristics (p.8):

- a. Alcohol or drug dependence
- b. History of domestic violence or abuse
- c. Mental illness, dependency, family dysfunction
- d. Economic pressures, personal stress
- e. Longstanding personality traits (bad temper, hypercritical, tendency to blame others for problems) (p.8).

In long term care settings, some other potential risk factors are:

- a. Negligent hiring practices (hiring violent criminals, thieves, and drug users to work as aides, maintenance workers, etc.; failing to do required background checks)
- b. Too few staff, high turnover, and inadequate training
- c. Reliance on staff that lack compassion or empathy for older people and those with disabilities (pp.8-9).

Setting and Context of Elder Abuse

Abuse can take place in any context. It may occur when a vulnerable adult lives alone or with a relative; it may also occur within nursing, residential or day care settings, in hospitals, custodial situations, support services into people's own homes, and other places previously assumed safe, or in public places' (Community, Ageing & Rehabilitation Department[USA] n.d).

In many ways it is misleading to talk of elder abuse as a single phenomenon. Abuse takes place in a range of settings, and its prevalence varies and these settings includes: Nursing home (12%), Sheltered housing (4%), Hospital (5%), Residential care (10%), Own home (67%) and other locations (2%) (House of Commons Health Committee, 2003–04).

Perception towards Aging

Writers claim that attitudes have a profound effect; however, research to date has focused on attitudes towards the generic concept of 'older people', with little attention given to how a person feels about his or her own ageing. It has been argued that attitudes are predominantly negative, affect quality of life and service provision and are related to the quantity and quality of contact (Draper et al., n.d., p.718)

Images of aging exist at two levels; personal (our own), and societal (opinion of many people in the society) which are mutually reinforcing. To understand aging holistically, it is

imperative to understand how the self-image is influenced by the process of aging including the social image. Aging occurs in a societal context, ranging from the micro scale of the family to the macro scale of the society. This context includes the attitudes, stereotypes and age norms, which determine age appropriate behavior for the aged (social-image). Further, the aged have an image of themselves (self-image) and an image of how they feel, the 'others' in the society perceive them (image of social image). The societal attitudes shape the social behavior towards the aged. The interactions of the aged in the social environment result in the self-image of the aged being reinforced by the social image (Kamla & Sijuwade, 2009, p. 1).

For instance, in traditional societies, elderly people are indispensable assets to every family and kin group. Traditional societies in Africa, the events of modernization, urbanization and industrialization has changed the perception of older people from being the guardians of the tradition of the society, custodians of the society treasures, upholders of cultural values, and the institution of wisdom. Nowadays, older people dwell in abject poverty, neglect, and lack of supports from families and their kin groups. Today, due to modernization, elderly people in Africa are deprived of their unquestionable roles in transmission of cultural values and traditions. Thus, at present, ageing in the African society, is perceived as retirement to a crises ridden stage of living. A study conducted by Kamla in Nigeria (2006), examined the changing perception of ageing in the Yoruba culture. Changes are due to urbanization, modernization, industrialization and the scourge of HIV/AIDS epidemics. The changes have impacts on the high esteem hitherto placed on ageing, as well as causing negative influence on the roles and functions of the elderly people. The elderly people are neglected and not included in government policies (pp.187-188).

Attitudes toward Age among Older People

How do people feel when they think about growing older? The process of professional consultation with older clients requires acknowledgment of deep, often unconscious feelings about aging on the part of a client and of oneself. These attitudes can have profound effects on life planning and choices for dealing with advancing age. Attitudes toward aging be grouped into four major categories:

Age Denial. According to Nelson (2002), cited in Draper, Gething, Fethney, Winfield, n.d.). Prejudice and rejection of aging in our society is so widespread that it has been given a name of its own: "ageism.". In light of that prejudice it is not surprising that there are many products on the market that promise to overcome aging: for example, so-called "anti-aging medicine" and cosmetic surgery, to name only two growing market segments. Because of the power of age-denial there will be clients who reject any kind of professional service or transaction if it means they have to identify themselves as being "old." This attitude can be a big problem. Fear and denial of aging can be paralyzing and lead to procrastination: "No, I've never written a will, but I'm planning to get to it one of these days." Age denial can pose a serious barrier to benefiting from the professional services offered by a CSA but there are strategies to overcome it.

Age Adaptation. With advancing age, there are changes in the body, in social life, and in financial conditions that call changes in behavior. Adapting to new circumstances is a key strategy for successful aging. But age adaptation is not easy. For instance, there are certain financial products- such as long-term care insurance- that may be helpful but appear threatening and unfamiliar to clients. While most people have experience with car insurance or homeowner's insurance, very few know much about long -term care insurance. A key question in age

adaptation is understanding a client's motivation. In the case of long-term care insurance, the incentive for buying might be to avoid being a burden on one's children or to preserve an estate. Still another more positive motive might be to maximize autonomy and choice in the future. A similar mix of motives appears in housing decisions. After children have left home or work obligations recede, people commonly begin to think about moving to a smaller house or renegotiating finances to draw down home equity. But they find themselves pulled in different directions: between "aging in place versus making an adaptive change. An age adaptive product- such as a reverse mortgages- may arouse ambivalence for people who have long had a goal of paying off the mortgage. An important role for the CSA is to help clients work through mixed motives as they adapt to age-related life changes.

Age Irrelevance. In view of the power of ageism, we sometimes find that it's best to downplay aging altogether. There are dimensions of financial behavior, such as saving for the future, that can be promoted in an age-irrelevant manner. David Wolfe has argued that marketers generally do better by positioning their products as "ageless (Wolfe & Snyder, 2003)." We know from studies of "age identification" that as wealth and socioeconomic level rises, people are less and less inclined to relate to life options according to age. This fact has important implications for CSAs as they help clients plan for the future. Even if a product is age adaptive, we may do better by approaching the decision in terms of age irrelevance or ageless marketing. By ignoring any explicit link to chronological age we can sometimes bypass fear and avoidance in order to deal with the client's needs in a way which is approached independent of chronological age.

Age Affirmation. We shouldn't overemphasize the negative aspects of age avoidance. After all, there are in fact many hopes for later life- such as retirement travel or pension eligibility- that are both positive and are explicitly linked to chronological age. Taken together

all these hopes comprise our "dream" for a good old age. Skillful marketers understand the power of hopes and dreams and they try to tap into that positive motivation. For example, retirement communities, such as Sun City, in their marketing appeals usually emphasize features and benefits of retirement living such as leisure time and the opportunity to fulfill long-cherished fantasies for the good life (Freedman, 2002).

Reaction of the Elderly towards Abuse

Feeling guilty, anxious, confused, ashamed, or fearful is a very common reaction to abuse or neglect. You may also become depressed because you see yourself and/or your situation as hopeless and you may begin to avoid others. Many older people do not speak up about what is going on in their own home, which can lead to even more abuse. Sometimes they suffer the pain in silence because of such *mistaken beliefs* as (The University Hospitals of Columbia and Cornell [USA], 2006, p.2):

“*Family matters are private and should stay that way.*” If you believe this, then you are less likely to seek help. But without help, chances are that the abuse will worsen (p.2).

“*I have no one to turn to who can help.*” It is easy to believe that nobody is available to help, especially since your relative may be isolating you from others. But there are people who will care about you and help you – perhaps a neighbor, friend, doctor, nurse, clergy member – if you can find a way to let them know you are unhappy at home(p.2).

“*The abuse is my fault.*” The natural inclination is to blame oneself for the abuse or neglect in order to feel more in control of a situation that is out of your control. Also, part of the self-blame may come from feeling guilty, often a common reaction to being mistreated. You may believe that you did something wrong and therefore you somehow caused the abuse. But no

matter what happened in the past-even if you made mistakes you deeply regret-it is never okay for someone to hurt you (p.2).

"The consequences of speaking up are worse than keeping quiet." You may be concerned that if you tell an outsider about your situation, you will have to move from your home or, perhaps, live alone. Or you may become confused about the appropriate action to take because of the impact on your family if you report it to the authorities. Speaking up does not automatically mean strangers will control your life. It does increase the likelihood that you will find someone who can help you problem-solve workable alternatives (p.2).

"I'm so ashamed and embarrassed that my own family member could be behaving in an abusive or neglectful way." Older people often are ashamed about the mistreatment they are experiencing, so they avoid telling anyone about it. Feeling ashamed usually comes from a fear that others will judge you or your family member harshly if they knew what was happening, and believing their criticism would be too difficult to tolerate. But there are many people who would want to help you and who would not judge you or your relative(s). You just need to ignore those people who do not understand and keep speaking up until you find those who do (p.3).

"I'm afraid if I break the "family secret," the person hurting me will get back at me in a way worse than what is happening now." Being afraid that the abuser will retaliate is a real concern. However, doing nothing will rarely end an abusive situation; in fact, it usually gets worse. When seeking help, be sure to discuss your very real safety concerns so that a safety plan can be developed to fit your particular circumstances (p.3).

The Gender Dimension of Elder Abuse

According to Settersten & Angel (2011) as cited in Brandl et al., (2007, p.72), most of the theories in gerontology are highly criticized for their conceptualization of later life as largely

gender blind. They built their assumptions on the total experience elderly who are exclusively male. It is argued that experience of elderly males and females regarding abuse is completely different.

The gender aspects of elder abuse and the overlaps with domestic violence in particular necessitate a deeper discussion. Women live longer than men almost everywhere. In 2002, there were 678 men for every 1000 women aged 60 years and over in Europe. At age 80 years and over, the world average was below 600 men for every 1000 women, while in developed countries women aged 80 years and over outnumbered men by more than two to one. Although women have the advantage of longevity, they are more likely than men to experience domestic violence and discrimination in access to basic services, such as education, health care and social security, resulting in a cumulative status of ill-health, which, due to women's second-class status, is often neglected or ignored. Therefore, it is critical to analyze the abuse of older women not only within the context of population numbers where women outnumber men but also in the context of a life-course of discrimination, oppression and abuse.

The term "elder abuse" is gender-neutral, obscuring the fact that the majority of abused elders are women and offenders are usually, although not exclusively, men. Past studies have shown older men to be equally at risk but currently these are in the minority. It has been proposed that elder abuse should be examined more closely in the framework of power within gender relations and the oppression of women in society, rather than within the framework of age and family relations, in line with feminist theories. But older women have suffered *double discrimination*: on the one hand, the feminist movement has for too long excluded older women from their cause and has been accused of being ageist and on the other hand, it has been claimed that most elder abuse research has been done by men. As with domestic violence against younger

women, intervention with older women is very complex. A qualitative study of intimate partner violence among women aged 55 years and over describes why women remain in abusive relationships. The reasons are the same as for younger women, but magnified as a result of ageing, generational cohort, historical and cultural reasons. Leaving the partner may not be an option for older women: they do not find support groups with younger women helpful, as they have different life experiences, and shelters filled with children and/or not adapted to some older women's special needs may result in older women returning to their abusers (Silvia, 2008, p.10)

In the most accurate statistics on the lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence come from the National Violence against Women Survey, conducted by Professors Tjaden and Thoennes as cited in Roberts and Roberts (2005), with grants from the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Their study was based on telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample (N = 16,000) of 8,000 men and 8,000 women, and found that 25 percent of the women and 7.6 percent of the men said that they had been physically battered and/or raped by a spouse, cohabiting partner, or date during their lifetime. These national figures document the high prevalence of intimate partner abuse (Roberts & Roberts, 2005, p.4).

I believe that adopting the use of a "gender lens" will allow for an exploration of the abuses faced both by men and women in later life in their own context. Hence I have tried to review literatures by putting the situation of elder abuse within the context of elder abuse. Here are literatures collected from different sources and they will be cross discussed with the primary data that will be obtained in the later part of this research.

Elderly Women in Africa

In Sub-Saharan Africa, women traditionally enjoyed status in their later years as healers or teachers of traditional skills. But research carried out by Help Age International reveals that in some regions of Mozambique, Tanzania, Ghana and Burkina Faso older women are often subjected to accusations of witchcraft which can result in psychological abuse, violence and in extreme cases, killing of older women. Research shows that child mortality and morbidity, gender inequality and social exclusion of older women, plus lack of awareness of older people's rights, are the key underlying factors for witchcraft accusations (Begum, 2008, p.10).

Theoretical Models of Elder Abuse

According to Perel (2008) and Samantha (2007), Several broad theoretical models have been drawn from psychology, sociology, feminism and the fields of child abuse and domestic violence in attempts by researchers to explain the causes of elder abuse.

Situational theory: Claims that an overburdened and stressed caregiver creates an environment for abuse (Perel, 2008, p.7).

Exchange theory: Addresses reciprocity and dependence between the abused and the perpetrator. It suggests that abuse can occur within a framework of tactics and responses in family life.

Intra-individual dynamics (psychopathology) theory: Claims a correlation between a mentally or emotionally disturbed abuser and abuse (Perel, 2008, p.7).

Intergenerational transmission or social learning theory: States that an adult's behavior relates to learned behavior as a child, thus reverting to the same pattern in adulthood (Perel,2008, p.7).

Feminist theory: Is based on domestic violence models, highlighting the imbalance of power within relationships and how men use violence as a way to demonstrate power (Perel,2008, p.7).

Political economic theories: Have criticized the emphasis on individualistic theories, claiming that structural forces and the marginalization of elders within society have created conditions that lead to conflict and violence (Perel, 2008, pp.7-8).

It has become apparent that no single model or theory can explain such a complex issue as elder abuse as research has never been able to validate them. In response to the inadequacy of any single model and in order to accommodate the multiplicity and complexity of factors associated with elder abuse, researchers have turned to the *ecological model* in line with child abuse, youth violence and intimate partner violence. The ecological model explores the interactions between the individual and contextual factors. It considers violence as the result of the complex interplay between the person's individual characteristics (i.e. biology, personal history), close interpersonal relationships, characteristics of the community in which the person lives or works and societal factors such as policies and social norms. The ecological model allows elder abuse to be linked to broader social issues. Single theories that focus on caregiver stress reflect the fact that elder abuse has been defined and conceptualized mostly by professionals who deal with frail and vulnerable populations (Perel, 2008, pp.7-8).

Some of the theories of elder abuse identified by Samantha include stress theory, cycle of violence theory and elder impairment theory.

Stress Theory:- Any common theory indicates that the stress the caregiver experiences from caring for the elder or from everyday life leads him to take out his frustration on the elder. Many cases of elder abuse back up this theory. Oftentimes, caregivers receive little or no support in caring for the elderly person, leaving all of the strain of care on one person. Even if the elder is capable of caring for her own basic needs, the extra stain on finances or time can lead the caregiver to lash out under stress. Stress outside of the caregiver role, such as job-related stress,

family strain or substance abuse (Samantha, 2007). can increase the chance of elder abuse. it is more or less similar with situational theory of Perel.

Cycle of Violence Theory:-Also called "domestic violence theory," it stipulates the relationship between the caregiver and the elder has always been based on abuse or violence. If a child was abused by a parent in his younger years, or if he witness the parent being abusive to someone else (a sibling, spouse, etc.), he will retaliate with abuse when the parent becomes an elder (Samantha, 2007, p.3).

Elder Impairment Theory:- According to this theory, elders in poor health are more likely to be abused. Many elders who are dependent on caregivers are physically disabled or suffer from mental disabilities. These disabilities can put extra strain on the caregiver, leading to a higher chance of abuse. Impaired elders are also less likely to understand that abuse is happening to them or to seek help from an outside source, and so the abuse may go on for an extended period of time (Samantha, 2007, p. 3).

Elder-abuse theories have for a long time ignored the views and perceptions of older persons themselves. Research increasingly includes older persons in designs of studies through participative and action research or by gathering views and perceptions of older persons on their health needs and services on the needs and perceptions of elders of minority ethnic groups and on possible interventions. However, the development of such research is slow, sporadic and small scale, requiring an urgent and ongoing effort to correct such a situation, which has a clear impact on the development of practice. Development of *inter-professional theory* that takes into account the interaction between the different levels of the ecological model may help in understanding the complexities of elder abuse and allow appropriate action to be taken (Perel, 2008, p.8).

Chapter Three

Research Method

This is a cross-sectional research intended to describe the lived experience of the abused elderly. Hence, a qualitative & phenomenological paradigm was applied to guide the overall process of the research. This is the philosophy or the general principle which has guided the entire study.

Why a Qualitative Research Design?

Qualitative research is useful for finding out information in areas where little information is known, or to study a particular concept in more detail (Education Centre, The Hillingdon Hospital, 2006, p.1).

Qualitative research design was chosen because; there is a paucity of data regarding the issue of elder abuse and quantitative research does not have the quality to give an in-depth insight in to what the actual experience looks like as lived and described by the people in the phenomenon. As was cited in Gloria and Charmaine (2010, p.23), Pain (1999) argued that qualitative research is seen as one way of allowing older adults to speak for themselves and to interpret their own lives, rather than inferring this from empirical indicators. Pain further suggests that elder abuse research in particular has been dominated by quantitative analyses, and many sources point to the need for in-depth research on individual cases to explore how abuse is structured and experienced within the context of people's lives. What has the abuse meant to them? How have they coped with or resisted it?

According to Linda, Amy, and Thomas (2008, p.80), quantitative research methods are typically used to understand variation, test causal relationships and identify the prevalence or distribution of phenomena. The goals of qualitative research, on the other hand, are to understand

processes, experiences and meanings people assign to things. To this end, the focus of this study is not to come up with the numerical figures of rate, prevalence and incidence of elder abuse; but to describe the lived experience of the abused elderly. Qualitative research empowers research participants to speak out their own phenomenon so that others can understand the issue from the participants' point of view. I believe that reality is a constructed by the inner world of individuals & is embedded within them; which do not exist in any way external to them. Hence, the experience of each elderly regarding abuse should not be subjected to generalization; since this obscures the inner world of the participants. Therefore, this research has applied a purely qualitative research design.

A phenomenological Inquiry

The research was designed to describe the lived experience of the abused elderly by using a qualitative research procedure and a phenomenological strategy. The term *lived experience* derives from the German *erlebnis*-experience as we live through it and recognize it as a particular type of experience (Lisa, 2008, P.616).

Since the main question of this problem is to provide a description of the lived experience of the abused elderly, and since the major question asked by phenomenologist is "What is the meaning of one's lived experience?" and since the only reliable source of information to answer this question is the person who has experienced the phenomenon, I have chosen phenomenology both as my philosophical paradigm and a strategy in this research.

Van Manen (1997) & Vallel (1989), as cited in Laverty, argued that Phenomenology is essentially the study of lived experience or the life world and its emphasis is on the world as lived by a person, not the world or reality as something separate from the person (Laverty, 2003, p3-4). This inquiry asks "*What is this experience like?*" as it attempts to unfold meanings as they

are lived in everyday existence. Lavery has noted that phenomenological research is descriptive and focuses on the structure of experience, the organizing principles that give form and meaning to the life world.

Since phenomenology is one type of a qualitative study approach applied mostly to describe the lived experience of a certain phenomenon as it happens from the perspective of the study participants, this research has applied a phenomenological strategy to meet the goal of describing the actual lived experience of the abused elderly in Bishoftu town.

Specifically, a heuristic or transcendental phenomenology had been applied in this research since it focuses on the description of the participants' experience rather than the interpretation of the researcher (Hermeneutics phenomenology) (Willis, 2006, pp.9-10).

According to Moustakas's (1994) as was cited in Creswell (2006, pp. 59-60), heuristic or transcendental phenomenology is focused less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of participants. To do this, Moustakas focuses on one of Husserl's concepts, epoche (bracketing), in which investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under examination. Hence, bracketing was used in this study to leave aside my personal biases and present the phenomenon as it was (Creswell, 2006).

Description of the Study Site

Debre Zeit, which is commonly known by its official name as Bishoftu, is one of the towns of Oromia Regional State, located at 45 km. south east of Addis Ababa. The town has an estimate of over 200,000 total human populations. Geographically, Bishoftu has got a number of crater lakes such as Babogaya, Hora, Kuriftu, Chalalaka, Green Lake and Bishoftu that attracts both the domestic and foreign tourists. Currently, textile industry, steel-mills, plastic factories, food processing factories, flower industry and the like are flourishing. The National Air Force

Base, Dejen and Gafat Industrial equipments and armament factory are also located within the town. The town was established in relation to the establishment of the Ethiopian Air Force Base. The population is a mixture of various ethnic and religious groups. The literacy rate is also assumed to be high and is considered as a potential resource for the town. (Source: Bishoftu Investment Office).

Even though there is no exact statistical figure to tell the number of people over the age of 60 residing in the town, the town's Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs assumes that the number of the elderly is increasing from time to time including those who are on the street.

Study participants and Eligibility Criteria

Since the objective of this research is to give a description of the lived experience of the elderly facing elder abuse, the study participants were the people who had been thought to be elders according to the official age cut-off in Ethiopian context; i.e., any one above the age of 60 had been eligible to take part as a participant in this study. In addition, the participants in the study need to be carefully chosen to be individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon in question. To this end, I have adopted and applied the 15 items Hwalek-Sengstock Elder Abuse Screening Test (Look Appendix-II- for details on the tool) to screen participants whether they have had a history of abuse or not and only those who are tested positive by the tool were legible to take part in the study.

With regard to diversity and stratification, I have considered sex to have had an influence on the outcome as I have come across literatures indicating the unique experience of each sex category. Hence, both male and female participants were given an equal chance to be involved in the sample.

Sampling Procedure

Since representativeness and generalization are not concerns in a qualitative research, there is no numerical procedure that I have followed to limit and bound the size of the sample based on a ready-made formula. Therefore, the limit on the sample size of a qualitative research has been extended until I reached the point data saturation. The type of sampling procedure that I have applied in this study is non-probability and purposive sampling. In addition to the principle of data saturation, various writers have indicated as how much of a sample size is appropriate in a phenomenological research. Polkinghore (1989), as was cited in Creswell (2007, p. 61) suggested that sample size in a phenomenological study might elapse from 5 to 25 individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. In another literature, Boyd (2001), as cited in Groenewald, regards 2 to 10 participants as sufficient to reach saturation (Groenewald, 2004, p.11). Creswell (1998) as was cited in the same literature recommends “long interviews with up to 10 people” for a phenomenological study (Groenewald, 2004, p.11). Taking these benchmarks in to account, i have decided to include 10 participants, 5 male and 5 female participants; which was amenable to change based on the principle of data saturation. Consequently, I have collected data only from six participants, 3 males and 3 females; due to the issue of data saturation.

In selecting the final 10 participants, 50 elderlies, more than the age of 60 had been tested haphazardly for the history of abuse by the Hwalek-Sengstock Elder Abuse Screening Test (H-S/EAST) tool. Finally, the degree of abuse was compared for all participant and those first ten participants with a greater degree of abuse were found to be the final participants.

But because new information had stopped to emerge, I have resigned the interview process on the sixth participant of the study and all older persons who ended up being

participants in this research were only six (who have had experienced a greater degree of abuse as was tested by the screening tool). The resignation was due to the issue of data saturation.

Locating Participants

Hycner (1999, p. 156), as was cited in Groenewald (2004, p. 8) “the phenomenon dictates the method (not vice-versa) including even the type of participants.” In this regard, i had to locate participants who were experiencing the phenomenon of elder abuse; i.e., i had to sniff for the phenomenon. Hence, a mechanism had to be developed to identify those elderly who have had a lived experience of elder abuse and it is only by then that it would be possible to come up with a rich description of the phenomenon. In selecting the 10 participants with the phenomena, I have applied a standardized screening tool developed by the University of California for this purpose. One best standardized tool was the 15 items Hwalek-Sengstock Elder Abuse Screening Test (H-S/EAST) fitting to my purpose (University of California, 2007). I have chosen the tool because it is simple to register and is not as such time consuming-it only takes five-ten minutes. In addition, the tool was easy to adapt to the context of Ethiopia; and i did not do any significant modification on it since it fits to the purpose. I went out to the field with the three data collectors i have employed to test anyone who looks elderly by applying a convenience sampling procedure.

Accordingly, it was only when a person was found to be diagnosed positive by the tool that he/she had been legible to be included in the sample. The full content and description of the instrument is attached in the appendix (for a detail information on the tool, you can refer to Appendix-II-). I have employed three degree program university students to undertake the pre-test process before the interview. I went out to the field with the three data collectors i have

employed to test anyone who looked elderly by applying a convenience sampling procedure to find those who fit to the purpose.

As a result, I have tested 20 elderly on my own and the rest 30 were tested by the students who had been given a half an hour training on how to undertake the test.

Instrument Development

Interviews are identified as the best tools used to generate data that are systematically analyzed to search for themes and patterns that illustrate similarities or differences and uncover the meaning of the particular experience in a phenomenological research (Cooper, Endacott, Chapman, 2009, p.775). Hence, unstructured and in-depth interview had been applied as a data collection tool in this research. Personal observation was also applied to enhance and supplement the data collected through the in-depth and unstructured interview. I found the observation helpful since it allowed me to read feelings of participants and the interaction dynamics that they had with other family members. I have developed the instrument based on the literatures that I have reviewed.

In-depth and Unstructured interview: since the study was to figure out the lived experience of the abused elderly, a structured interview or questionnaire was not an appropriate tool since it goes to the field with prescribed themes to be explored. To this end, the experience of the abused elderly would not have been well articulated and covered by using a structured interview. Therefore, I have preferred to develop an interview guide that was amenable to change through the process and I went to the field to learn from the experiences of the participants.

The interview guide was developed by considering the research questions, cultural factors, previous literatures and anticipation of possible response participants may give. According to Maxwell (2005), as cited in Nathan (2010), the development of interview guide

depends on the research questions, the actual research situation and on what will work most effectively in that situation to give the researcher the data needed. Maxwell argued that You need to anticipate, as best you can, how particular questions will actually work in practice-how people understand them, and how they are likely to answer. He said, "Try to put yourself in your interview's place and imagine how you would react to these questions and get feedback from others on how they think the interview guide will work" (Nathan, 2010, p.26).

Data Collection Procedure

First, I have secured a letter of approval from the School of Social Work. After having the letter, I prepared a consent form to enable participants understand that they have a right to participate or not to in the study and/or quit the engagement any time they want. Then, after I have tried to build a rapport with potential participants, I have clearly outlined what the study is all about and requested the willingness of each elder to participate in the test process. After that, the comfortable time and place for the interview was decided by a discussion with participants who were found to have a history of abuse by the test tool and who have signed the consent paper. Finally, data collection took place by preparing all the necessary materials required for the purpose; such as voice recorder, pen, and note pad. I have had more than one session with each participants since the research is phenomenological and the purpose was to dig into the phenomenon under question.

Ethical Consideration

Participants were clearly informed about the voluntary nature of their participation, purpose of the research, confidentiality and anonymity of the information they would disclose. Then, they have signed on the consent form which states that they have the right to quit at any stage of the process if they feel uncomfortable. In addition to this, the research would not have

been undertaken unless and otherwise the review board of the school approves to do so. Hence, the proposal had passed through that process. Even if it is not ethical to pay for participants for the fact that they are willing to take part in the research, I have considered a kind of coffee and tea during the interview sessions.

Data Analysis

A thematic data analysis was applied in this study. Accordingly, data collected from the participants was organized in to major thematic areas. After transcription of the voice recorded data, those data with similar content were grouped under one theme. After that, the thematically organized data was discussed with the existing literature. In presenting the finding, I have tried not to distort the phenomenon as it was presented by the participants.

Trustworthiness

Cited in Mouton & Marais (1990, p. 70), Groenewald (2004), argued that the phenomenological research design by itself contributes toward truth since it presents the phenomenon as it is. Bracketing one's view consciously in order to understand the phenomenon in terms of the perspective of the participants was also another way that adds up to truthfulness. Hence, i went to the field to learn from participants' experience. According to Groenewald (2004), bracketing contributes to the truthfulness of a data. I have also communicated back on the major findings of the study with the six participants to validate that it reflected their perspectives regarding the phenomenon that was studied thereby ensuring the truthfulness of my finding (Groenewald, 2004, p.1). In addition, i have provided the draft manuscript of my research to academician colleagues to assess the degree of deviation that i have made from presenting the actual experience of the elderly as it was.

Chapter Four

Major Findings

This chapter is organized under two major sections. The first major part deals with the background information of the participants. The next major part in general attempted to address the research question of the thesis and again this part is sub-divided in to five parts based on the specific objectives of the research and the major thematic areas. The first sub-part of the second major part presented information on how aging and elder abuse were perceived and experienced by the elderly followed by the nature and types of abuses perpetrated on the elderly. This is followed by the elucidation on the nature of perpetrators, contexts and settings, risk factors and consequences of elder abuse. The fourth sub-part has articulated the gender dimension of elder abuse- as how each sex category experienced elder abuse and finally, the reactions and coping mechanisms adopted by the elderly were described. Since I have applied a heuristic phenomenology, the findings of the study are presented in a descriptive way. This descriptive way of presenting data was characterized by use of long, extended and direct quotes that will provide a clear picture without reduction of what the participants have said regarding their lived experience of the phenomenon.

Background of the Study Participants

This section presents background of the participants. Basic data on participants' sex, age, religion, ethnicity, marital status, number of children, education, income, residence situation, and history of being in a care center and health status of participants.

Table 4.1. Participants' data on sex, age, religion, marital status, No. of children & health status.

S.No.	Name	Sex	Age	Religion	Marital Status	No. of Children	Health Condition
1.	Meskerem	F	93	Christian	Widowed	2	Sick
2.	Hawi	F	75	Christian	Widowed	3	Sick
3.	Hiwot	F	68	Christian	Married	5	Healthy
4.	Nigatu	M	67	Christian	Married	4	Healthy
5.	Mebatsion	M	77	Christian	Married	4	Sick
6.	Gemechis	M	81	Christian	Widowed	5	Sick

Meskerem, Hawi and Hiwot are female participants with age 93, 75 and 68 years old, respectively. The rest three participants- Nigatu, Mebatsion and Gemechis are males who are 67, 77, and 82 years old, respectively. Religion wise, five of the participants were orthodox Christianity religion followers and Hiwot was the follower of protestant Christianity.

Regarding marital status, Meskerem, Hawi and Gemechis were similar in that they were all widowed. In contrast, the rest Hiwot, Nigatu and Mebatsion were married and were living with their spouses. Regarding the number of children, Meskerem has one male and one female child whom she is not living with right now. Hawi has got three children among which one is male and the rest are females. One female is living with her, the other is married and the male child is living in Addis having started his own family. Among the five children that Hiwot has got, three of them were females and the rest were males. Three of them have started their own life and only two children-one male and one female were home with their parents. Nigatu has got four children-three males and one female; among which only one is left home and the rest are living in Addis. Mebatsion has four children- three males and one female. Two males are from his current wife and the rest were from another woman. The two boys are still living with their

parents. Among the five children that Gemechis has two boys are from another woman and the rest- one boy and two females are from his current marital partner. Three of the children are living with him-one boy and two females.

Regarding the condition of health, except Hiwot and Nigatu, all of them felt that they are sick and are not healthy. Meskerem claimed that there is an unbearable pain caused by a hit from her child living with her (though this child is not Meskerem's biological daughter, she was the one who raised her beginning from the moment she was deserted by her biological mother 25 years ago). And Meskerem had also lost her sight gradually starting from the last two years; now she is completely visually impaired. In addition to these, Meskerem had also talked about all the unhealthy feelings that she has together with her age. Hawi had already been diagnosed for diabetics and blood pressure and she had also lost almost half of her teeth which she said had caused her an unbearable pain. Hiwot and Nigatu have a feeling that they are healthy; except that there are experiencing a sort of weakness and a little dental problem which they assumed is the result of the aging process. Mebatsion had already been diagnosed for diabetics, blood pressure, and arthritis. He had also undergone prostate cancer surgery before two years. He felt that his body in general is losing its vitality. The health condition of Gemechis was not any better than from Mebatsion; the difference is that he had never been diagnosed for prostate cancer and uric acid imbalance problem. But the rest health issues of diabetics, blood pressure and all the physical deteriorations that developed with age in the case of Mebatsion were experienced with even a higher degree by Gemechis.

Table 4.2. Participants' education, income source, residence, and care center history.

S.No.	Name	Education	Source of Income	Residence	Care center History
1.	Meskerem	Illiterate	None	Home with children	Not at all
2.	Hawi	Read & write	Children	Home With children	Not at all
3.	Hiwot	Diploma	pension,rent & children	Home With children	Not at all
4.	Nigatu	Illiterate	Salary & Children	Home with children	Not at all
5.	Mebatsion	12 Complete	Chidren & Pension	Home with children	Not at all
6.	Gemechis	12 complete	Rent & pension	Home with children	Not at all

Academically, Meskerem and Nigatu were illiterate. Hawi can read and write because of the basic education (*'Meserete-Timhirt'*) program during the regime of Dergue. Hiwot has got a diploma certificate in teaching and she had been teaching for 31 years since she was ousted due age before 13 years. She felt that she was actively capable of teaching by the time she was pensioned. Mebatsion is a high school graduate but he has been certified with various certificates for his professional training and service in Ethiopian Air Force. Hence, he is a professional mechanics, car driver and machine operator. He had served as a master technician in the army, specifically, Ethiopian Air Force. Gemechis has also got two diplomas in management and airplane technician. He had also take various trainings within Ethiopia and abroad. He had served in the army before he was ousted when the regime of 'Dergue' was thrown away by the current EPRDF in the name pension. He is a leughtenal colonel while he was in the army.

With regard to source of income, except Meskerem, all of them get the financial support from pension and informally from children. Likewise, Meskerem has got no source of income at all and she lives dependently on her adopted child who herself has three children whose source of income is obtained by selling a boiled coffee by moving here & there in addition to the

support that she had from her husband. Meskerem's husband was dead and the two biological children are in Borena & she had no communication with them at all. Hence, she is entirely dependent on her adopted child for a living. But, she has also mentioned that sometimes she begs without being seen by her adopted child and her husband. Hawi is completely living by the support she gets from one of her child who is living in Addis. Hiwot depended on her pension, house renting, and support from children. Nigatu works as a guard in a certain private organization and earns 350.00 birr per month. Three of his children are already employed and they are the ones who support their parents & he is grateful for that. But, he felt that he is strong enough & can do anything that is not related with paper work if he was given the chance. Mebatsion completely depended on his pension but sometimes his female child who is living in Addis supports him economically. He felt that the pension that he gets is not enough to support his home because the money is inflated & two of his grown up children who are in their 40s and 30s are dependent on their parents. He said that his wife has also got two extra children in Greece and she also rents houses but he has no right to claim those incomes; he even has got no power to decide on his own pension. Gemechis makes a living by the money he gets from pension which is not enough and by renting houses.

Meskerem resides in her own kebele house with her adopted child, husband of her adopted child, and three children of her adopted child. The rest of the participants are living with their children and some relatives. While Hawi and Nigatu were living in a kebele house, Hiwot, & Gemechis were living in a house owned privately by them. Mebatsion was living in a house privately owned by his wife and he had regretted for not having built a house when he had the chance. He is always tortured by the fact that he is dependent on a woman's property and the feeling exacerbates whenever his wife uses derogatory words to remind him that he is dependent

on her house. With regard to the history of ever having been admitted to an elderly care center, all of them have confirmed that they have never been admitted in a care center. Meskerem have said that I would have done that if I had the chance.

Feeling, Perception, Meaning, & Experience attached to Aging and Elder Abuse

The Feeling, Perception and Experience of Getting Older,

I asked participant about their lived experience through the process of aging-the feeling, perception & meaning that they attach to aging. Most of the participants perceived and described aging as “grace”, “reward”, “gift” and “reverence” while Meskerem expressed aging in the opposite direction, i.e., she felt that being aged is being “weak”, “sick”, “worthless”, “isolated”, “disgraced”, being “despised”, “anguished” and “abused by every little one”.

Meskerem said that aging is a bad thing that ever happened in her life. Accordingly, she felt that nothing worse has ever happened in her life. She said that when you get older everybody will consider you something worthless; as if you never had contributed a thing for your country and people. Here is what Meskerem said in her own words:

It's better to die early than to live like this. I have been rich, beautiful, married, powerful, mother, wife, protector of the public as “*abyot tibeka*”, I have danced, I have recreated, I have done all that I wanted because I was young and strong. Now i am old (“*aroge*”), and disgusting. Now the child I have adopted, whom I raised and cared for, whom I cleaned her dirt and defecation (“*bekizenua techemalike yasadekuat*”!); She is now the leader of the house; she hits, me and she insults me in a degrading manner telling me that i am disgusting (she was very shivering while telling me this). So haaa she continued, after all this, how can you expect me to love the aging process young boy? (She was like trying to

stare at me, though she could not see me because she had already lost her sight). So, getting older is a curse, especially when you do not have somebody who would take care of you like me. God gave me a protective brother and husband, who died long ago and my biological children are now in Borena and we do not communicate at all. I wish they were all here by my side to protect me from this devil woman. (She was saying all this in a pathetic way that touched my heart).

I asked her again that whether she believes that the fate of all older people is like this; and she replied:

“Yetadelutma benkbkabe tekebrewna tenkebarew yinoralu ene negn enji gedde sebarawa, bebete mechaweche yehonkut!” (Literally it means that those lucky elderly are living with care, dignity and respect; it’s me the unlucky one who had become a playing toy in my own house). Hmmm, I do not know why God does not take me? Does not he find a place for me? (*“Minew amlak lene bota ata? Lemin aywesdegnm? aaaayyyyiiiii”*)).

Hence, being old to Meskerem has an undesirable and unpleasant connotation. She thought that becoming old is equivalent to becoming a child- that you cannot even protect yourself, decide for yourself, and do what you want to. She added, being old is being treated like an old home utensil! As an old utensil is thrown because it is useless after its long years of service, the same logic is applied on an older person by the people around.

Hawi has reflected a somehow moderate view on the meaning of being old as compared with Meskerem. She said that being old is something rewarding that only few people can have such a golden chance. But she has a strong claim that this could be so if the aging process is taking within a healthy support system in all aspects. She said:

If God has given you the blessed ones, I mean children who respect and value their parents; those are the ones who are devoted to look after their older parents in all aspects and this leads older persons to be fond of the aging process. So for me, getting older is not as such a bad thing to cry about and I cannot say that it is such a lovely phenomenon that ever happened in my life to be fond of; but I'm happy to have such a blessed children whom i am dependent upon for everything and who are providing me with everything they can. Hence being old is good if there are people around you to support you; but even with the existence of the support systems around you, there are lots of forces that might make you feel bad about you getting older. These are mostly related to the physical weakness that comes with the process, the health issues, the feeling of loneliness, and feeling of not being able to do what you want to.

Hiwot said that being old is such a blessing but sometimes you might feel awkward for not being able to do what you used to do because of the physical deterioration that comes with age. So it's good to get older but not to get extremely older become completely dependent on others (*"mejajet new metfo"*). Hiwot assumed that as long as Jesus is in her life, everything is going to be fine. So she is thankful for Jesus for making her healthy in her old days. She told me that there are lots of things that she wanted to achieve in the rest of her life; such as getting her B.A. degree. She is happy with her children except one of them who steal money and other properties for his addiction. But she said,

She is not going to give up on him that Jesus will save him. So I am not as such affected because I am old and I do not even feel that I'm old; except the time that I was ousted from job in the name pension from my job while I was active in the

the teaching business. I felt bad about my age only that time when I was forced to leave the profession that I have lived for such a long time. Getting older sometimes makes you feel bad when the system ousts you from what you were doing saying that you are old & not effective while you that you are still strong and that you know you can do it; from this point of view, you might come to a notion that being old means being useless and unimportant. But thank Lord that feeling had long gone because of Jesus. Hence my experience regarding aging is not as such bad and abusive.

Nigatu also felt that age is a source of grace and reverence (“*idme tsega new*”). But he had also also added the following:

Sometimes it might also means that not being able to do what you want to because you wanted to. There are lots of restrictions because of age such as losing the energy and physical force that you have as a youngster. But thank God that I am still healthy and strong. I am illiterate and I am very eager to learn (at least to know how to read and write), but because of my age, I do have a feeling that I cannot do all that I wanted to like my younger days. All in all, when you get older, there is a feeling that you cannot do things by yourself. I have faced challenges from the political system that currently exists; it had been very long since I came here; but due to the fact that I cannot speak the local language and I do not belong to it I have been abused a lot. Sometimes I felt that; if I were young I would have killed all those who are abusing me and live a banditry life. So sometimes being old is not being able to respond to the mistreatments that you face. Family members might even abuse you knowing that you cannot defend

them back. Sometimes even your wife might use derogatory words on you and you would say nothing bad as the younger days. The government is also supporting only those who have served in the army or within its various institutions in a permanent form of employment. The rest are dependent on their children or go out to beg. Thank God that I am still strong and healthy. God had given me blessed children who are supporting me these days economically; I do not know what I would have done without them!

Mebatsion had been pensioned-off long ago in his early 50s while he was serving the army within the Air Force Section since his younger days. He had a completely positive outlook towards aging. He noted that getting older is such a grace and reverence that only few people are lucky to reach it (*"idme tsega new"*). But he asserted that this is only the case when the environment in which the aging process takes place is healthy; he said the following:

If aging is taking place in the midst of support from the children that you have raised and from the nation that you have served, then aging is not bad. But, the nation that I have served is doing nothing to support me in my older days except the little monthly earning that I get which I have saved as a worker during my younger days. Getting older is sometimes not being able to do what you wanted to. In your younger age you run here and there to do what you want to; but now there are lots of restrictions not to do that. These factors include mostly the health issues that you will come to face in the older days. Because of my age I have developed such chronic illnesses like diabetics, hypertension, arthritis and the like. These health issues inhibited me from doing things that I want to. Hence, getting older sometimes is getting sick, weak. But, if you are aging in a supportive

environment it will not be as such difficult to cope with the aging process and getting older would be such a blessing. Now what I think is about my death-leaving this world without being in pain. I do not dream to become this or that, do this or that; I only pray that God will take me away without causing pain on me and without causing trouble on those who would take care of me if I am staying on bed. I do not want that to happen to me and that is always my prayer for God; to take my soul only within a one day sickness (*“Yalga kuragna mehon alfeligim band ken beshita biwesdegn bye new yemitseliyew”*). Therefore, when you get older, you will not think of your future on earth- getting older will take away all your hopes and dreams on earth.

Gemechis has also a similar view towards getting older with Mebatsion, i.e., aging is good if it takes place in a caring environment and if it will not make him bed ridden. He focused on the difference between those younger days when he felt that nothing would stop him from achieving what he wanted and these older days when everyone does whatever he or she wants on him-even kids. He said,

Your wife will torture you with pejorative words reminding you that you had caused her lots of trouble in your younger days and the same is true with your children sometimes. So, being older means being belittled, abused, mistreated by everyone and not having the power to protect yourself from the harm. I used to give order for thousands of people in the army to do what I wanted to and everybody trembles while I give orders or take measures; but now things are different; everybody give me order and trembles me with their measures, even

my grandchildren. Even though age is a gift and grace, as long as the environment in which you are getting older is not healthy, it would be a curse.

From the experience of the narration of the lived experience of the participants, we can understand that the meaning that is attached to getting older is highly affected by the surrounding situation. If the aging process is taking place in a favorable environment that is free of abuse in any form and full of care, support and reverence; getting older in this case is perceived as something desirable. In contrast, if the surrounding environment in which the aging process takes place is full of abuse, anguish, and disrespect; then in this sense getting older had been described as something undesirable. The other issue that surrounded the negative meaning that the participants attached to getting older is when the aging process goes beyond its limit; i.e., when you get extremely older to the extent of losing your mind (“they called it “*Mejajet*”). All of them do not have a desire to reach that stage—they have preferred death than getting extremely old and lose one’s own self, be a trouble for family members. While all of the participants had attached a mixed meaning towards getting older depending on situations, only Meskerem (who is the oldest of all) gave a completely negative view of being older.

The Meaning Attached to Elder Abuse,

As to the feeling and meaning that they attach towards elder abuse, they have said that elder abuse can be anything that causes harm on an elderly person and they have said that this might include being insulted, being belittled, being embarrassed, not listened to what you would say, denied your access to basic needs and your right to decide on your affairs, being agonized, tortured, or even ignored & abandoned. All of the participants have asserted that being abused and mistreated as an elderly instead of being respected and taken a good care is something undesirable and it is the darkest side of the aging process that will make you hate the idea of

getting older. All of them have mentioned that they are abused in one way or another by different organs starting from family members to the system of the country as a whole. Here is how Meskerem puts her experience regarding abuse:

Being abused as an elderly will make you think of lots of things-even death, yes death. Especially when you are an elderly person who had been through a joyous and magnificent past as a child, youngster and adult; the abuses that you face as an elderly would really become unbearable. I had been beautiful that even males were fighting on me, I had been a bar owner, I had been strong even to punish deviants physically as an “*abyot tibeka*” (literally it means protector of the revolution; it is a political status during the regime of Dergue in Ethiopia), I had supported the poor economically, I had been respected and begged, I was born and raised in a joyous and well-to-do family, but now things are turned upside down and I’m being abused these days as an elderly. The child that I had adopted with her husband and her three children are the source of my mistreatment. They kick me, push me, intimidate me, disgrace me, ignore me and do not take me to hospital. They are even planning to transfer their names on my own kebele house and throw me out. Last time she threw me on a sharp stone and led me to an awful waist pain which I cannot bear. She always insults me, which is more agonizing than the physical pain. As if i did not know how to get clean, she called me “*Gimatam*” and “*timb*” (literally, it means disgusting), as if i had not cleaned her dirt and defecation (*Bekzenua endaltechemaleku*) during her childhood without being disgusted. She always talks to me closing her nose with her fingers.

One major fact that I had come across through observation during the in-depth interview sessions was that none of the participants, except Meskerem had that courage to blame family members, especially, children for perpetrating any form of abuse or mistreatment on them. But I had read from their face a fear of guilty feeling if they talk about their “*Gemena*” (*literally it means a secret that has to be kept within the circle of intimate ones only, which is unethical in Ethiopian culture to talk about it for others who are out of the circle intimacy*). The elderlies are ashamed of breaking the families secret not only due to the issue of cultural barrier; but also due to a fear factor. For instance Gemechis noted “If I break the “family secret,” I will be scared that the abuser might get back and hurt me in a way worse than what is happening now.”

To break through the cultural barrier and explore the actual experience of abuse perpetrated by family members on participants, I have used various techniques such as using simple, less offensive, less blaming expressions while presenting my interview questions. I have also tried to ask indirect questions by depersonalizing my questions. For instance, asking “have you ever felt lonely” rather than asking “Does anyone from your family members restricts your social participation with other family members and friend?”. In this this way I have found out that, they do not like to publically blame their family members for the abuses that they had perpetrated on them; when actually they are being mistreated by the very family members who were living with them.

Meskerem was the only participant who said what she felt about the mistreatments perpetrated up on her even in the presence of her perpetrators. I think that is because she has got no blood relationship with the perpetrators and because her abuse had reached its climax. In addition to this the abuse perpetrated on her is relatively severe and unbearable as compared with the rest of the participants. This can be a push factor to talk.

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The Nature and Types of Abuses Perpetrated on the Elderly

I have asked the participants whether they have ever been abused or not in any form and about the forms of abuses if they have ever encountered any over the years. The forms of abuse that were encountered so far by the elderly in Bishoftu are various including psychological abuse, physical abuse, neglect, self-neglect, labor exploitation, material or financial exploitation, system abuse and cultural abuse.

Meskerem asserted that she had experienced beating, pushing, slapping, kicking. She also added that she had been insulted, humiliated, intimidated, verbally assaulted and harassed and also isolated and neglected. Materially, she said that her adopted child had stolen most of her home utensils and sold them out. Gemechis had noted that he is insulted, shoved, not given the care that he deserves or desires, he even had been denied a chance to decide on issues that concerns him. He also claimed that the system (the government) is not doing enough to protect him given the service that he had offered in the army. Hawi also said that her children do not allow her to go to church, meet friends and participate in social affairs. She also added that sometimes she even neglects herself when her daughter is not around. Hiwot is the youngest and stronger of all the female participants and is relatively not deteriorated physically. Hiwot said, it is her husband who insults her and kicks her sometimes; and one of her children who uses derogatory words and who sometimes give her a bad look (*"gilmicha"*).

Nigatu has expressed his grievance on government and public service providers such as the kebele administrators. He said that he had been discriminated on various aspects because of his ethnic background. He had also complained on government saying that the government is only taking care of those elderly population who had been in the army and other governmental

institutions; the rest of the elderly population are disregarded by the pension system and this is one of the abuses that I came across so far. Nigatu also added,

I am not given the chance to work though I feel that I am strong enough to undertake any physical activities; I feel that I'm still stronger than my younger children, I can do what they cannot physically. Your children sometimes might remind you the fact that by telling you that you cannot do it, you have got to take a break, please stay home. They are doing this to show their concern about you; but it might be painful for you and they do not know that.

Mebatsion focused on the abuses that are caused at home by family members and the governmental system. He noted that his wife always uses agonizing words such as he is living in her house dependently, that he had mistreated her in earlier times of their marriage and two of his older male children are still dependent on them for their survival. He said he had not had a financial freedom and security; his pension is little and all of it is expected to be given to his wife without putting a penny in his pocket. The children always claim that the food is not tasty or fresh as if they are the ones who generate the income for the family. When he wants to do something that requires finance, he feels agonized because he failed to do it because of lack of money-which he played with during the younger days. He also claimed that that government is not doing enough to support him taking in to account the service that he had rendered in the army. In general, all of the participants had experienced some form of abuse by different perpetrators starting from family members to the government.

Which Form of Abuse is more Common and severe?

Among all the abuses or mistreatments that had been perpetrated on the elderly, psychological or emotional abuse had been identified as the most agonizing and unbearable form

of abuse. For instance among all the participants, Meskerem is the only one in being mistreated physically, there was no one else who mentioned that that they are being punished physically. Taking the unbearable physical torture that she was in, I have asked her which had been more painful and she replied that “it is the insult, verbal assault and harassment that is more agonizing to me than the physical assault and harassment. She said that she had already got used to the physical anguish, it is the insulting and mental torture that had been unbearable to her (“*Dulawn lemjewalehu, sidibuna kalatochun new meshekem yekebedegn!*”). In a similar way, as to the most painful form of abuse, all of them commonly responded with a shivering body, a frowned look and a painful sound that it is the psychological or emotional abuse that is unbearable- “insults and verbal assaults cannot be healed!” they said.

Despite the fact that participants had experienced psychological abuse as the most severe and painful form of abuse, the participants had also asserted that other forms of abuse are also perpetrated on the elderly. Physical abuse, material or financial abuse, labor exploitation, system abuse, cultural abuse, neglect, and self-neglect are some of the common types abuses and mistreatments encountered by the elderly.

Sexual abuse is an abuse which is commonly mentioned in western literatures as one of the commonly experienced form of abuse, especially, in care centers. But no participant in this research had mentioned an experience of sexual abuse in relation to the aging process. Meskerem had mentioned that she had been once raped by a man in her adolescent years and that has got nothing to do with being elderly and being sexually abused. As cited in Brandl, Dyer, Heisler, Marla, Stiegel, & Thomas (2007), Tatara (1993) has noted that sexual abuse constitutes less than 1% of all forms of elder abuse.

In case of the this research, participants might had been exposed to sexual abuse; but the cultural restriction on talking about your “*Gemena*”; might had been a crucial factor not to disclose any experience regarding such a sensitive issue; because the issue of sex is among one of the biggest “*Gemenas*” difficult to talk about openly in Ethiopian culture; even under normal circumstances. Personally, I had also been challenged by the culture to openly discuss and explore the issue.

One of the findings which attracted me was regarding the types and nature of abuses faced by the participants. There were abuses which are not considered as abuse by the participants. For instance *forced feeding* is considered as an abuse or mistreatment of the elderly in the western societies; but all of the participants (except Meskerem) had considered forced feeding as something positive. For example Hawi had said the following regarding forced feeding:

I’m really lucky to have someone by my side to follow and control whether I have eaten or not. My daughter prepares foods from anything that is found in the house (“*Bet yaferawn*”) and feeds me on time even if i resisted and that is why I’m saying that i am lucky. There are lots of older friends like me who do not have that chance; even those having plenty of money have got no one to follow and feed them with concern.

Perpetrators, Contexts and Settings, Risk factors and Consequences of Elder Abuse

Perpetrators of Elder Abuse

The participants were asked about the nature and types of perpetrators. All of them have had a history of abuse which is perpetrated by individuals whom the participants have trusted a lot. These included family members (children, grandchildren, and spouses), relatives, neighbors, kids, the younger generation, public service providers such as taxi drivers & “*weyalas*” (*literally it means assistants of taxi drivers*), merchants, kebele administrators, and other governmental

institution workers. Meskerem had listed out her adopted child as her first perpetrator followed by her adopted child's husband and their three children who were all below the age of seven. In addition, Meskerem had also noted that her neighbors also abused her by taking side with her adopted child. Hawi had mentioned that individuals who were doing the abuse on her included her children, taxi drivers, her neighbors and some of their kids. In the case of Hiwot, her husband, her children, and administrators were on the list. Nigatu mentioned kebele administrators, neighbors, children, spouse and some youngsters. In the case of Mebatsion, children and spouse were identified as abusers. Mebatsion had also accused the government for neglecting the elderly. Taxi drivers had also been mentioned by Mebatsion as abusers. He said that when he stands waiting for a taxi, the drivers' stops and leave as soon as possible without giving you the service you deserve whenever they realized that you are an older person. Gemechis has identified his children, grandchildren, neighbors, taxi drivers and the government as perpetrators of the abuses on him.

Here we can see that the most common perpetrators of the elderly person were closer family members such as children, spouse, and grandchildren, at home. Neighbors, younger generations, kids, taxi drivers, administrators and the government were also among the abusers identified by the participants.

The participants were also asked to give description about the perpetrators. When the participants mentioned the nature of the perpetrators, they have all said that their perpetrators as male, female, younger than them, physically stronger than them, unemployed, drug addicted, alcoholics, deviants, disrespectful, uncomfortable, scary, frightening and aggressive. For example when Meskerem was asked about what image would come to her mind when she thinks

of her abusers, she said, "scary, frightening, addicted, young, strong, addicted, devilish, ugly, aggressive, unsecured, awful, shocking and horrific."

According to the experience of the sing participants, the perpetrators were mostly applying intimidation & instilling among their victims to do things in their own interest.

There were perpetrators who did not know that they are abusing their elders; instead they assume that they are caring for them. The interview I had with one of the perpetrators is a good example in this regard. I had a chance to talk to one of the perpetrators, Meskerem's adopted child. I found Meskerem accidentally heartbroken and devastated out door by the road asking for people to help her cross the asphalt so that she can beg for alms from the passer byes. Then I asked whether she is going to be willing to get tested by the elder abuse test tool for about three-five minutes and she gave me her consent and the test result indicated that she is the victim of a high degree of elder mistreatment. Again, I proposed her if she is willing to do an interview that would take about one and a half to three hours; she gave me her consent then I started my interview. In the process, neighbors saw and told me to stop and asked her to get home; but she refused. Then they called her adopted child from one of the neighborhood and she came angrily and aggressively to listen to what she had to say. She just insulted Meskerem in front of me saying "*balege*", "*sim atfi*"! which literally means, deviant or unethical & left. After I am done with Meskerem, I went to talk to Mimi and she told me that the "*arogit*" is abusing her. She told me how Meskerem messed her life. She told me that all that she had said is wrong and you can ask everyone around here, they can tell you what I mean to her. In all the conversation that I had with her, she had not had the slightest feeling or guilty feeling that she perpetrated abuse on Meskerem; she was rather telling me the abuses perpetrated on her by Meskerem.

Setting and Context of Elder Abuse

Participants were asked about the contexts and settings of elder abuse- as how (in what condition) and where elder abuse takes place in most cases. Based on the experience of the participants as where and in what circumstances the abuse takes place, shortage of home utility, lack of observers/witnesses, sickness, loneliness, drinking, addiction to drug, anger, and trying to advise abusers were identified as facilitating contexts for perpetrators to abuse the elderly and home is the most commonly cited setting by the participants as where most of the mistreatments are perpetrated on the elderly.

When asked about the specific contexts of abuse, Meskerem replied that the abuse takes place in all situations except that when there are people around; “whenever we are alone at home, that is the specific situation which makes me more vulnerable to be abused by my adopted child and her husband; because, no one notices”. Hawi said that the abuse takes place in most cases whenever her daughter is not around. She mentioned, “The unbearable feeling of loneliness and isolation comes around and kids and some adults in the neighborhood insults me whenever my daughter is not around”. Hiwot said that the abuses are perpetrated on her in most cases when there are problems at home; “My husband uses derogatory words when he cannot get his food on time or when he does not like the food and the same is true with one of my children”. In the case of Nigatu, the abuse is mostly common when there are scarcities of day to day consumption utilities. In his own words, “I always feel terrible, when my wife run-out-off “teff”, or “buna”, and when she or I gets sick”. He mentioned that the misery is unbearable whenever he realizes that he cannot do anything about it. Mebatsion said that whenever his children are at home unemployed, whenever they are drunk, or when their pockets are empty for “*chat or cigarette*” and he mentioned the same is true with his wife when she runs of budget. He also noted, “When

there is shortage of transportation, taxi drivers are not willing to give you the service and other public service providers are not happy to give you service if you are old". The other context identified by Mebatsion was, when you advise them or tell them what they are doing is not right; they responded in an offensive manner. Gemechis is abused mostly when shortage of some consumption utilities happen, when his children are angry with other reasons, when his children were fighting each other verbally or physically at home and when he tried to use public services such as transportation. He also said "the type, magnitude, and severity of the mistreatment had significantly increased as I get older and older, sicker and sicker, weaker and weaker".

Risk Factors and Consequences of Elder Abuse

Risk Factors for Elder Abuse,

The risk factors for the mistreatment of the elderly included poverty, extreme aging, high physical deterioration, prevalence of various health issues, being widowed, high degree of dependence on others, the behavior of the elderly, the behavior of those responsible to care for the elderly, the legal protection, the cultural context and perception towards aging, the nature and type of victim-perpetrator relationship. Parenting and unhealthy history of past relationship between current victims and perpetrators were also additional risk factors for elder abuse. Most of the risk factors explored are commonly shared by the participants of the study.

Meskerem had mentioned that whenever she is alone at home with her adopted child and her husband and when there is no one to notice what is going on from outside, she is insulted or physically mistreated. She had also said that the rate of abuse had increased as she got older, as she got sick, as she lost her eyesight and as she stopped generating income of her own. So here we can understand that having no one to protect your rights, being alone, getting older, getting sick, increased dependency in various aspects, can increase the risk of being abused. In the case

of Hawi being left alone home had been as a risk factor to expose her for abuse from perpetrators in the neighborhood. Although being left alone by itself is a form of abuse that we call neglect, it might be a risk factor to lead to other forms of abuses by outsiders in the absence of family members protecting the elderly at home. Hiwot have said that shortage of home consumption utilities had led her to be insulted by her husband and her male child. She added:

The system's neglect on older persons by itself had contributed a lot in being abused by other segments of the populous; including family members. If everybody knows that, they will definitely be on trial for insulting or perpetrating another form of abuse on an the elderly, no one will be dare to perpetrate an abuse on an elderly person considering the outcome". She had also mentioned that the cultural setting can also increase or decrease the risk of being abused; if the culture is one that does not value the elderly, the tendency will be higher.

From Hiwot's experience, we can understand that the neglect of the government by itself can be a risk factor that can lead others to abuse the elderly; including family members, if the government cannot have an isolated legal system to protect the elderly from elder abuse like other forms of protection on other groups of the population such as children. In the same manner with Hiwot, Nigatu had also blamed the government for doing nothing to protect the elderly and he believed that it is this neglect of the government that served as a risk factor for others to abuse the elderly. He also mentioned that not being a native person; being an immigrant from where you were born might also expose an elderly to be abused by the natives. The other risk factor that Nigatu mentioned was being poor and dependent on others; which can increase their tendency to abuse the dependent elderly. Mebatsion had indicated what Nigatu identified as risk factors; but he had also added a new dimension. He said:

Your behavior determines to a greater degree your risk of being abused by whoever is around you, especially family members. If you are giving orders with harsh words to get something, if you curse those around you, if you are hot-tempered and patient less, your probability to get abused will be higher than without the existence of these behaviors. The kind of relationship that you had in the past (before you got older) with those whom you are living with is the unhealthy one; i.e., if you used to abuse them, then it will be your turn to be mistreated as you had mistreated them (*"Beseferkew kuna tiseferaleh"*). In addition to this, if there are family members who are alcoholics or drug addicts, including yourself, your tendency to be abused will be higher according to my experience.

Mebatsion had also mentioned sickness, loss of energy, inappropriate way of parenting, lack of economic security and the following dependency can all increase risk of abuse among the elderly population and this can be aggravated if the system is doing nothing to stop this by providing a special protection for the elderly. What Gemechis said is no different from what Mebatsion said; but, he said getting older without having someone who grow old with you is painful. He put his feeling this way:

All you have at home is numbers of young people who are only listening to their feelings and who are devoted to live in their world; it feels like you are alone in the midst of plenty of people who are speaking a different language with you. No one listens to what you are saying, what you think wrong is right in their view and vice versa. There is no one that you share what you feel in your own way; being widowed in general is a little harsher than having someone by your side who

speaks your language (language of the elderly) and whom you can share your feelings with. So having no one by your age at home might be risky for the elderly to be abused emotionally and psychologically.

Consequences of Elder Abuse

Participants were asked about the possible outcomes of the abuses perpetrated on the elderly. Various consequences had been identified and experienced by the participants. These included; emotional damage, anxiety, depression, mental illness, low self-esteem, physical damage (broken bone, bruises and mobility problems), loss of property, chronic illness, faster rate of the aging process, ageism and the related social seclusion and exclusion. Meskerem said that when you are abused, especially, insulted, you feel very hurt and agonized; the anguish is even immensely greater than the one that can result from physical abuse. She added that the physical torture and damage are also unbearable. She said the following in her own words:

...last time Mimi shoved me and I had fallen on the ground. Unfortunately, there was an edgy and sharp stone on the ground which smashed back of my shoulder and my waist. Right now, my physical mobility is extremely restricted due to that. In addition to the restriction, I have found it very difficult to bear the physical anguish and the resultant emotional torture.

She quoted a famous Ethiopian saying "*Anbessa siyarej...*" and hated the fact that she is an elderly thinking that she could have defended herself in a better way if what had been happening on her as an elderly was happening in her younger days. Here we can see that the painful physical experience had led her to an emotional pain; thinking that this would not have happened on her if it was not due to her age.

Hawi had also mentioned that the feeling of loneliness and social seclusion would lead to an emotional pain and she said,

When you continue to be alone for such a long time, there is nothing that you will think about; except comparing the younger days with your aging days thinking about all the mistreatments that are being perpetrated on you as an elderly and thinking about what you would have done if you were younger. But, the misery will grow higher & higher as you realize the fact that you are an old frail who cannot even rescue yourself from the anguish you are in.

Hiwot had said there is a feeling that she will develop when people, the culture and especially, the system around tells her that she cannot do it because she is old and should be pensioned while deep inside she knows she really can do it. She noted, “this labeling by others as weak and incapable will make you actually incapable and you will become weak because you are labeled so and this and this in turn will lead you to possess a low self-esteem”. Nigatu had also mentioned that elder abuse might further aggravate the discrimination which the elderly are already facing as a result of aging by making them more vulnerable to various forms of abuse. Mebatsion and Gemechis had also noted that elder abuse in any form would lead to various consequences; but noted again that emotional consequence is unbearable. They have said that there are other forms abuses that might follow in relation to the emotional consequence. Especially, “if you were a person who used to be a hero, strong and capable, the consequences of abuse would be much more unbearable”.

Although participants had listed out various consequences of being abused as an elderly, the rate, prevalence, incidence and magnitude of agony that they have attached to the emotional consequence is greater than of all. Mebatsion had put his feeling this way:

Whenever an abuse of any type is perpetrated on you, it is the deepest part of your feeling that is going to be agonized first and most. Each and every form of abuse had an emotional consequence; when somebody insults you, when someone takes away or misuses your property, when somebody you cared for slaps or shoves you, lets you down, deprived you from your basic needs, and even when you are lonely, it is your emotion that is going to be jeopardized first and for most. A physical pain can heal, a lost material can be gained back, but on earth could you be able to heal your emotional distress; it is something that always leaven a scar in your mind. It is all this emotional pain that would lead to other consequences such as chronic illness, social seclusion, ageism, low self-esteem, faster rate of aging and finally to death.

The Gender Dimension of Elder Abuse: *How Do Male & Female Elderly Experience Abuse?*

To explore the phenomenon of elder abuse within the framework of gender variation, specific interview guide points were prepared for each sex group of the participants-males and females. In this regard, the intention of the researcher was to find out how males and females had experienced elder abuse within the context of the culturally constructed ideologies regarding the experiences of males and females.

Females' Experience

When asked what it means to be a female, all female participants had used words and phrases such as “*child bearer*”, “*commodity*”, “*who cannot protect herself*”, “*weak*”, “*poor*”,

“*undermined*”, “*discriminated*”, and “*dependent*”. They have a feeling that they are not treated in an equal manner with their counter parts. To the question forwarded to female participants to explore whether a specific form of abuse had been perpetrated on them just because they are females. All of the participants have said that it is because of the fact that they are females that they had experienced all the abuses; especially, in the younger days. Hawi said that although gender had played a greater role in making her more vulnerable to abuse, especially, in the younger days, she had noted that there are other factors that had contributed for the abuse in the older days. Here is what she had to say in her own words:

In the younger days, I was dependent on my husband in almost everything; he was older than me when we got married; I was almost less than half of his age- I was like fourteen or fifteen and he was in his early thirties. I was living with families and he was on his own. Those days were very hurting; because he always used to mistreat me; he had not provided me enough income, he slapped me, insulted me and he even had forced me out of home. In all those days, I had not had any choice but to live with him and take the abuses for granted. I had tried to get divorced with him but that did not work. Now all those are stories because he is not alive. In all the times we had been together, he had been harsh to me until he became old enough and lost all of his energy which he depended on; especially, when he became “*Yealga Kuragna*” which literally means “*bed-ridden*”, he had not got the chance to abuse me; he started to develop a caring & regretting behavior all his days since he passed away. In the days of his weakness, I had had a chance to pay him back for what he did on me; but I am not a woman of vengeance; “*vengeance is of God*”. He had suffered a lot before he passed

away and I believe that was his payment from above. So, it is not only just being female that could expose you to mistreatment by male counter parts. It is your weakness, dependence in various forms that would lead you to abuse; but those are highly related with your being female and the place that you have within the society as a possessor of that sex. All in all, your femaleness affects you only in the younger days when your husband used to be the master of everything in the house; but all that will definitely change as he gets older and weaker. Sometimes in this case the story might be reversed and he might be the one to be mistreated.

Similar to Hawi's argument, the rest two female participants had argued that being female can increase the degree of abuse; especially, in the younger days when the husband was stronger in all aspects and when the wife was dependent on her him. They argued that the scenario might change and the reverse might happen when he gets older and the wife might have the chance to do the abuse on him; especially, if he was mistreating her during his times of strength. All females argued that during times of elderly, the females still continue to be responsible for the household chores and this labor exploitation is something that a woman experiences as a female starting from the younger days and it continues to the older days without complaint from females because they have already got used to it and they do not even consider it as an abuse.

Females were asked whether they have ever perpetrated an abuse on male counter parts or not and all of them have said that they never did that but had known female friends who did that on their husbands on the days of his weakness and dependence; especially if that specific husband had abused his wife in earlier times.

Males' Experience

Male participants were asked similar questions with females; as what being male refers to them and as whether or not an abuse is perpetrated on them because they are simply males.

When they are asked what being male is they used terminologies such as hero, strong, dependable, leader, provider, winner, unbeatable and the like. All of them believed that a man is superior to a female in many aspects. Regarding the question the question which sex group of the elderly is more abused, all of them argued that it is definitely males. Here is what Mebatsion had to say:

I do not agree with the idea that older women are the ones who are victims of elder abuse as compared with elderly males. Abuse might be perpetrated on females by male counter parts before the aging process had begun; but as the age increases, the abuse on females will significantly reduce and it will increase on the males. This is because the males had always been strong & dominant in their younger days and unfortunately, they will lose all the power and dominance as they get older. So, everybody around the elderly would have a chance to abuse them; even kids; the abuse might get severe if the elderly used to abuse those who were around during his younger days. The pain is unbearable because the world of abuse is new for the elderly male; the reason is that elderly males had not experienced abuse in their younger days. So it is agonizing when it happens in the latter years. In contrast, females have already experienced and lived with the abuse that is perpetrated on them starting from the younger days. Females have already got used to it.

Nigatu had also expressed his feeling in this regard in the following manner: □

A female elderly had already got used to the abuses that are perpetrated on her as an elderly (*"Tikatun ena chanawn Lebsawalech"*) when she was just a kid, during her younger days and adulthood. Therefore, being bitten or insulted are not as such a new experience when it comes to the aging process among females. In contrast, it is difficult and unbearable for a man to be a victim of abuse because he had never been in that world for so long and it will be very difficult to live with

Gemechis had also added one issue saying that the age gap between a man and a woman (the fact that the groom is older than the bride) during marriage can also be a factor for a man to be abused by his spouse in the later years; this is simply, the man will get extremely older and dependent while the woman is relatively younger and stronger, which might led her to abuse her husband who cannot protect himself as he used to be because of age and related sickness and weakness. The abuse on him might be severe if he was one of a kind who mistreated his wife in the past.

From the experiences of the male participants, we can understand that their experience and belief reflected a higher tendency towards the fact that males are highly abused than females.

Reaction of the Elderly towards Elder Abuse & Coping Mechanisms

Reaction of the Elderly towards Elder Abuse

As to the question how do you react whenever any form of abuse is perpetrated on you, respondents had mentioned various reactions that they had made so far. The participants have said, *"I have cried"*, *"I tried to protect myself if it was a physical threat"*, *"I Screamed"*, *I "insulted them back"*, *"I cursed the abusers"*, *"begged the abusers"*, *"irritated"*, and sometimes *"not reacted at all"*.

Most of the participants have noted that, it is difficult to describe how they have reacted whenever an abuse is perpetrated on them. But they have said that an abuse in any form had immediately led them to an extreme emotional state which most of them argued was difficult to control. Here is what Meskerem had said:

Whenever my adopted child mistreated me (bitts me or insults me), I got extremely angry and emotional and does not even know what to do; I had screamed, cursed her or tried to protect myself physically; but all of my reactions annoys her and had aggravated her to hit me or insult me in an exacerbated manner. Because I have no one around to turn for help around me, I preferred to confront her.

Mebatsion had noted that he did not know what to do or how to react whenever a mistreatment had been perpetrated on him; he said,

I did not know how I reacted whenever somebody insulted me, belittled me, or disrespected me. I always got angry and emotional and did not know what to have done at the moment. What I remember is I cursed them and insult them back.

Sometimes I even threw objects on them. But finally, after I cooled down, I always realized that my reactions aggravated the abusers for next time. Now I am learning that being calm and patient is the best way deal with your perpetrators.

Gemechis said that he reacted in various ways especially when it comes to his dignity;

When somebody around me tried to belittle me or disrespects me, that moment I feel I would rather die than founding myself in such a situation; so, I react aggressively in most cases but now I am learning that it does not help to react that way. It had only led me to an emotional disturbance and exacerbated my sickness;

my blood pressure increases whenever I got angry. I think it is better to cool down and take things for granted even if it is very tough.

Hiwot said that whenever she is bitten by her husband or insulted or mistreated in any form by any one, she said sometimes she got angry, sometimes cried, sometimes reacted back, sometimes insulted back and the other time kept quiet.

From the participants experience we can understand the way they have reacted had allowed them to figure out which reaction had had a further negative consequence and which reaction is good in calming down the abusers.

Coping Mechanisms among the elderly,

Participants were asked what kinds of coping mechanisms they have applied in order to deal with the mistreatments that were perpetrated on them and they had identified various forms of coping mechanisms. The coping mechanisms that they have applied included cursing the perpetrators, insulting the perpetrators, physically trying to defend yourself, screaming, telling to people, being polite, being patient, not trying to harm perpetrators back and praying (telling everything to God).

Participants had categorized the coping mechanisms in to two. Mebatsion noted that some of the coping mechanisms work while most of them led to a further abusive situation. Hiwot said, “Whenever you try to attack back, your perpetrators became more and more aggressive and whenever you kept quiet; your perpetrators calms down and stop the mistreatment”. Meskerem had also noted that the mistreatment gets more severe whenever I scream, tell my anguish and sorrow to people (“*mirreten ena sikayen lesewoch sinager yibisibatal*”), tried to resist physically, or cried out loud. Here is what Nigatu had to say regarding bad and good ways of coping with the mistreatments that the elderly are facing:

When somebody around me-my spouse or children, insults me or said something degrading or belittling, I responded in the same way aggressively and emotionally and in this case, the mistreatment will be intensified and sometimes, they had even perpetrated a physical response. In contrast, whenever I try to calm down while degrading things were happening on me, the perpetrators also act the same way and sometimes they even felt ashamed and said sorry for what they did. Therefore, the coping mechanisms that you choose to deal with elder abuse matters a lot in determining the nature, severity and magnitude of the mistreatment to be perpetrated on you by the perpetrators.

In the same manner Mebatsion had also argued that the way you react and the coping mechanisms that you prefer to deal with abusive situations can be protecting, calming or triggering. He noted that, though it is difficult for him, he is now trying to calm down because he had learnt that becoming hot would rather trigger perpetrators. Almost all of the participants have said that they have learnt prayer is a good coping mechanism in dealing with the mistreatments that they were facing. Hawi said,

Whenever I tell my feelings to God, it is like he is listening to me and responds to me; a feeling of courage comes around to fill me and I can have the strength not to have been affected by the mistreatments perpetrated on me. He always gives the courage to go on. Hiwot added, if it was not for the prayer and communication I had with God, I would have been a dead person because of the abuses that had already been perpetrated on me.

Gemechis had also noted that reacting back aggressively like the younger days is not an effective coping mechanism to deal with the mistreatments you face during elderly”.

Except Meskerem, all of them have learned that instead of screaming, crying loud or reacting aggressively; prayer, patience and politeness are effective ways to deal with the abusive phenomenon perpetrated on the elderly.

The Future and the Abused Elderly

When asked what the future looks like, almost all of the participants have said that there is nothing left and are waiting for their death; a kind of death which will take sooner; not the one that puts in you anguish and make you dependent and bed-ridden; which is troublesome both for the guardians and the frail elderly. Hiwot and Nigatu said that they are still strong and are able to perform activities, even including those tasks that include physical performance. Mebatsion had also mentioned that the system can still make a lot out of the elderly in various ways by using their long years of accumulated skills and wisdoms. But, they said that there is no system to integrate the elderly into the nation building process. Hence, all of them had retreated and had attached their future to the transcendent and became watchful about their death, and this was one of the major findings emerged from this study. To this end, all of the participants have indicated a higher tendency to attach themselves to the transcendental or spiritual dimension of life. Here is what Nigatu said regarding his future:

I do not have any worldly plan for the future; I know that I am still strong and I can be an active actor in the development process; but the system is not open for an elderly like me; even if I am strong enough to take tasks. Unlike my younger days, my plan for the future is to go somewhere far away and live the rest of my life in a certain monastery, "*Alem Bekagn lije*" (*literally, it means I am disgusted with the worldly life*) and I am thinking of my life after death; but then, the image of my children comes to my mind and fail to decide. I realize how they are going

to be affected and drop the idea of going to monastery; but, still I have a great attachment with my religion and I love to go to the church to pray and I always felt great after that.

Mebatsion had also indicated the same tendency of leaving the worldly life and living the spiritual life by going to a certain monastery; thinking that he has got nothing left in this world.

He said:

Mejajet alfeligim” (I do not want to get extremely older); I hate becoming bed-ridden and dependent on others on a daily basis; I would rather die than living a life like that. Hereafter, if it is the will of God, I am always praying that God will take me without pain; I want him to take me with a three day maximum sickness and not more than that. *“Hulum neger abkital Mechem kahun behuala*

ezelalehuna echefralehu biye alimegnim.

Hawi had also noted that there is nothing that she is thinking about in the future except her death, a kind of death without pain and without an exhausting sickness. She said “sometimes a burning desire of running away to a certain monastery comes to my mind and I do not know what to decide that time”.

From the lived experience of the elderly regarding the future, we can figure out “death” and “spirituality” had been the two concepts that came together with the aging process among the participants. Unlike the younger days, all of the participants were alert and vigilant about their death and they have indicated a higher tendency of attachment to the spiritual dimension of life.

Suggestion by the Participants

Participants were interviewed on various as to what do you think is the government doing and what shall be done in the future to curb the issue of elder abuse and they have argued that the government is not doing what it has to do to provide social protection for the elderly. For instance Nigatu said,

Those who were in the army and in other governmental organization have pension; what about the rest of the elderly population who have never been employed in the formal sector!? Does not have I served my country in various aspects? I did and I am still serving especially as “*yehager shimagle*” (literally an elderly who serves the community by resolving disputes). But, the government only cares for those who were serving in its own institutions and does not care about us. Regarding the future, the government should give attention to the issue of the elderly in various dimensions including abuse of different forms; it has to build a separate system to give protection for the aging population. We deserve support and protection.

Mebatsion also said that he had served his country in various ways; he said that he used to be a car driver, mechanic, and machine operator in the army; but complained that the pension he is receiving is not enough at least to support him on his basic necessities. He suggested that the government and the community should help the elderly persons in various ways. The government should provide a legal, economic, social and psychological protection for the elderly in general. In the same manner like females and children, the government should also give protection for the elderly population which is practical. Gemechis and Hiwot also suggested that the elderly can be productive like

other groups of the population. The government should focus on organizing the elderly in various associations based on their interest and give them legal, economic, social and psychological support.

Almost all of the participants have agreed with the idea that the government is not doing enough to give protection for the elderly, especially regarding the issue of elder abuse. They said an explicit and separate protection system should be established to care for the elderly who are employed both in the formal and informal sector. The younger generation should also think about the scenario in the future; they should set directions for the rainy day when the aging process becomes a reality. They have also said that the issue of elder abuse should be emphasized as an issue and the government should give legal protection in that regard.

Chapter Five

Discussion on Major Findings

This phenomenological research was conducted to describe the lived experiences of the elderly facing elder abuse in Bishoftu town. Basically, the literature review and the finding were organized around the central research question posed and the specific objectives that this research sought to address. It has presented a detailed account on the lived experiences of the elderly facing elder abuse. The experience, meaning and perception of the elderly towards aging & elder abuse, the nature & types of abuses experienced by the elderly, the perpetrators, risk factors, contexts, settings & consequences of elder abuse. In addition, the gender dimension of elder abuse, the reaction of the elderly during moments of abuse and the coping mechanisms used by the elderly were also dealt with. This section is specifically designed to put the findings of the research within the framework of the existing literature and the researcher's view.

Feeling, Perception and Experiences towards Aging & Elder Abuse

One of the major findings that this research arrived at is the feeling, perception, meanings and experiences of the elderly towards aging and elder abuse is highly influenced by the environment and circumstances in which they lived. If the elderly are living in a healthy, safe, caring, loving, participatory, and respecting environment, their feeling, perception and experience of aging would be highly positive and if the environment is an abusive and mistreating one, their feeling and experiences for the process of aging could be a negative one. Hence, the elderly develops a positive or negative view towards aging based on the situation in which they are living.

All participants hated getting older in an abusive situation on the one hand and considered getting older as grace, reverence (*"Idmen Indetsega"*) on the other. Meskerem had

developed a negative feeling and perception for aging because she was living in an extremely abusive environment. Strengthening the finding, literatures claimed that whether positive or negative, attitudes have a profound effect; how a person feels about his or her own ageing determines his/her wellbeing and the feeling and perception is also determined by the situation in which the elderly person is living (Draper, Gething, Fethney, Winfield, n.d., p.718).

The perception towards aging can be seen in two ways; self-perception and society's perception. The two re-enforces each other; i.e., if the society has a negative perception towards ageing, then the individual elderly is going to develop the same feeling towards his/her ageing and if the individual has a negative image towards his/her personal ageing process, then others (the society) are going to perceive his/her ageing as negative.

According to Nelson (2002), cited in Draper et al., (n.d., p.721), one of the consequences of a negative attitude towards aging that results from ageism is "*age denial*"; some elderly might even reject a service or interview denying that they are an elderly. For instance, while I was trying to test participants, two elderly persons reacted in what literatures called an "*age denial*" manner. They were two individuals who looked like an elderly physically & I asked them to undertake the test to be involved in the sample politely, but they offended me saying that "*Mine Arogit Yimeslal Ante!*" and "*Hidna Arogehn Felg*", respectively (Literally, it means "*which part of me looked like an elderly*" and "*Go look for your old one*", respectively).

Another perception towards the full rejection of aging (a complete negative feeling towards ageing) was "*aging in its extreme sense*"; no participant wanted to live longer beyond the limit; i.e., none of the participants wanted to become bed-ridden and frail and live a complete dependent life (They put it this way in their own language "*Mejajet befitsum alfeligim; Amlak*

Amuamuaten yasamirilign!”). Age in its extreme form whether in a comfortable or an abusive environment had been considered as undesirable by the elderly.

Those elderly participants who had led a very nice life previously before the aging phenomenon were more likely to develop a negative feeling, meaning and perception towards living an elderly life; so, their experience to getting older had been found to be an undesirable one. Meskerem for instance had led a very comfortable life; she used to own a hotel in the younger days and she is now trapped in an extremely abusive and painful environment. When I asked her how she feels about her aging, she asked me back this question looking deep through my eyes “...after all the agony and mistreatment I have been through, how can you expect me to love my aging process young man?”. Mebatsion and Gemechis had also suffered from the same feeling and perception towards getting older by comparing their life as an elderly with the life they had led during young hood and adulthood. They were both in the army; Gemechis was a “Leughtenal Colonel” while Mebatsion was a “Master Technician”. Both of them led a fancy life, gave order to people, and participated in many issues even at a national level. When all that reverence withered away and the same people who respected them came to disregard them, they have really hated their aging. Gemechis once said in the interview process “*Wey Nedo*” comparing his life with the one that he led before. In a similar manner, literatures have argued that those older persons who had led a better life in the past before the aging process started found it difficult to cope with the mistreatments that age brings (Gloria and Charmaine, 2010).

The other issue discovered in this research was that elderly persons who are victims of abuse might not consider it as an abuse. The case in mind is Hawi; who considered her forced feeding as something desirable. There is a body of literature which supports this idea. For instance, in a study conducted by the government of Alberta, it was confirmed that victims of

elder abuse may regard the abuse as “normal” behavior, or may mistakenly or wrongly believe they did something to bring on the abuse. In some cases the victim may not understand or be aware they are suffering abuse (Government of Alberta, 2010, p.6).

From the above discussion, we can understand that the feeling of the elderly towards the process of aging is dependent on the environment in which the process takes place & the personal level of awareness.

The Different Forms of Abuses Perpetrated on the Elderly

Different forms of elder abuse had been identified. Even though the emotional abuse was more agonizing, other forms of abuses were also perpetrated on the elderly. System and cultural abuse, physical abuse, material or financial exploitation and neglect were also listed out as the various forms of abuse. No report was made on self-neglect except by one of the participants, (Meskerem) and no elderly among the participants, whether male or female had been abused sexually. Hence, we can say that psychological or emotional abuse is the most severe and highly reported form of abuse while self-neglect was the most under reported form of mistreatment in this research. Likewise, sexual abuse is a non-reported form of abuse by the participants.

In contrast to the finding of this study, some literatures have argued that financial abuse is the most commonly reported form of abuse by the elderly. For instance, in a study conducted in America, Pritchard argued that financial or material abuse is the most common type of abuse experienced by the elderly; especially, the elderly male followed by neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse (Pritchard, 200, p. 46).

In more than 67 literatures that I have reviewed, except one, none of them acknowledged system/structural (in the sense of political structure) abuse as one separate form of abuse. But, in the conversation I had with the participants of this study, system abuse was identified as one

form of abuse among the elderly. Almost all of the participants have argued that the system is not doing enough to give protection for the elderly who have served their nation before the aging process started. Accordingly, the system is doing nothing more than neglecting the elderly after exploiting their labor and skill in previous times.

Participants had also complained on the system saying that, it only considers those who had served in the army or in other governmental institutions leaving aside the great majority of the elderly population who are employed in the informal sector. Those who have had the privilege for pension had also complained that they were pensioned while they were capable and energetic of contributing to the nation building process; they have also said that the pension that they were entitled to receive was not enough to fulfill their day-to-day needs even.

In a similar fashion, one study conducted in Nigeria by *Ajomale* in title *Elder Abuse; The Nigerian experience* in 2007, had indicated that societal/cultural and structural/system abuse are facts in Nigeria. The study noted that issues of culture as related to the elderly are sometimes used in abusing the elderly. For instance, accusations of witchcraft based on fragility of an elderly women, her use of walking stick and her bent figure due to old age results to ostracism and stigmatization. In addition, the older person being forbidden to speak his/her own language is another form of abuse. In this regard, Nigatu had mentioned his mistreatment based on the fact the fact that he is not originally from the local ethnic group by the local 'kebele' administrators. According to *Ajomale*, the dehumanizing treatment of older people who suffer in institutions and marginalization by the government is a system abuse. He argued saying, for even those who worked in the organized private sector (*here we have to note that in Ethiopia, the private sector is not yet entitled to be pensioned until after 10 years*) and the public sector and are entitled to pensions, the improper ways they are treated leaves much to be desired. Pensions are not enough

to allow for reasonable quality of life. Irregular payment and long delay in payment of gratuities after retirement are examples of abuse (Ajomale, 2007, pp.11-12).

Hence, from this discussion we can say that the experience of older people in developing countries like Nigeria and Ethiopia were found to be subjects of structural and cultural abuse.

Perpetrators, Contexts and Settings, Risk factors and Consequences of Elder Abuse

Perpetrators, Contexts and Setting of Elder Abuse,

Unbelievable as it may sound; most of the perpetrators of the abuses perpetrated on the participants were found to be individuals who have a close relationship with the elderly participants and these included family members (such as children; especially the adult ones, children's spouses, grandchildren, and spouses of the elderly), relatives, neighbors, administrators and other public service providers. In addition to those who had been in an intimate relationship with the elderly, other perpetrators were identified who abused the elderly out of the home and domestic environment and these included kids in the community, the younger generation, public service providers such as taxi drivers & "*weyalas*" (*literally it means assistants of taxi drivers*), merchants, kebele administrators, and other governmental institution workers.

In a similar fashion, literatures have confirmed that elder abuses are mostly perpetrated by the people whom the elderly have trusted a lot. According to the National Association of State Units on Aging in America, the great majority of abusers are family members, most often an adult child or spouse. Likewise, abuse can also occur at a long term care facility by staffs that have direct contact with the elderly. Other offenders may include other family and old friends, newly developed "friends" who intentionally prey on older adults, and service providers in positions of trust (National Association of State Units on Aging[USA], 2005, p.7). In a research

conducted by Jackie Pritchard, it was confirmed that abusers of the elderly were identified to be those closest to the elderly. Accordingly son(s) were identified as the major abusers followed by daughter(s), wife, carer (s), friend (s) and neighbors (Pritchard, 2001, p.47).

As confirmed both by the findings of this research and the above literatures, the great majority of the perpetrators of abuse on the elderly were those who are in a trust relationship with the elderly. In addition to family members, neighbors can also abuse the elderly. For instance, Meskerem had noted that there is no one by her side and the neighbors were even mistreating her by backing the family members who were abusing her in various forms. I even have observed her neighbors trying to convince me not to have had the interview with Meskerem intimidating her not to continue the interview with me (which failed because of Meskerem's and my resistance) and they said "*do not trust her, all that she is going to tell you about her adopted child is false; we can witness that everything is fine for her at home; it is just age and a mental problem that is driving her, she is just not normal*". I have seen with my own eyes how harsh her adopted child and her neighbors were towards Meskerem in that brief session I had with her. I have observed that some perpetrators do have a strong conviction that what they are doing is not an abuse. For instance whenever the adopted child of Meskerem and the daughter of Hawi forced their mothers to eat or take medicine they never thought that they are abusing them; they were rather thinking they were caring for them. But, there are also other research findings elsewhere refuting the idea that the majority of perpetrators are family members. As reflected in *Broken Trust: Elders, Family, and Finances* (2009), it was reported that most perpetrators were strangers (51%), followed by family and friends (34%), Medicare and Medicaid fraud (4%), and business (12%) (The MetLife Mature Market Institute, 2001, p.10).

The other issue worth discussing about the nature of perpetrators is their personal profile and behavioral background; i.e., if the person living with an elderly is a drug addict, bad tempered, jobless and dependent on the family, there is a higher tendency of perpetrating an abuse of any type on the elderly. The case in mind is Mebatsion; he had two adult children who were jobless and living home dependent on their parents. Mebatsion had noted how abusive his children were towards him, especially whenever he tried to advise them. In addition to the unemployment, one of the children is a drug addict. The fact that they are unemployed and the guilty feeling that they have developed as a result of their dependence on their parents, the drug addiction to escape from such feeling of guilt had contributed a lot in letting them act in an abusive manner towards their parents.

Strengthening this argument, The National Association of State Units on Aging in America has identified some characteristics of perpetrators that triggers them to act abusively and these included alcohol or drug dependence, history of domestic violence or abuse, mental illness, dependency, family dysfunction, economic pressures, personal stress, and longstanding personality traits such as bad temper, hypercritical, tendency to blame others for problems (National Association of State Units on Aging[USA], 2005, p.7).

From the above discussion, we can understand that the situation, nature and behavior of the perpetrators matters a lot in being harsh or caring towards the elderly.

It is crucial to know the settings and contexts in which elder abuse takes place. Hence, the research has found out that the setting where the majority of the abuses on the participants had been reported to be home.

According to Ashley B. Carson, the vast majority of abusers were family members (approximately 90%), most often adult children, spouses/partners and others (Ashley B. Carson, 2009 p.3). Another study by House of Commons Health Committee, confirmed that abuse takes place in a range of settings, home being the predominant one, and its prevalence varies and these settings includes: Nursing home (12%), Sheltered housing(4%),Hospital (5%), Residential care (10%), Own home (67%) and Other locations (2%) (House of Commons Health Committee, 2003–04). Although home is the setting where most of the abuse takes place, this does not mean that there are no other settings where abuse takes place; in fact there are. ‘Kebele’, taxi, and other public service providing government organs were identified were settings listed out by the participants other than home. Shortage of home utility, lack of observers/witnesses, sickness, loneliness, drinking, addiction to drug use and abuse, anger, and trying to advise abusers were identified as facilitating contexts for perpetrators to abuse the elderly.

According to the discussion, home is the place where elder abuse takes place most frequently and this had contributed a lot in making elder abuse a hidden social phenomenon. Because most of the elderly spend their time at home; this together with the cultural barrier led them not to talk about their family secrets for outsiders, and because no one from outside notices the crimes that are committed on the elderly, the situation of elder abuse has become a hidden phenomenon and an issue difficult to explore. Fueling this idea, Ashley B. Carson, had described the issue of elder abuse as a growing, yet hidden problem (Carson A.B., 2009 p.26).

Risk Factors and Consequences of Elder Abuse

An understanding of associated risk factors & consequences of elder abuse is necessary for the development of screening methods, to provide a rational basis for prevention programs and to the development of public policy initiatives (Bonnie and Wallace, 2003, pp.88-89).

Regarding the risk factors, the participants of the study had listed out poverty, extreme aging, high physical deterioration, prevalence of various health issues, drug addiction, being widowed, dependency on others, dependency of adult children on the elderly, burden and stress on carers, behavior of the elderly, behavior of carers, lack of legal protection, neglect by the system, bad history of past relationship, negative cultural context and perception towards aging as major risk factors that have had contributed for their abuse.

In this regard, literatures have argued that adult child being dependent upon the older adult, a history of domestic violence in the home, living with others in isolation, caregiver Stress and the older adult having problems with mental illness or substance abuse as risk factors for elder abuse (National Association of State Units on Aging[USA], 2005, p.8).

The chance I had to talk with the carer of Meskerem had really made me develop an insight on the concept of *caregiver stress* as a risk factor for the elderly to be abused. Meskerem's adopted child was highly stressed by the relationship that she had with Meskerem. She was assuming that she is doing all she can to help and care for Meskerem; but, she complained that Meskerem had never been grateful for that. She said, " Meskerem is always blaming me in face of others as if I am mistreating and agonizing her, while the truth is I am doing all the best that I can for her. You can ask the neighbors how I nurture and care for her; but she always disregards that and tried to annoy me in what she says and does. when I washed her clothes, she urinates on it, when I gave her water with a cup, she urinate in it, when I tell her to take her medicines and I gave her food, she assumed that I have intoxicated it and you do not have any idea how messy the house is because of her. Now, I am sick and tired of taking care of her and I am going to fly to the Middle East leaving here my three children and their father because of her". I can read the pressure on her face while she was telling me her feelings.

Surprisingly, she was assuming that she was the one who is being agonized and mistreated, not Meskerem. Here, we can understand how care givers can be stressed out and provoked to mistreat the one whom they were supposed to take care of. This experience can be well understood by *Situational theory*; which claims that an overburdened and stressed caregiver creates an environment for abuse (Perel, 2008, pp.7).

Jill Hightower, as cited in Gloria and Charmaine, noted that overly demanding care recipient may be more prone to abuse at the hands of their caregivers and may exacerbate their problems (Gloria and Charmain,2010, P.18). In relation to this Mebatsion had noted that, an elderly should have an extremely limitless patience while living with others; if an elderly becomes complaint and angry at everything, his/her risk of being mistreated will increase. As cited in Gloria and Charmaine, Kosberg argued that men who engaged in abusive behavior of family members earlier in their lives are at high risk for being abused in their later years; elder abuse can be targeted upon an earlier abuser: the husband/father (Gloria and Charmain, 2010, P.27). In this regard, Hawi mentioned that her deceased husband had abused her while he was alive and young; but she said that God paid her husband back when he got older; bed-ridden and frail, but she never mistreated him because she believed that vengeance is of God's. This can be explained by *Exchange theory*; which assumes that reciprocity and dependence between the abused and the perpetrator. It suggests that abuse can occur within a framework of tactics and responses in family life. Unlike Hawi, those who abused might develop a feeling of paying back or exchange (Perel, 2008, p.7)).

As to the consequences, Participants had identified various consequences of being abused as an elderly. These included; emotional damage, anxiety, depression, mental illness, low self-esteem, physical damage (broken bone, bruises and mobility problems), faster rate of aging,

death, loss of property, chronic illness, faster rate of aging, ageism and the related social segregation as the major outcomes of being abused. Fueling the experiences of the study participants, Lavery argued that elder abuse has devastating consequences for older persons such as poor quality of life, psychological distress, multiple health problems and increased mortality (Lavery, 2003, p.1).

As cited in Gloria and Charmain (2010), Sylvia Ashley has also argued that, elders who experienced mistreatment, had a 300% higher risk of death when compared to those who had not been mistreated. 26 Women who experienced psychological or emotional abuse (alone or with other kinds of abuse) had significantly increased odds of reporting joint, heart and digestive problems; depression or anxiety; and chronic pain.

Home was the setting where most of the abuses had taken place and family members had been found to be the major perpetrators of elder abuse. Various risk factors of elder abuse were also identified as leading to various undesirable consequences.

The Unique Experience of Males and Females

In a Number one New-York Times Best Seller Book *Men are from Mars; Women are from Venus*, Psychologist John Gray has clearly described how different are males and females in their view of the world. How they construct reality and how they speak a different language (Gray, 1998).

As the focus on the issue of elder mistreatment started to grow from time to time, new sub-issues are emerging within the issue of elder abuse itself. One such issue that has gained recognition by very few scholars is the gender dimension of elder abuse. The objective of this thematic area would be to provide a detailed description on how males and females experience the aging process. As cited in Gloria and Charmain (2010, p.17), Jill Hightower criticized the

label “*elder abuse*” as it actually reflects a societal predisposition to homogenize older people by ignoring differences among the elderly, including gender. Jill urged, if we are to fully address issues of violence and abuse in the lives of older adults, we must move beyond the “*current narrow*”, “*gender-neutral*” focus of the field of elder abuse. According to Settersten & Angel (2011) cited in Brandl & colleagues, most of the theories in gerontology are highly criticized for their conceptualization of later life as largely gender blind (Brandl et al., 2007, p.16).

Consequently, there are various categories of scholars who argue that the experiences of males and females are completely different and should be treated separately without being labeled under the general concept of “elder abuse”. Hence, some categories of scholars argued that females are more abused than males and other scholars argued the other way round. For instance, The National Research Council (2003), as was cited in Nerenberg (2009, p.14), argued that the majority of victims are women. Similar to this, women make up approximately 66% of elder abuse victims in the United States, and 89% of the cases of abuse occurred in a domestic setting (Carson, 2009, p.6). Other scholars criticized the existing belief that abuse is the issue of children and women and argued that males’ situation is a hidden one while they can be equally victims of abuse as females (Pritchard, 2001, p.7).

In this specific research, participants were selected deliberately from both sex categories in order to figure out experiences under each sex category. To this end, a significant discrepancy was found between the views and lived experiences of male & female participants regarding elder abuse, there is significant commonality among the experiences of the two sexes, though. The following part is devoted to present the views and experiences of each sex category regarding elder abuse.

Females' Experience

When asked what it means to be a female, female participants have responded “*child bearer*”, “*commodity*”, “*who cannot protect herself*”, “*weak*”, “*poor*”, “*undermined*”, “*discriminated*”, and “*dependent*”. They have a feeling that they are not treated in an equal manner with their counter parts. They said that it was because they are females that they had been subjected to all the abuses and mistreatments that they have encountered; especially during the younger days when their husbands were stronger and masters of everything. The power imbalance, between males and females which was reflected by female participants can be explained by *Feminist theory*; which highlights the imbalance of power within relationships between male and female and how men use violence as a way to demonstrate power (Perel, 2008, pp.8). All of the participants reflected the view that the dependency on the husband in earlier times had led them to the abuses that they have suffered from. The men in earlier times were stronger physically, economically, emotionally and the female was dependent on the man in those regards and this together with the socio-cultural frame-work, had led females to possess a lower status and become dominated by the males. They claimed that these factors led females to be discriminated and mistreated by the rest of the society. Hiwot said the culture had accepted and supported the gap between the two sexes; hence females' abuse is considered normal the society. She continued and said “when a husband bits or insults his wife, it is something normal and supported by such cultural sayings such as “*setna ahya kalteregetu....*”; but, if a woman did what he had done, it is the most undesirable scenario”.

The women participants had also noted that unlike the younger days, the abuse perpetrated on them especially, by their marriage partners had significantly reduced as the males became weaker and frail due to age. Hawi said, “You can bit him or insult him as he did it on

you in the younger days when he becomes weak and bed-ridden, but vengeance is of God; God had paid him back for his deeds before he passed away". Even though they never did abuse their husbands, the female participants have known friends who beats and punishes their husbands; especially those husbands who used to abuse their wives. Similar to this idea, Pritchard argued that men who engaged in abusive behavior of family members earlier in their lives are at high risk for being abused in their later years. In such instances, the abuser becomes abused and it is all a 'learned behavior'; and she called this form of abuse intergenerational cyclical abuse (Pritchard, 2001, P.37). *Intergenerational transmission or social learning theory* also states that an adult's behavior relates to learned behavior as a child, thus reverting to the same pattern in adulthood (Perel, 2008, p.7). Hence, children who had been abused and who have seen their mother being abused by their father and a wife who had been a victim of earlier abuse can learn to abuse the weak in later life; especially the father or husband.

The other finding was that unlike males, most females did not assume some issues such as forced feeding as an abuse; they rather has taken it as a positive thing that ever happened to them. The case in mind is Hawi; whose daughter pressurizes her to eat even if she was not hungry. Females had not also complained even in the elderly days, about the gender based labor exploitation perpetrated on them since childhood till their older times. This can be justified by the *ecological model* which explores the interactions between the individual and contextual factors. It considers violence as the result of the complex interplay between the person's individual characteristics (i.e. biology, personal history), close interpersonal relationships, characteristics of the community in which the person lives or works and societal factors such as policies and social norms (Perel, 2008, p.8). The community, the norms and everyone within the community held a belief that females are basically inferior to males and it is not a big deal to

mistreat a female in such a community where the society legitimized it by its cultural framework. Hence, participants came to a belief that their mistreatment is a normal phenomenon.

In line with this, a study conducted by the government of Alberta confirmed that victims of elder abuse may regard the abuse as “normal” behavior, or may mistakenly or wrongly believe they did something to bring on the abuse. In some cases the victim may not understand or be aware they are suffering abuse (Government of Alberta, 2010, p.6).

In addition to all the special forms of abuses they thought are perpetrated on them because of their sex, they have been equally subjective to the abuses that were commonly faced by both males and females due to old age.

From the above discussion we can see how males took advantage of their strength, energy, the normative and cultural frame works to justify the abuse on females and how the females came to be socialized that their mistreatment is normal and natural.

Males' Experience

Strange as it may sound this specific section is devoted to discuss the perpetrated on males. The image of females as victims and males as abusers is a very common theme carried in the popular press, professional literature, and the mass media and this had significantly contributed to make the abuse on males an invisible or hidden problem.

In the same manner there are lots of scholars and lay men who perceive males as perpetrators and females as the victims; and in contrast, there are also scholars who assume that the abuse perpetrated on elderly males is no different from the females; sometimes they even argue that males are abused more than females. For instance, Tatara (1993) cited in Gloria and Charmaine, found that In a national study of elder abuse in the United States, the proportion of older men who were abused exceeded the proportion of women who were abused (Gloria and Charmaine, 2010, p.33).

In this phenomenological study, I have come across to the fact that I never expected; that all male participants assumed that the phenomenon of elder abuse is much more severe for them than the females. The meanings they gave for being male included such words as hero, strong, dependable, leader, provider, winner, unbeatable and the like. They assumed that elder abuse is more painful for male than females because of the meaning they have maleness and that meaning had been completely disproved by the aging process; where they became weak, frail, sick and dependent. This completely opposes the meaning that they have and the life they led before the aging process. Because, most of the elderly had never been abused like females before and because they are ashamed to report abuses, the abuse they face as a result of aging becomes new invisible, and unbearable. Participants had argued that a woman had already got used to the world of abuse; so, it is not going to be new and difficult to her. To use Nigatu's expression in his own language, "*Tikatunma Lebsawalech*" (she had already "dressed the abuse", which literally means, she had already got used to it, it is not new to her). Hence, males had found it very difficult to live in a world of dependence, weakness. Strengthening this, Psychologist Gray (1998), argued that males by their very nature love to do things on their own, to always be winners and they will be satisfied whenever they achieve what dreamt on their own without anyone's assistance. Contrary to their feeling, the aging process will make them dependent on others as we have seen on the participants and they have found it very difficult to cope-up with the new world. Being assisted in a normal way by itself inflicts a pain on elderly male. Males' abuse is more hidden than that of female abuse because males are highly ashamed and restricted by the culture than females to present themselves as weak and incapable for others.

The other complaint raised by the male elderly participants was the abuse perpetrated on them by the system of their country. All of them said that they have served their country

massively in various aspects. Nigatu served his country as a civilian store keeper in the army for a complete 20 years and as a local security person in kebele; but he never has been entitled to pension. The other two used to be highly posted individuals in the army but complained that they were pensioned untimely and the pension is not enough to make a living given the current life expense. They were all disenchanted by the system more than female participants. This disenchantment by the system can be related to *Political economic theories* (Perel, 2008); which criticizes individualistic theories, claiming that structural forces and the marginalization of elders within society have created conditions that lead to conflict and violence.

Though there are commonalities, the above discussion had clearly indicated that there is a clear distinction in the way how elderly males and females lived their life in the world of elder abuse. The same abuse might connote a different meaning and produce a different reaction among male and female elderly. For instance, males felt that they have experienced labor exploitation by the system, while females did not consider labor exploitation as an abuse at all because of their socialization.

From the discussion, we can understand how the cycle of abuse recurs through the life stages; i.e., males who used to abuse their wives in the younger days becomes victims of abuse in the older days by the very same wives whom they used to abuse during the younger days.

Reactions and Coping Mechanisms

Reactions

The participants said, "*I have cried*", "*I had been frightened*", "*I was ashamed*", "*I have trembled*", "*I tried to protect myself if it was a physical threat*", "*I Screamed*", I "*insulted them back*", "*I cursed the abusers*", "*begged the abusers*", "*irritated*", and sometimes "*not reacted at all*" when they were asked about their reaction during moments of abuse.

According to the University Hospitals of Columbia and Cornell, Feeling guilty, anxious, confused, ashamed, or fearful is a very common reaction to abuse or neglect. Many older people do not speak up about what is going on in their own home, which can lead to even more abuse. Sometimes they suffer the pain in silence because of such *mistaken beliefs* as “*Family matters are private and should stay that way*” , “*I have no one to turn to who can help*” , “*The abuse is my fault.*” , “*The consequences of speaking up are worse than keeping quiet.*” , “*I’m so ashamed and embarrassed that my own family member could be behaving in an abusive or neglectful way*”, “*I’m afraid if I break the “family secret,” the person hurting me will get back at me in a way worse than what is happening now.*” (The University Hospitals of Columbia and Cornell, 2006, p.2).

In a similar line with the literature, Meskerem failed to tell to others because of her deep feeling that there is no one to help her and that is why she preferred to confront her abuser. Sometimes participants suffer from the pain of abuse silently because of various factors. One such big factor was the cultural frame work in which the elderly were living; in Ethiopia uncovering you family secret (“*Yebeteseb Gemena*”), is a culturally undesirable behavior.

Hence, there was a little tendency for abusers to report cases of abuse. Except Meskerem, all the participants were highly restrictive in disclosing cases of abuse; but their facial expression tells that there are things that they wanted to say but found it difficult to do so and the ecological model can give a justification for such a behavior which can be influenced by the view of the wider community. Because it is culturally thought undesirable to talk about your family secrets, and because individuals are the reflections of the normative and cultural values in which they were born and raised up, they found it very difficult to talk about such sensitive issue as elder abuse. The other factor was a fear that disclosing might lead to retaliation by the perpetrators if

they knew that their misdeeds were publicized. Hence they intimidate the elderly by telling them what the consequence would be. The case in mind is Hawi, who kept quiet than accusing her husband for the violence he is perpetrating on her. Most of the participants have preferred to react within the family setting rather than disclosing secrets to outsiders & in the process participants have developed various coping mechanisms out of their lived experience. For instance, most of the participants have learnt that confrontation is not a feasible reaction for an elderly if the goal is not to provoke perpetrators and aggravate the situation. As time goes by, most of them had preferred to take a non-confrontation approach in their reaction to abuses.

Coping Mechanism

Based on their lived experience, participants have categorized the coping mechanisms that they have applied so far in to two; coping mechanisms that worked and that did not work. Among the coping mechanisms that they thought does not work, the major ones were mentioned in the reaction section and they included insulting back, physically trying to defend, screaming, and cursing the perpetrators. On the other hand, being polite and patient towards perpetrators and potential perpetrators, Telling your pain to a friend without the knowledge of perpetrators (sharing their feeling to someone else reduced their agony), and praying.

Participants noted that the coping mechanisms that they have categorized as ineffective were immediate mechanisms that emanate from an emotional reaction to defend themselves. Those are more of reaction than coping mechanisms; but sometimes they can serve as an immediate and temporary coping mechanism. For instance, if there were people around, screaming might work. The same is true with all other immediate coping mechanisms; sometimes they work and most of the time they fail. As Mebatsion, mentioned patience and politeness are better in dealing with the abusers. Almost all of the participants had mentioned

that previously, they have used mechanisms that even provoke abusers for an extended abuse and finally they have learnt that being aggressive does not work and almost all of them have retreated to other coping mechanisms such as patience and politeness.

Spirituality as a coping Mechanism

Among all the coping mechanisms that the participants were using, being involved in a spiritual dimension of life was identified as the best coping mechanisms of all. In this regard, almost all of them used prayer to cope up with the pain inflicted on them by the abusers. The case in mind is Hawi; who said the abuses perpetrated on her would have killed her if it was not for the help of God.

The Future and the Abused Elderly

When participants were asked about the future, they have shown a higher tendency to attach themselves with the spiritual dimension of life. One big event of life every participant expecting was '*death*'. Every participant said that there is nothing that they are left with on earth. Hence they were begging God for a quick and less painful death. Some of them even have developed a desire of going and living life of a monk and a nun in a monastery. Some of the participants have suggested that they should be given a chance to contribute their part to the nation building process.

The above discussion on the future view of the elderly had clearly led the emergence of three basic facts. First, as people get older, their meaning for life will be reduced and their commitment for the spiritual dimension of life has increased. Second, as age increases, people would become too much vigilant about the final stage of life- "*death*". Finally, the elderly has also got a feeling that they can be productive if they are given a chance in a way that is compatible with the situation of the elderly.

Chapter-Six

Conclusion and Implication

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicated that the participants' meaning, feeling, perception and experience towards the aging had been highly influenced by the situation or environment in which the aging process takes place. The perception and experience of the elderly towards aging as measured by the degree of positivity and negativity is influenced by the corresponding positive or negative environment in which the aging process takes place; i.e., if the environment is supportive of the elderly, aging will be perceived as something positive and the opposite will be true if the aging process is taking place in an uncaring and degrading environment. Hence, we can conclude that creating a positive and caring environment for the elderly is very essential in bringing a successful process of aging.

Among all the abuses ever perpetrated on the participants, psychological or emotional abuse had been identified as the most agonizing and difficult to cope with type of abuse. Therefore, intervention programs should focus on this form of abuse in helping the abused elderly. Since most of the people who perpetrated abuses on the elderly were family members or trusted others, intervention programs by social workers and other professionals should give a due attention in developing mechanisms to deal with perpetrators at home.

The risk factors for the mistreatment of the elderly included poverty, extreme aging, high physical deterioration, chronic illness, drug addiction, being widowed, high degree of dependence on others, the behavior of the elderly & carers, lack of legal protection, , unhealthy victim-perpetrator relationship, cultural context and caregiver stress. Emotional damage, anxiety, depression, mental illness, low self-esteem, physical damage (broken bone, bruises and

mobility problems), loss of property, chronic illness, faster rate of the aging process, ageism, social seclusion and untimely death were identified as consequences of elder abuse. Considering the various risk factors and consequences of elder abuse, it is crucial to deal with the risk factors so as to prevent the likelihood of mistreatment on the elderly.

As to the gender dimension of elder abuse, it was found that both males and females are abused in almost a similar magnitude; but the abuse perpetrated on males is mostly a hidden one and unbearable one as compared with females. The logic here was that males had never been in the world of abuse previously before aging, which led them to face a difficulty to cope up with a new world of abuse which they never knew before. In contrast females have got used to the abusive situation earlier before the aging process; so, it was not as such difficult for females to deal with similar situation as compared with males. The major finding in this dimension was that, although there were common elements, males and females experienced the situation of elder abuse in unique ways and this in turn will dictate the designing of an intervention program which considers the different experiences of male and female elderly.

Through their lived experience the abused elderly have learnt effective and ineffective mechanisms of dealing with abuse. Among all the coping mechanisms, prayer, politeness and patience had been identified as best ways to cope with the abusers and the abuse. Taking this in to account, professionals should learn from and build up on the existing coping mechanisms held by the elderly while designing intervention programs.

The issue of death and spirituality are highly pronounced as people get older. Therefore, intervention programs should realize this fact and give attention to these fundamental issues in planning any intervention program to help the elderly. Since there are elderly people who feel

that they are productive, they should get the necessary assistance from the governmental and non-governmental sectors so that they can become part and parcel of the development process.

In general, i can say that the issue of elder abuse is deeply rooted within the biological, psychological, economic and socio-cultural fabrics of a certain society and within the members of that society. Therefore, no single risk factor is responsible for the issue of elder abuse and no single and overarching intervention program should be adopted without considering the differences among the abused elderly people.

Implication

This study has explored the various issues that underlie the lived experience of the elderly facing mistreatment. Even though the lived experience of each participant was unique, there was common phenomenon shared by all of them as a group of an abused elderly. While some of them were living with their spouses, others were widowed, while some of them were males and others were females, while some of them were living in an extremely abusive situation others were living in a relatively less abusive situation, while some of them were in the age group of the oldest old, others were in the age group of the middle-old and the youngest-old, while some were pensioned others were not entitled for pension and while some of them were chronically sick, others were relatively healthy. All of them had experienced a sort of abuse because of their age and psychological or emotional abuse was found to be the most agonizing type of mistreatment. All the participants had shown an inclination towards spirituality and religiosity as their age increased and they were all vigilant about the issue of death.

Even though there are common issues that can be addressed commonly for the whole group of the elderly, a single and overarching intervention strategy does not appear to be the best option to guide workable intervention programs. Rather, there needs to be coordination between

policy makers, social work practitioners and researchers in order to address the issue of elder abuse based on the common and unique experiences of the elderly. Hence, the findings of this research have several implications for these groups.

Implication for Social Work Practice

This study has indicated that the elder abuse has harmful and unbearable consequences on the elderly. To this end, social workers can be directly involved in helping the elderly people help themselves to cope up with the problems they grapple with as a result of elder mistreatment. Social workers can be engaged in identifying, assessing, planning, intervention, and evaluation of the services rendered with regard to freeing and empowering the elderly to lead a successful aging. Since the findings of this research has regarded both the unique & common experiences of the abused elderly, it can be of great value for a successful social work practice that is tailored according to the unique experiences of each elderly and that is common for those who shared a common experience. The findings have also indicated that people are discriminated and denied equal opportunities simply because of their age. Since social justice, equity and equality of opportunity are basic building blocks in social work practice, social workers can apply them to deal with problems like ageism.

The research has also indicated that the elderlies have strengths and have even developed coping mechanisms to deal with the problems they encounter. Hence, social workers can build up on the assets that had already been possessed by the elderly by applying a strength based model to bring the elderly out of trouble. The research argued that the physical, cultural, political, and economical environment had influenced both victims and perpetrators; so, social workers can apply their knowledge of the person in the environment model to facilitate the environment where the aging process takes place.

Since the issue of elder abuse is not yet given attention in the public like child and woman abuse and since the elderly are weak and caught up by various factors not to publicize their problem, social workers can use the findings of the research to advocate on behalf of both the voiceless victims and the issue of elder abuse.

Implication for Future Research

The study has been intended to assess the lived experience of the abused elderly. It has tried to fill the gap in knowledge regarding the experiences of the abused elderly by applying a phenomenological research. Although this research has explored the issue of elder abuse by adhering to a general approach, it might be crucial to investigate various sub-issues under the umbrella of elder abuse. For instance, all types of abuses faced by the elderly had been assessed by taking a general approach which might lead to a lesser emphasis on each form of abuse separately in a detailed manner. In this regard, this study might initiate future researches under each type of mistreatment in an in depth manner. Hence, each type of abuse will be investigated separately in its own right.

This is a qualitative phenomenological research which does not give a quantitative insight on the cause, rate, prevalence and incidence of elder abuse. In the future, researchers might be triggered to conduct researches around the issue by following various research designs other than qualitative & phenomenological designs.

Implication for Social Policy

The issue of elder mistreatment has been raised as one of the issues facing the elderly under issue number thirteen-Protection of life and property in the National Plan of Action on older persons (Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs [Ethiopia], 2006, p.69). But, the issue had not been given a wider coverage, so that it can be considered as a big issue on its own right.

Therefore, this research will be of great value for policy makers and advocates who are interested in lobbying for or developing a separate alternative policy regarding the issue of elder abuse.

This study gives a clue on how the elderly are experiencing the aging process and it will inform policy makers how reality is perceived by the elderly, this in turn would lead policy makers to designing a policy that is tailored as per the interests of the elderly.

Except the issue of gender and HIV/AIDS, the Ethiopian National Plan of Action on older persons seemed to disregard the unique experiences of older persons on other aspects. In this regard, this research might inform policy makers how unique are the experiences of each elderly and this will prevent policy makers from making a mistake of developing an overarching policy by putting the diverse issues of the elderly in the same bag.

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Appendix-I-

Interview Guide

This interview guide is prepared to describe the lived experience of elder abuse among the elderly in Bishoftu town. The participation in this interview is based on a complete consent of the elderly participant; i.e., any participant can disengage himself/herself from the interview whenever he/she felt uncomfortable to continue. I expect that participants will fully collaborate in giving their genuine experience regarding the issue under investigation.

Date of interview: _____

Venue of the interview: _____

Starting time: _____

Ending time: _____

Background of Participants

1. Sex _____
2. Age _____
3. Ethnic Background _____
4. Religion _____
5. Income _____
6. Source of income _____
7. Marital status _____
8. Number of Children _____
9. Have you ever been in an institutional care system? _____
10. Health condition?

Meaning, Perception, Feeling of the elderly towards aging

11. How can you describe the life you are living right now?

Probe: What is aging means to you?

12. Could you give me a brief history of how your aging process begun?

13. What is your perception towards the life you are living right now?

14. Has being old made a difference to how you see yourself?

Probe: If so, how do you see yourself now as different from before your elderly years?

How would you say you have changed?

15. Could you tell me how you are experiencing the aging process?

16. How is aging perceived in your community?

17. How do you think others perceive you?

Elder Abuse, its history, Nature & Types as Experienced by the Elderly

18. What is elder abuse to you?

19. How do you think elder abuse happens?

20. Have you ever been abused?

Probes:

a. Physical

Has anyone ever used physical force on you that may result in bodily injury, physical pain, or impairment? (have you ever experienced hitting, beating, pushing, shoving, shaking, slapping, kicking, pinching and burning, forced-feeding, and physical punishment of any kind)?

b. Sexual

Has anyone ever tried to have a non-consensual sexual contact of any kind with you?

(This might include, but is not limited to, unwanted touching, and all types of sexual assault or battery, such as rape, sodomy, coerced nudity, and sexually explicit photographing).

c. Psychological or Emotional

Has anyone ever inflicted anguish, pain, or distress through verbal or nonverbal acts on you? (This might include, but is not limited to, verbal assaults, insults, threats, intimidation, humiliation, and harassment).

Probe: Has anyone treated you as an infant; isolated you from your family, friends or regular activities; giving you the “silent treatment”; and enforcing social isolation on you?

d. Financial or Material Exploitation

Has anyone ever tried to use your money, assets, funds or other properties illegally or improperly? (This might include but not limited to forging an older person’s signature; misusing or stealing an older person’s money or possessions; coercing or deceiving an older person into signing any document).

e. Neglect

Has anyone responsible to care for you refused or failed to provide you with such life necessities as food, water, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, medicine, comfort, personal safety, and other essentials?

f. Self-Neglect

Have you ever found yourself in a position no longer willing or able to provide basic care for yourself?

Probe: If so, please give me an explanation of the situation.

g. Abandonment

Has anyone, who has assumed responsibility for providing you care, ever deserted you?

h. Societal or Cultural Abuse

Have you ever felt that the society or culture has abused you?

Probe: Have you ever been discriminated because you are old, ashamed of speaking your language, degraded by cultural sayings, stories, and etc.

i. Structural/Institutional Abuse

How can you describe the system in supporting you as an elderly person?

Probe: Is the government doing what it is expected to do support you? If not, what do you suggest?

21. Which form abuse is more severe/hurting/painful to you?

Probe: Tell me why it is more painful?

22. Would you please explain how you experienced each form of abuse that ever happened to you?

Perpetrators of Elder Abuse

23. Can you tell me about the abusers?

Probe: what kind of relationship do you have to the abusers?

24. Have you ever expected that they will perpetrate the abuse on you?

Probe: Can you tell me why if you have ever expected that?

25. If you have to describe your abusers, what would you say?

Probe: What images and what words come to your mind when you think of your abusers? Do you have words for it?

Risk factors, Setting, Context, and consequence of elder abuse

26. What do you think are the factors for each form of abuse you are facing/have faced?

27. Would you tell me where the abuse takes place in most cases?

Probe: Home, work place, public place, on the road, in social activities, & etc.

28. Could you give me a brief description of how the abuse takes place?

29. What do you think are the consequences of your abuse?

Probe: physical, psychological, financial, system, etc.

30. Do you feel that the different forms of abuse have affected your everyday life?

Probe: If so, how do the different forms of elder abuse affect your everyday life?

Gender Dimension of Elder Abuse

For Males:

31. What is being male to you?

32. Have you ever felt that a certain form of abuse happened to you because you are male?

33. Do you think that males experience elder abuse differently from females?

Probe: please explain how and why?

34. Have you ever felt that you have abused an elderly woman?

For Females:

35. What is being female to you?

36. Have you ever felt that a certain form of abuse happened to you because you are female?

37. Do you think that females experience elder abuse differently from males?

38. Have you ever felt that you have abused an elderly man?

Reaction & Coping Mechanisms Used by the Elderly to Deal with Abuse & view of the future

39. Could you please explain how you feel the moment you are abused?

40. What do you do when you are abused?

41. How do you deal with the abuses you face?

Probe: do you have strategies to help yourself? Ways of coping, physical, mental, etc.

42. What do you think of the future?

Appendix-II-

The Screening Tool applied in the study

This tool is directly adopted from University of California at Berkley; School of Social Welfare as published on a journal entitled Instruments for Assessing Elder Mistreatment: Implications for Adult Protective Services, Number 9, September 2007.

Hwalek-Sengstock Elder Abuse Screening Test (H-S/EAST).

The H-S/EAST is a 15-item screening tool designed to identify older adults who are being abused or who are at risk for abuse. The H-S/EAST developed out of a larger study that used a pool of more than 1000 items from several existing elder abuse protocols.⁴⁰ From the larger pool, the authors selected items believed to be correlates of abuse; data reduction techniques were then used to shorten the final instrument. The H-S/EAST evaluates *three specific categories of abuse*, including: “(1) overt violation of personal rights or direct abuse, (2) characteristics of the elder that make him or her vulnerable to abuse, and (3) characteristics of a potentially abusive situation.” Items include questions such as “Can you take your own medication and get around by yourself?” and “Are you helping to support someone?” After reverse coding four items, responses to questions (“yes” or “no”) are summed. One item, “Who makes decisions about your life- like how you should live or where you should live?” involves an open response and the response of “someone else” is coded in the risk direction.

The H-S/EAST is to be used to assess for risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. A score of 3 or greater indicates that the patient may be at a higher risk of being mistreated. The purpose of this tool is to provide the opportunity for a discussion with a patient and indicate the need for further assessment. The H-S/EAST is a brief (administration time estimated to be between 5-10 minutes) and easy to administer tool.

The 15-Item Hwalek-Sengstock Elder Abuse Screening Test

Violation of Personal Rights or Direct Abuse

1. Does someone else make decisions about your life – like how you should live or where you should live?
2. Does someone in your family make you stay in bed or tell you you're sick when you know you're not?
3. Has anyone forced you to do things you didn't want to do?
4. Has anyone taken things that belong to you without your OK?
5. Has anyone close to you tried to hurt you or harm you recently?

Characteristics of Vulnerability

6. Do you have anyone who spends time with you, taking you shopping or to the doctor?
7. Are you sad or lonely often?
8. Can you take your own medication and get around by yourself?

Potentially Abusive Situations

9. Are you helping to support someone?
10. Do you feel uncomfortable with anyone in your family?
11. Do you feel that nobody wants you around?
12. Does anyone in your family drink a lot?
13. Do you trust most of the people in your family?
14. Does anyone tell you that you give them too much trouble?
15. Do you have enough privacy at home?

N.B.: A response of "no" to items 6, 8, 13, and 15 and a response of "yes" to all other score is in the abused direction.

Appendix-III-

Statement of Informed Consent

Me,

Hello, my name is Solomon Tefera; I'm a graduating class student of Social work in the master's program in Addis Ababa University. I'm conducting a thesis as a partial requirement for the completion of my study. The central objective of my study is to describe the lived experience of the abused elderly in Bishoftu town. Hence, i have prepared a statement of informed consent to provide you a clear picture on the risks and benefits of the study; so that you will be well aware of the outcomes to accept or reject the idea of being a participant in the study. Therefore, i will read you the following statement and you will listen to me very carefully and sign or reject signing on the space provided. You, can ask for clarity at any point of my reading and make sure that you have not put your signature without a full understanding of the statement.

Respondents,

I, _____, is being requested by Solomon Tefera, the sole researcher of this thesis and a student of Social Work in Addis Ababa University Graduate Studies Program to participate in his study of the Lived Experience of the Abused Elderly.

Purpose of the study

I comprehend that the general purpose of the study is to describe the Lived Experience of the Abused Elderly in Bishoftu Town. The researcher hopes to gain an understanding of the issue by

having more than one in-depth interview sessions with the elderly persons who have had experienced mistreatment in their life as an elderly.

Explanation of the procedures to be followed

I understand that as a participant, I have the right to withdraw from the interview process for any reason. I understand that I will participate in an interview sessions that might take one to three hours in each session. The interviewer will ask me a question about my lived experience as an abused elderly.

Description of benefits

I understand that by sharing this information, I will assist the study in clarifying the phenomenon of elder abuse so that the issue will be recognized separately on its own right and it will be dealt with in a better way by developing effective intervention programs in the future.

Description of risk and discomforts

No harm is apparent because of participating in this research. If I anticipate any potential harm in the process or as a result of participating in this study and felt that i am unable to continue an interview, I may stop the interview process at any time.

Confidentiality

I understand that I will be sharing information on my personal lived experience with the researcher. Great precaution will be taken to ensure that this information will remain confidential. Any reports or documents which are to be written as a result of the study will never refer to specific individuals by name.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I understand that I may discontinue participation any time with no penalty to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions, and I have received a copy of this consent form. By signing this document, I freely and voluntarily consent or say-so to be interviewed as a participant in this research

Signature of the participant

Date

Official Name of participant

Signature of Witness

Date

Official Name of Witness

የቃለ-መጠይቁ መሪ ነጥቦች

ይህ የቃለ-መጠይቅ መምሪያ በቢሾፍቱ ከተማ የሚኖሩና ከዕድሜያቸው መግፋት ጋር ተያይዞ ለተለያዩ የጥቃት ዐይነቶች ስለባ የሆኑ ዐረጋውያን ያላቸውን የህይወት ተሞክሮ ለመግለፅና ለማብራራት የተዘጋጀ ነው። የዚህ ጥናት ተሳታፊነት ሙሉ በሙሉ በዐረጋውያኑ ፈቃደኝነት ላይ የተመሰረተ ነው። ስለዚህ ማንኛውም ተሳታፊ ባልተመቸው ጊዜ ቃለ-መጠይቁን ሊያቆም ይችላል። ተሳታፊዎች ትክክለኛውን መረጃ በመስጠት እንደሚተባበሩኝ ትስፋ ዐደርጋለሁ።

ቃለ መጠይቁ የተደረገበት ቀን -----

ቃለ መጠይቁ የተደረገበት ቦታ-----

ቃለ መጠይቁ የተጀመረበት ሰዓት -----

ቃለ መጠይቁ ያለቀበት ሰዓት -----

የተሳታፊዎች መሠረታዊ መረጃ

1. ፆታ -----
2. ዕድሜ -----
3. ሀይማኖት -----
4. የገቢ ሁኔታ -----
5. የገቢ መጠን -----
6. የልጆች ቁጥር -----
7. የጤና ሁኔታ -----
8. የትና ነው የሚሩት?-----

አረጋውያን ስለዕድሜ መግፋት ያላቸው ስሜትና አመለካከት

9. የዕድሜ መግፋት ማለት ለዕርስዎ ምን ማለት ነው?
10. በእርስዎ ዘንድ በዕድሜ የመግፋቱ ሁኔታ እንዴት እንደተጀመረ ሊያስረዱኝ ይችላሉ ?
11. በዕድሜዎ መግፋት ለራስዎ በነበረዎ አመለካከት ላይ ልዩነት ፈጥሩዋል?
 ማብራሪያ፡- ለራስዎ ባለዎ አመለካከት ልዩነት ካለ ከዕድሜ መግፋትዎ በፊት/ልጅነት፣ ወጣትነት፣ ጎለማሳነት/ ዘመን እና አሁን ያለው አመለካከትዎ ምን

ይመስላል? ማለቴለራስዎ ያለዎ አመለካከት ድርና ዘንድ ምን ይመስላል? ለውጥ ካለ አንዴት የአመለካከት ለውጥ ለመጣ እንደቻለ ቢያስረድኝ?

12. ከዕድሜ መግፍት ጋር አንዴት አየኖሩ እንደሆነ ልምድዎን ይገልጹልኛል?

ማብራሪያ:- ከዕድሜው መግፋት ጋር ተያይዞ ለመኖር የሚያደርጉትን የኑሮ ተሞክሮ ማለቴ ነው።

13. የዕድሜ መግፋት በርስዎ አካባቢ ማህበረሰብ እንዴት ይታያል?

ማብራሪያ:- አረጋዊ ማለት ለርሶ ማህበረሰብ ምን ማለት ነው?

14. የዕድሜ መግፋቱን ሁኔታ በቤተሰብ አባላት አንዴት ዕንደሚይ ሊያብራሩልኝ ይችላሉ?

15. ሌሎች ሰዎችን አርስዎን እንዴት የሚያይዎት ይመስሉታል?

የአረጋውያን ጥቃት፣ የጥቃት ሁኔታዎች፣ ባህሪያቱና አይነቶቹ ከአረጋውያን ዕይታ

- ዕስኪ ስለደረሱብዎ የጥቃት አይነቶችና ሁኔታዎች ዕናውራ

16. የአረጋውያን ጥቃት ማለት ለዕርስዎ ምንድነው?

17. የአረጋውያን ጥቃት እንዴት ሊከሰት ይችላል ብለው ያስባሉ?

18. ጥቃት ደርሶብዎት ያውቃል?

ማብራሪያዎች

ሀ- አካላዊ ጥቃት

ጉልበት በመጠቀም የአካላዊ ጉዳት፣ ቁስለት፣ ወይም ህመም አድርሶብዎ የሚያውቅ ሰው አለ?

ማብራሪያ:- ተመተው፣ ተገፍተው፣ ተገፍትረው፣ ተጎላቁለው፣ ተጠምገዘዘው፣ ተጨምቀው፣ በጥፊ ተመተው፣ ተኮርኩመው፣ ተቆንጥጠው፣ ተቃጥለው፣ በጉልበት ተመገቡተቡለው እና ማንኛውም አይነት አካላዊ ጥቃት ደርሶብዎ ያውቃል? እስኪ በእርስዎ ላይ አካላዊ ጥቃት ከደረሰ በጥልቅ ያብራሩልኝ።

ለ- ወሲባዊ/የታዊ/ጥቃት

ከርስዎ ጋር የየታዊ/ወሲባዊ/ አካላዊ ንክኪ ለመድረግ ሞክሮ የሚያውቅ ሰው አለ?

ማብራሪያ:- ይህ የሚከተሉትን ሊያካትት ይችላል ነገር ግን በእነሱ ብቻ አይወሰንም።

- ያልፈለጉትን ወሲባዊ ግንኙነትን አንዲያደርጉ መገደድ
- ያልፈለጉት/ከፈቃድ ውጪ የሆነ/ አካላዊ ንክኪ (ለምሳሌ፡- ገላውን ሲታጠቡ)
- ማንኛውም አይነት ጉልበት የተማላበት ወሲባዊ/የታዊ/ ጥቃት /ጉዳት እንደ ደፈራ፣የተመሳሳይ የታ ወሲባዊ ትንኮሳ፣በኃይል ራቁትዎን አንዲሆኑ ወይም የራቁት ፎቶግራፍ እንዲመለከቱ ወይም እንዲነሱ መደረግ።

ሐ- ስሜታዊ ወይም ስነ-ልቦናዊ ጥቃት

ቃላትን በመጠቀም፣ በምልክት ወይም በተግባር መንፈስዎን፣ ስሜትዎን፣ ውስጥዎን ወይም ስነ-ልቦናዎን አስጨንቆዎት፣ ረብሾዎት፣ አሳምሞዎ የሚያውቅ ሰው አለ?

ማብራሪያ፡- ይህ ሚክተሎትን ሊያካትት የችላል ነገር ግን ከነሱ ብቻ አይወሰንም

- የቃላት ትንኮሳ/ጥቃት/ጉጂ ቃላትን በመጠቀም
- ስድብ ወይም ሀይለ ቃል
- ስጋት
- ዛቻ
- ውርደት/አፍረት
- ንዴት
- ጭንቀትና
- ፍርሃት
- የዝትተኝነት ስሜት የመሳሰሉትን ፈጥሮብዎ የሚያውቅ ሰው

እንደ ህፃን አይቶዎ/ቆጥሮዎ/፣ ከቤተሠብዎ፣ ከጓደኞችዎ ወይም ከሌሎች ተለት ተግባርዎ ወይም ከማህበራዊ ህይወትዎ ለይቶዎ/ነጥሎዎ/ የሚያውቅ ሰው አለ? ካለ ቢያብራሩልኝ።

መ- የገንዘብ /የንብረት/ ብዝበዛ

ሀ. የእርስዎ የሆነን ገንዘብ፣ንብረት፣ጥሪት፣እርዳታ ወይም ማንኛውም የርስዎ የሆነን ነገር በህገ-ወጥ መልኩ ወይም ትክክል ባልሆነ መልኩ ሲጠቀም የሞክረ ሰው አለ?

ማብራሪያ፡-የገንዘብ/ንብረት ብዝበዛ የሚከተሉትን ሊያካትት ይችላል በነሱ ብቻ ግን አይወሰንም

- የርስዎን ፊርማ አስመስሎ መፈረም
- ያለአግባብ የርስዎን ንብረት ወይም ገንዘብ መጠቀም /ማበላሸት ወይም ማባከን/
- የርስዎ የሆነን ንብረት ወይም ገንዘብ መስረቅናማጭበርበር
- በጉልበት ወይም በማታለል እንዲፈርሙ መድረግ

ሠ- ቸል የመባል ጥቃት

ለዕርስዎ እንክብካቤን ለማድረግ ሃላፊነት ያለበት/ባት ሰው ለመኖር አስፈላጊ የሆኑ እንደ ምግብ፣ ውሀ፣ ልብስ፣ መጠለያ፣ የግልንፅህና፣ መድሀኒት የግል ደህንነት እና ሌሎችን ከማቅረብ/ከመስጠት/ ለዝና/ና ያውቃል/ታውቃለች?

ማብራሪያ፡- እስቲ ካለ እነዴት ዕንደነበር ሠፋ አድርገው ልምድዎን ቢያጫውቱኝ።

ረ-የራስ ቸልተኝነት ጥቃት

ለራስዎ መስጠት/ማድረግ ያለብዎን መሰረታዎ እንክብካቤ ለመስጠት ፈቃደኛ ያልሆኑበት(እያቻሉ)ወይም ያልቻሉ

በት ሁኔታ ተፈጥሮ ያውቃል?

ማብራሪያ፡- እባክዎን እንዲህ አይነቱ ሁኔታ ተከስቶ የሚያውቅ ከሆነ ሁኔታውን በጥልቅ ቢያብራሩልኝ።

ሰ- የመተው ጥቃት

እርስዎን ለማስተዳደር/ለመንከባከብ/ ሃላፊነት ያለበት ሰው ከነጭራሹ ትቶዎ ወይም ወደኋላ ብሎዎ ያውቃል?

ማብራሪያ፡- ይህ ሁኔታ ካጋጠመዎ ዕንደነበር ቢያብራሩልኝ።

ቀ. ባህላዊ ወይም ማህበረሰባዊ ጥቃት

ሀ. እስቲ ማህበረሰቡ ለርሶ የሚሠጠውን ቦታ ይግለፁልኝ

ለ. ማህበረሰቡ ወይም ያሉበት ባህል አረጋውያኑን የሚያይበት እይታ ዕንደነት ነው?

መ. ባሉበት በማህበረሰብ ወይም ባህል ጥቃት ደርሶብዎ ያውቃል?

ማብራሪያ:- ማድላት ከማህበራዊ ተሳትፎ የማጠናከሩን ለማድረግ ዕምነት፣ ቋንቋና አስተሳሰብ ለማራመድ ሀፍረት ተሰምቶ ያውቃል በማህበረሰብ/በባህሉ ፊት? ለአንዳንድ ባህላዊ ተረቶች አባባሎች ተረትና ምሳሌዎች ተጎድተው/ተጠቅተው የሚያውቁ ከሆነ በያብራራልኝ።

ተ. መዋቅራዊ ጥቃት

ሀ. ለሀገራዊ መዋቅሩ ያበረከቱት ነገር አለ?

ማብራሪያ:- ካለ ተሞክሮዎን ቢገልፁልኝ።

ለ. ሀገራዊ መዋቅሩ እርስዎን ለመርዳት የሚያደርጋቸው ነገሮች አሉ?

ማብራሪያ:- ኋላ በያብራራልኝ ከሌለኝ ምን ይመክራሉ? መንግስትና ሀገር እንደርሶ ያሉትን ለመርዳት ምን ማድረግ አለባቸው ይላሉ

19. ያጋጠመዎትን እያንዳንዳን አይነት ጥቃት ተሞክሮዎን ቢገልፁልኝ።

20. አረጋውያን ላይ ከሚደርሱ ጥቃቶች ሁሉ በእርሶ ዕይታ በጣም ከባዱና አደገኛው የቱ ነው ይላሉ?

ማብራሪያ:- ለምን የመረጡት የአረጋውያን ጥቃት በጣም አደገኛው የሆነው እንደሆነ በያብራራልኝ።

አረጋውያን ላይ ጥቃትን የሚያደርሱት ሰዎች ሁኔታ

21. እስኪ ጥቃቶችን ስለሚያደርሱብዎ ሰዎች ግለፁልኝ።

ማብራሪያ:- እነማን እንደሆኑ ከጥቃት ፋላጊዎቹ ጋር ያለዎት ግንኙነት ምንድን ነው? (ዝምንድና፣)

22. እነዚያ ጥቃትን ያደረሱብዎ ሰዎች ጥቃቱን ያደርሱብኛል (ይጎዱኛል) ብለው አስበው ለምትው ለጠብቀው ያውቃሉ?

ማብራሪያ:- ጠብቀው ለምትው የሚያውቁ ከሆነ ለምን እንደሆነ በያብራራልኝ።

23. ጥቃት ያደረሱብዎን ሰዎች መግለፅ ቢኖርብዎ እንዴት ይገልጻቸዎል?

ማብራሪያ፡- ማለቴ ምን አይነት ምስሎችና መግለጫ ቃላቶች ወደ አእምሮዎ ይመጣሉ?
ይህን ለመግለፅ ቃላቶች ካሉዎ ቢገልፁልኝ?

ለጥቃት አጋላጭ አደጋዎች፣ መነሻ ቦታዎች፣ ሁኔታዎች እና የአረጋውያን ጥቃት
የሚያስከትለው ውጤት

24. ላጋጠመዎ እያንዳንዱ ጥቃት አይነት አማጭ ሁኔታዎች(ምክንያቶች) ምን ሊሆኑ
ይችላሉ ብለው ያስባሉ?

25. በብዛት ጥቃቶች የሚያጋጥሙም የት እንደሆነ ሊነግሩኝ ይችላሉ?

ማብራሪያ፡- ማለቴ በቤት ውስጥ፣ ስራ ቦታ፣ ማህበራዊ ተሳትፎዎች ላይ፣ መንገድ
ላይ፣ የህዝብ መገልገያ ቦታዎች ላይ እና የመሳሰሉት።

26. ጥቃቶቹ እንዴት አንሚከናወኑ ማብራሪያ ሊሠጡኝ ይችላሉ?

ማብራሪያ፡- ማለቴ በምን አይነት ሁኔታና ዘዴ ነው ጥቃቶቹ
የሚደርሱብዎ?(የት፣ እንዴት፣ በማን፣ በምን፣ ሁኔታ፣ ዘዴ፣)

27. የጥቃቱ ስለባ መሆን የሚያመጣው ውጤት (ጥቅም ወይም ጉዳት) ካለ ቢያብራሩልኝ።

ማለቴ ከአካላዊ፣ ስነ ልቦናዊና ስሜታዊ፣ ንብረታዊና ከመሳሰሉት ጋር ተያይዞ ማለቴ
ነው።

28. የዕለት ተዕለት ህይወትዎ በተለያዩ የጥቃት አይነቶች ውስጥ ተፅዕኖ ስር ወድቋል ብለው
ያስባሉ?

ማብራሪያ፡- የዕለት ተዕለት ህይወትዎ ላይ በጥቃቱ ምክንያት ተፅዕኖ ስር ካለ እባክዎን
እያንዳንዱ የጥቃት አይነት ያደረሰውን ተፅዕኖ ቢያብራሩልኝ።

የአረጋውያን ጥቃት ፆታዊ አቅጣጫ

ለወንዶች ብቻ፡-

29. ወንድ\ወንድ መሆን ማለት ለርስዎ ምን ማለት ነው?

30. የሆኑ አይነት ጥቃቶች ወንድ በመሆኔ ደረሰብኛል ብለው ያስባሉ?

ማብራሪያ፡- በወንድነቴ ከአረጋዊነቴ በተጨማሪ ጥቃት ደርሶብኛል ብለው የሚያስቡ ከሆነ
ቢያብራሩልኝ።

31. ወንዶችና ሴቶች የአረጋውያንን ጥቃት በተለያየባለጠጠ መልኩ ነው የሚጋፈጡት
ብለው ያስባሉ?

ማብራሪያ፡- እንደዚህ የሚያስቡ ከሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ።

32.አረጋጂ የሆነች ሴት(ሚስትዎ፣ ዘመድዎ፣ ጎረቤትዎ፣ የስራ ባልደረባዎ፣ እናትዎ ወይም ሌላ) ላይ ጥቃት አድርጎ አውቃለሁ ብለው አስበው ያውቃሉ?
ማብራሪያ:-ጥቃቱ አካላዊ፣ ስሜታዊ(ስድብ፣ ማግለል፣ ዝትማድረግ)ዎታዊና ሌላም ሊሆን ይችላል።

ለሴቶች ብቻ:-

33.ሴትነት(ሴት መሆን) ማለት ለርስዎ ምን ማለት ነው?

34.የሆኑ አይነት ጥቃቶች በሴትነቱ ከአረጋጂነቱ ጎን ለጎን ደርሶብኛል ብለው ያስባሉ?

ማብራሪያ:- የሚያስቡ ከሆነ በያብራሩልኝ።

35.ወንዶችና ሴቶች የአረጋውያንን ጥቃት በተለያየባቸው መልኩ ይጋራጡታል ብለው ያስባሉ?

ማብራሪያ:- እንደዚያ የሚያስቡ ከሆነ በጥልቅ በያብራሩልኝ።

36.አረጋጂ የሆነን ወንድ ጥቃት አድርጎብኑ አውቃለሁ ብለው ያስባሉ?

ማብራሪያ:-ካለ በያብራሩልኝ።

በአረጋውያን ለጥቃቱ የሚሰጡ ምላሾችና ከጥቃት ራስን ለመጠበቅ ወይም ጥቃቱን ለመቋቋም ጥቅም ላይ የሚውሉ ዘዴዎች

37.ልክ ጥቃቶች እንደተፈፀሙብዎ የሚሠማዎን ስሜት ሊገልፁልኝ ይችላሉ?

38.ጥቃቶቹ ከደረሱብዎ በኋላ ምን ያደርጋሉ?

ማብራሪያ:-ማለቱ ምላሽዎ ምንድን ነው?

39.ጥቃቶቹን ለመከላከል ወይም ለማስቆም ዘዴዎችን ይጠቀማሉ?

ማብራሪያ:-የሚጠቀሙ ከሆነ የዘዴዎቹን አይነት በገልፁልኝ

40.ወደፊት ስላለው ሁኔታዎ ምን ያስባሉ?

41.ወደፊት ምን መደረግ አለበትዎ ይላሉ?

42.ማለት የሚፈልጉት ነገር ካለ?

አመሰግናለሁ!!!

ቀጥተኛጥቃት-ወይምየግል-መብት-ጥሰቶች:-

1. ሌሎችሠዎችስለእርስዎህይወት-ሳኔያስተላልፋሉ? ለምሳሌ:-
የትናኔነዴት-መኖርእንዳለብዎት
2. ከቤተሰቦችዎአባላት-ወ-ስጥላይታ-መውእንደታ-መሙ-የሚነግርዎት-ወይምአንዲተኙ-የሚያደርግ
ዎት-ላከመኝታ-ላይእንዳይወርዱ-የሚያደርግዎሠው-አለ?
3. ከዚህበፊት-ማድረግ-የማይፈልጉትን-ነገርእንዲያደርጉ-በኃይል-አስገድዶ-ዎሚያውቅሰው-አለ?
4. የዕርስዎ-የሆነንን-ብረት፣ ገንዘብ፣ ዕቃወይም-ሌላ-ከዕርስዎ-በጉፈ-ቃድ-ወ-ጪ-ወስዶ-ወይም-ያለ-አግባብ-ለ
መጠቀም-ሞክሮ-የሚያውቅሰው-አለ?
5. የቅርብዎ-የሆነ-ሰው-ባለፉት-የቅርብ-ጊዜ-ያት-በተለያዩ-መልክ-ሊገ-ዳዎ-ሞክሮ-ያው-ቃል?

የጥቃት-ተጋላጭነት-የሚያመላክቱ-ባህሪያት:-

6. ከዕርስዎ-ጋር-ጊዜ-ን-የሚያሳልፍ፣ ወደሀኪም፣ ወደገበያ፣ ጤናጣቢያ፣ ጎረቤት፣ ሀዘንቤት፣
ወይም-ወደ-ህይማኖት-ቦታ-የሚወስድ-ዎሰው-አለ?
7. ብዙ-ጊዜ-ወይም-በተደጋጋሚ-የሀዘን-ወይም-የብቸኝነት-ስሜት-ይሠማዎታል ?
8. መድሀኒቶች-ዎን-ራስዎ-ወስደው-ቤት-አካባቢ-ያለድጋፍ-ይንቀሳቀሳሉ?

ለጥቃት-ምቹ/አጋላጭ-የሆኑ-ሁኔታዎች:-

9. ሌሎችሰዎችን-ይረዳሉ ? የሚረዱት-ሰው-አለ?
10. ከቤተሰብዎ-አባላት-ወ-ስጥ-የማይመች-ዎሰው-አለ?
11. በሌሎች-ያለ-መፋለግ-ስሜት-ይሰማዎታል? ማንም-የማይፈልግ-ዎይ-መስል-ዎታል?
12. ከቤተሰብዎ-አባላት-ወ-ስጥ-መጠጥ-የሚያዘውት-ርአለ?
13. ብዙ-ዎቹ-የቤተሰብ-አባላት-ላይ-እምነት-አለዎ/ብዙ-ዎቹ-ን-ምነት-ቸዋል?
14. እርሶች-ግርወይም-መከራ-እየፈጠሩ-በት-እንደሆነ-ነግሮ-ዎሚያውቅሰው-አለ?
15. በቂ-የሆነ-የግል-ነፃነት-በቤት-ዎ-ያገኛሉ?

አመሰግናለሁ!!!

የተሳተፎ ጥቅም

በዚህ ጥናት በመሳተፍና አስፈላጊውን መረጃ መስጠቱ የአረጋውያን ጥቃትን ግልፅ ለማድረግና ችግሩን ለመፍታት ወደፊት ለሚደረጉ እንቅስቃሴዎች የበኩሉን አስተዋኑ እንደሚያበረክትም ተረድቻለሁ።

በጥናቱ በመሳተፍ ሊመጣ የሚችል ጉዳት

በዚህ ጥናት በመሳተፍ ምክንያት የሚመጣ ጉዳት የለም። ነገር ግን ተሳተፎው ችግር እንደሚኖረው ብረዳ በየትኛውም ጊዜ ማቆም እንደምችል ተረድቻለሁ።

የመረጃ ሚስጥራዊነት

ግላዊ የህይወት ተሞክሮዎቼ ላይ መረጃን ለተመራማሪው እንደማካፍል አውቃለሁ። ሆኖም መረጃዎቼ ሁሉ በሚስጥር እንደሚጠበቁና የትኛውንም ግለሰብ በስም እንደማያመላክቱ ተረድቻለሁ።

በፈቃደኝነት ላይ የተመሰረተ ተሳትፎ፡-

በዚህ ጥናት መሳተፍ በሙሉ ፈቃደኝነቴ ላይ የተመሰረተ ነው። በጥናቱ አለመሳተፍ ምንም አይነት ቅጣት እንደሌለውና ላገኝ ከሚገባኝ ጥቅሞችም እንደማያገደኝ ተረድቻለሁ።

የትኛውንም ጥያቄ እንደጠይቅ እድሉ የተሰጠኝ ሲሆን የቅፁ አንድ ኮፒም እኔ ጋር ቀሪ ይደረጋል። ፊርማዬን በማኖር በነፃነትና በፈቃደኝነት በዚህ ጥናት ቃለመጠይቅ በማድረግ ለመሳተፍ መስማማቴን እገልጻለሁ።

የተሳታፊው ፊርማ

ቀን

የተሳታፊው ህጋዊስም

ምስክር ፊርማ

ቀን

ምስክር ህጋዊስም

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that, this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of material used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Full Name: Solomon Tefera

Signature 

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Date of Submission: _____

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University advisor.

Full Name: _____

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Town: A Phenomenological

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